

Life Without Trash Removal



*By Julia Jacobs,
Outreach Educator
and Laura Weber,
Solid Waste Project Manager*

Many of you probably remember the ice storm of 1998. Life as we knew it wasn't normal for a period of time. A similar scenario could happen if a pandemic condition occurred such as a widespread outbreak of swine flu. If this happened, what you would you do?

What are we going to do with all this trash building up around our homes?

I don't know but it sure is piling up fast.



Hey, didn't the SRMT Environment Division have a plan in place for us when something like this should happen?

I think you're right. Where did I hear about that?

It was in the SRMT Kawennios newsletter. Do you have a copy?

The Imaginary Scenario

Akwesasne is in a state of turmoil. The swine flu has struck fast and hard in our community. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe and Health services have issued a complete shutdown of all services except the SRMT Police department. Over 95% of Akwesasne employees have been stricken with this swine flu. To help contain the spread of the flu, the SRMT has issued a ban on travel, visiting, and shut down all offices, schools, businesses, stores, and community activities in the Akwesasne community indefinitely. The surrounding communities like Massena, Malone, Potsdam and Canton in Northern New York have also implemented bans just like the SRMT. All restrictions are in effect for the next 6 weeks.

Life definitely wouldn't be normal under these conditions. Many of the Tribal solid waste services that you are accustomed to receiving wouldn't be available.

Solid waste staff has been meeting since last year to devise and implement a discontinuity plan in case of extreme emergency. This plan is one component of the Environment Division's overall Discontinuity Plan.

The plan will be implemented when there is a limited number of staff able to work due to sickness or disaster. This plan states what staff would be able to handle what work, for how long, and when should this plan go into effect? Do we need to cross train workers to place in other job situations? Would the person be able to work from home? When do we shut everything down? These are important questions to think about and find solutions.

In the coming months we will be discussing more of our discontinuity plan and how the SRMT Solid Waste Program will help prepare the Akwesasne community in case we do have a situation like Kwis and Tiio are currently in.



.....

Yes, right here. The SRMT Environment Discontinuity Plan!

