
Nelson English Usage

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Step away from your thesaurus – Answers

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to complain about the rudeness shown by your council's garbage collectors. On the morning of December 20, I was, as usual, delivering the weekly papers into the recycle bin, ready for collection.

As I wheeled the bin toward the curb, it tipped over because it was overfull. As I stopped to pick up the scattered papers, the garbage truck turned the corner into my street. Seeing that I was battling with the papers, the collectors did nothing – other than skip collecting my recycling altogether, because my bin was just shy of the curb.

I finished wheeling the bin to the curb after picking up the papers, and attempted to wave down the garbage truck after it did a u-turn and came back down the other side of the street. The driver ignored me at first, but when the truck stopped to empty the bin opposite my house, he said, 'Sorry, lady. You're supposed to have it out the night before. It's not our problem if you don't get it out on time.'

Shocked at this display, I stared for a moment before crossing the street, dragging my bin behind me, which I proceeded to empty into another neighbour's full, to-be-emptied, bin.

The driver tooted at me several times, and, as I crossed back to my side of the street, empty bin in hand, he stuck his head out of the window and said, 'You crazy old witch!'

This is wildly inappropriate behaviour for council-approved employees and the driver should be penalised appropriately. The truck in question's number plate is GCC-143.

I await your swift response and attendance to this matter.

Sincerely,

Ethel P. Anglais