

PPSReview

**Product & Packaging
Stewardship Review**

MANAGING WASTE RESPONSIBLY

An information service for municipal governments
Vol 3, Issue 2, May 2002

Report assumes municipalities should share cost of recovering IT waste

A new report on managing information technology (IT) equipment lays out a “roadmap” for a stewardship plan, but assumes it will be partly funded by the municipal taxpayer—a position which is not supported by at least one provincial government.

Industry Roadmap – Overview of a National Action Plan for Management of End of Life IT and Telecom Equipment in Canada was commissioned in early 2002, by the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC), which represents 75% of the information technology and telecommunications (telecom) industry in Canada, contracted Enviro RIS to develop a national stewardship program plan for IT and telecom waste in Canada. Environment Canada, Industry Canada and National Resources Canada funded the work.

Released in March, the report addresses options for a national strategy, including: governance models, back-end transportation and processing cost analysis, fundraising options, roles and responsibilities, and

regulatory barriers. The plan contains a roll-out strategy for completion by 2007. The analysis estimates that under the proposed plan, 2,565,277 units or 21,939 tonnes of IT waste and telecom equipment could be recovered for recycling. Recycling 21,939 tonnes of IT waste would result in about 21,524 tonnes of avoided carbon dioxide emissions.

MUNICIPAL I.T. STREAM ONLY

The program includes personal computers, monitors, laptops, printers and scanners, telephones and fax machines. The program targets only those elements of the IT stream coming from the municipal or residential stream, referred to as “consumer products only”. Televisions and video display equipment are excluded from the plan.

Based on a “shared model”, municipalities would be responsible for financing collection (via municipal drop-off centres) and transportation from the drop-off centres to IT consolidation points. The report does not include estimates of how much these

additional services would cost municipalities, nor does it acknowledge that several provinces currently do not have a “municipal drop-off” infrastructure.

Although several jurisdictions in Canada make use of a non-governmental depot network for the recovery of beverage containers, household hazardous wastes, paint and used oil, such networks are not identified in the report as possible collection centres.

In its response to the ITAC report, the Government of Nova Scotia notes its municipalities will be looking for full cost recovery for the management of IT waste.

“I don’t think municipalities would be prepared to cover this cost,” said Bob Kenney of the Nova Scotia

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Welcome to our new readers

Some of the readers of this edition of *PPSReview* will be seeing it for the first time. We have increased our fax mailing list to include more municipal representatives and others from outside of Ontario as part of *PPSReview*'s goal to broaden its coverage across Canada. We believe there is a need for a wide range of approaches to waste management and that one size may not necessarily fit all. As always, we welcome submissions from individuals with their experiences—whatever may be their perspective.

Ben Bennett, publisher

Briefly...

COLUMBIA, MISSOURI LOSES ITS DEPOSIT PROGRAM

After three failures in the past 25 years to repeal the City of Columbia, Missouri's deposit ordinance, an April 2 referendum got the result repeal supporters were seeking. With a 25 % turnout, 58 % voted "yes" to repeal the ordinance, while 42 % voted against. Proponents of the repeal launched a petition drive last year and succeeded in getting enough signatures to force a referendum vote on the issue. Calling themselves the "Yes on Recycling Committee," argued that the deposit ordinance was robbing Columbia's municipal recycling Blue Bag program of material revenues (particularly from aluminum). Opponents of the repeal warned that recovery rates would fall and litter would increase.

Columbians Against Throwaways

BOTTLE BILL PASSES IN HAWAII

On April 30, legislators in the Hawaii House and Senate approved "bottle bill" legislation designed to reduce litter and increase recycling, by establishing a refundable 5-cent deposit on a wide range of beverage containers. Once the bill is signed by the governor, Hawaii will become the first U.S. state since 1986 to adopt a new beverage deposit law.

Container Recycling Institute

ALUMINUM CAN RECYCLING RATE DROPS BELOW 50% IN US, SAYS CRI

The US aluminum can recycling rate has fallen below 50%, says the US-based Container Recycling Institute. In 1997, the industry announced a recycling goal of 75% by 2001. Using industry data the US Department of Commerce and US Environmental Protection Agency formulas, CRI determined the 2001 recycling rate was 49.2 %, down from 65% in 1992. In April, the Aluminum Association reported a recycling rate of 55.4%.

Container Recycling Institute

PERRIER GOES PLASTIC

Perrier, the well-known French carbonated water purveyor, has decided make its bottle more mobile, and "adapted for today's on-the-move" lifestyle. On March 7, its new plastic 500 ml PET bottle was introduced into Canada. Perrier will also maintain its glass bottle format. The unbreakable and re-sealable screw-cap bottle consists of two layers of PET plastic, sandwiching a layer of nylon called MXD-6. No information was provided on the recyclability of the new package.

Canadian Packaging E-News - March 27, 2002

US BILL SEEKS 80% RECOVERY

In April, U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords (I-VT) introduced the National Beverage Producer Responsibility Act—new legislation holding the beverage industry responsible for the recovery of bottle and can waste. The Jeffords bill will allow the beverage industry to design its own "cost-effective" system to accomplish an 80% recycling rate by using a 10-cent refundable deposit on beverage containers. Currently 10 states, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Massachusetts, Maine, New York, Michigan, Oregon and Vermont, have deposit laws and a bottle bill in Hawaii is awaiting final approval.

Grass Roots Recycling Network

NEW NS MILK CARTONS ADD PLASTIC AND FIVE CENTS TO COVER THE COST

A move by the Nova Scotia dairy industry to add plastic spouts and screw tops to milk cartons has made front page headlines and has been subject to editorial comment and a satirical cartoon featuring a milk carton with the following message on the side: "MISSING: SENSIBLY-MADE RECYCLABLE MILK CONTAINER. CALL 1-800-NO-WASTE" The new milk containers were introduced in mid-May and included a five to seven-cent price increase to cover the extra cost of recycling the packaging. The entire top of the cartons will have to be removed and the plastic landfilled.

Chronicle-Herald, Halifax

Product & Packaging Stewardship Review is published by Ben Bennett Communications as part of the Fair Comment Project. It is faxed or emailed to municipalities as a communications service aimed at providing a broad range of stewardship and associated information from across Canada, the United States and overseas. The current issue of PPSReview, and past issues, are available for viewing on the Internet (www.productstewardship.org).

Anyone wishing to support the Fair Comment Project may email Ben Bennett (bbc@albedo.net). Confidentiality is guaranteed.

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NOTICE: Please be advised that this publication, AND the views expressed, have NO connection with the Association of Municipal Recycling Coordinators of Guelph, Ontario.

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OPINION PIECE

Recycling beyond the blue box: how Chris Stockwell sees the 3Rs world

(NOTE: Ontario's new environment (and energy) minister, **Chris Stockwell**, was the only one of the five candidates for the leadership of the Ontario Progressive Conservatives who made product stewardship part of his platform. Here is the text of a position paper Mr. Stockwell issued earlier this year.)

We must address waste management beyond the blue box. Re-use is a far better option. While recycling is working for certain commodities such as paper, steel and aluminum, there is no consistent market for recycled glass. We need a system that improves on the re-use of glass.

Ontario is one of the only Canadian provinces/territories whose empty wine and liquor bottles do not carry a deposit for refund. British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, PEI and the Yukon all recover wine and liquor bottles through a comprehensive deposit-return system. These jurisdictions divert between 75% and 85% of these containers from the municipal waste management infrastructure.

Bill 90 sent back to committee

Ontario's proposed Waste Diversion Act (Bill 90) received its second reading May 14 and has been sent to the General Government Committee which meets May 27 and 29.

The Bill had been carried forward from the Fall 2001 legislative session. To read about the brief debate held May 14, go to www.ontla.on.ca, and click on the *Hansard link*. Click on the *Committees* and follow links for updates.

Ontario's Waste Diversion Organization estimates that about 68% of wine and spirit bottles consumed at home are collected through the blue box. Home consumption represents approximately three quarters of all LCBO bottles, which means that Ontario is managing to recover only 51% of LCBO containers.

Furthermore, glass collected via the blue box in Ontario gets broken and contaminated with other material and different coloured glass. The

"I propose calling upon the LCBO to establish a model that facilitates total product stewardship by their suppliers with the ultimate goal that this model would be implemented by other retail."

resulting glass mix is not suitable for refilling or recycling into new bottles.

What this means is that despite the fact that municipalities are regulated to collect and recycle LCBO glass bottles at a cost to the LCBO of \$5 million annually, most of it continues to be sent to landfill. This has to stop.

I propose calling upon the LCBO to establish a model that facilitates total product stewardship by their suppliers with the ultimate goal that this model would be implemented by other retail sectors.

What this means is that suppliers would be responsible for the total costs of their product, including the disposal of the container. I will call upon the LCBO to implement a system of reusing glass similar to the model used by the Brewers Retail. Within two years, 20% of the LCBO products must be reusable. Total Product Stewardship will be required by LCBO suppliers within five years.

The impact will prove positive for taxpayers, the environment and business. In 1998, 270 municipalities comprising over 84% of Ontario's population endorsed motions requesting the province to implement a deposit-return program for LCBO containers. In fact, in 1998 the City of Toronto released a report estimating that deposit-return for wine and spirit bottles would reduce the city's waste management costs by approximately \$1 million per year following full implementation. In deposit-return

programs the polluter pays. The bulk of the costs are borne by those consumers who choose not to return containers, thereby forfeiting their deposit. These consumers voluntarily pay via unredeemed deposit revenue to help off-set

system costs.

An effective LCBO container recovery program would also create an opportunity for business. Throughout Europe and parts of Canada, refilling wine bottles is a sustainable business. Considering that southern Ontario is home to Canada's largest wine industry, setting up a collection in frastructure that can provide reusable bottles will create opportunities for local vintners to save money through reduced purchasing costs and exemption to the Ontario environmental levy.

The people of Ontario are ready to support initiatives to increase recycling, it's time the government supported them too.

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Handling fees on the increase for container take-back depots

Handling fees in deposit-return jurisdictions are on the rise. Earlier this year, the New Brunswick government increased handling fees by 0.2-cents per unit, followed by a 0.1-cent increase for each of two years after that. This means that by 2004, depot operators will receive 2.4-cents per refillable beer bottle and 3.4-cents for each non-refillable container handled.

In the west, handling fee increases are more varied. Alberta's Beverage Container Management Board, the organization responsible for overseeing the deposit-return program recently undertook an activity-based costing process to set new handling fees which better reflected the actual costs of

handling specific containers, and allowing depots to receive greater compensation and a fair rate of return. The recommended fees range from a low of 2.7-cents for aluminum cans to a high of 15-cents for large plastic bottles and less common containers like gable tops. The recommended fees are currently undergoing further cost scrutiny and refinement.

Last year, British Columbia also increased its handling fees. Depots are currently receiving between 3-cents (for aluminum cans) and 7-cents (2-litre PET bottles) per container.

Nova Scotia's Resource Recovery Fund Board is also re-evaluating its handling fees, through a study

commissioned earlier this year. At this point no information has been provided on its findings.

PPSR Review will keep readers updated on these developments.

Toronto seeks glass buyers

The City of Toronto staff have recommended the city continue to collect coloured glass through the blue box. Asked to look at the feasibility of dropping coloured glass from the recycling program, staff noted in a report to the city's works committee in April that provincial regulations mandate the collection of both clear and coloured glass and current funding from the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO), which amounts to \$770,000 per year, could be jeopardized if glass collection were discontinued.

Instead, staff recommended the city seek expressions of interest from potential buyers of 18,000 tonnes of mixed broken glass and 4,500 tonnes of coloured glass, as well as 5,400 tonnes of blue box residues generated each year in the city. The long-term prospects for the city's market for coloured glass are shaky, and the mixed broken glass is currently bring used for roadbed at the Keele Valley Landfill.

With the closing of the Keele Valley the broken glass would have to be shipped to Michigan, along with the regular Toronto waste, at a cost of about \$1 million per year

ITAC report (continued from Page 1/6)

Department of Environment and Labour.

Mr. Kenney noted the existing municipal infrastructure would not suit the proposed program. Nova Scotia has about 85 take-back Enviro-Depots already in place, which may be better suited for this purpose.

The province would like to see the IT waste from the industrial, commercial and institutional sector addressed at some point.

Under the ITAC plan, IT consumers would cover the costs of shipping material from consolidation points to processing centres, and the cost of processing. Consumers would cover these costs through a mandatory front-end, visible fee, paid on each product at the point of sale (similar to the tire or paint levies in BC, and the lubricating oil levy in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba). Nova Scotia is concerned about the concept of the up-front handling fee, preferring to see the cost internalized, as is the case with the province's paint stewardship program,

said Mr. Kenney. The province would also like to see some public consultation to see how they feel about the drop-off concept and the proposed fee.

The plan also proposes a governance option to create a national producer stewardship organization or PSO called *Recycle IT Inc*, responsible for member recruitment, setting and collecting fees, logistics and contracting, accreditation, defining and promoting best practices, promotion and education, media relations, auditing and reporting.

The back-end of the program, transportation from consolidation centres, final processing and administration is expected to cost between \$12-\$14 million when fully rolled out (about \$542/tonne). Municipal costs (collection and transportation) were not calculated.

A copy of the ITAC report can be downloaded from the PPSR website (www.productstewardship.org).

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PEI keeps non-refillable pop ban, tries anti-litter campaign

All eyes will be on the ground in Prince Edward Island (PEI) this summer and fall as a new awareness campaign seeks to respond to concerns about littering. The campaign is scheduled to be launched June 5.

Despite pressure from various sources, including Coca Cola Atlantic, Chester Gillan, P.E.I. Environment Minister announced in February he was maintaining his province's 18-year-old ban on pop and beer cans. The legislation demands that all carbonated beverages and beer must be bottled in refillable glass. It is illegal to sell canned soft drinks or beer on the island.

In the fall of 2001, Minister Gillan had asked his department to look at the feasibility of charging a deposit on various types of beverage containers as a way of reducing litter. Instead, the province will increase promotion to capture these items in the WasteWatch recycling program, said the minister. The minister was criticized by some on the "choice" issue (non-carbonated drinks can be sold in cans, PET, etc.), while others claimed the refillable mandate should apply to all beverages sold, not just carbonated drinks.

Repealing the ban on non-refillables for beer and pop would have a direct effect on Seaman's Beverages (recently purchased by Pepsi-Cola), the only bottler of soft drinks on the island. The company has 125 employees.

Tim Horton's, Nova Scotia, take on littering, too

In April, Tim Horton's announced a province-wide anti-litter campaign in Nova Scotia. The campaign will include in-store and drive-through signage, extensive radio promotions, plus community clean-up programs scheduled for May 25.

Developed in conjunction with Nova Scotia Environment and Labour, the campaign takes the theme, "What if everyone picked up just one piece of litter?"

Store staff will participate in a challenge to keep the store properties and surrounding areas cleared of litter and garbage. Tim Horton's currently has 176 stores in Nova Scotia.

In the meantime, recycling coordinators in Ontario and NS continue to struggle to find paper processors who will accept Tim Horton's paper cups, which are regarded as a contaminant.

COMING EVENTS

May 29-31

Recycling Council of British Columbia annual conference, Victoria, BC.
Call (604) 683-6009

May 31-June 3

Federation of Canadian Municipalities annual conference Hamilton, ON.
Call (613) 241-5221

June 2-5

SWANA Solid Waste Symposium Edmonton, AB
Call (780) 496-5403

August 16-21

Association of Municipalities of Ontario annual conference Toronto, ON.
Call (416) 971-9856 ext. 307

September 19-20

Composting Council of Canada annual conference Halifax, NS.
Call (416) 536-9892

September 25-27

Recycling Council of Ontario annual conference Belleville, ON.
Call (416) 960-1025

October 2-4

Recycling Council of Alberta annual conference Kananaskis, AB
Call (403) 843-6563

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Opinion Piece

The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of PPSReview

A maverick might just be what Ontario needs right now

By Jay Arthur

You have to like Ontario's new minister of the environment and energy, and house leader.

Chris Stockwell is a real person. You don't have to agree with him on everything. But you have to appreciate the direct approach of the man many have called a maverick.

He is a maverick because he hasn't always toed the party line and doesn't appear to be afraid of saying what he thinks.

It is interesting, is it not, that the only person who actually made waste management a part of his platform in the Tory leadership campaign, and who loudly espoused the notion of deposit return for the LCBO, was picked by Premier Ernie Eves to bok after the environment portfolio?

Assuming the road show and associated responsibilities surrounding the proposed sale of Hydro One ever allows him to actually step foot in his office, Mr. Stockwell will note a large pile of papers on his desk.

If he ever finds time to look in his environment in-tray, he may find a copy of Bill 90.

He may even find a copy of the position paper on recycling he wrote during the leadership campaign (and faithfully reproduced on Page 3/6, I note).

Somewhere closer to the top perhaps will be a copy of the recent staff report in Toronto that lamented the lot of the glass recycling program. There are 18,000 tonnes of broken glass that cannot be recycled and 4,500 tonnes of coloured glass for which a continued market is highly doubtful.

And he will flip back to his position paper and say to himself, "This is nuts!" (or something suitably maverick-like).

The vast majority of glass out there comes from the same place—the liquor store. The vast majority of wine bottles could easily be refilled, and those that couldn't, could certainly be recycled in a clean stream that would produce fewer residues. If municipalities weren't compelled by law, or bribed by LCBO funding to collect glass they would drop it in a second.

"The vast majority of wine bottles could easily be refilled, and those that couldn't, could certainly be recycled in a clean stream that would produce fewer residues."

So here's the challenge, Minister Stockwell.

You already have some kind of tacit approval from your boss to bring your position paper back to the top of the pile. You were quite up-front about it, and no one seriously challenged the wisdom. Ms Witmer made some positive remarks about Bill 90 but she had to say something. It was announced on her watch.

The new Premier has shown he does have the flexibility to at least look at other ideas (unlike his predecessor). Just look at the hydro issue—in the *other* in-tray, Mr. Minister.

You might even be able to push ahead with the LCBO deposit return idea within the context of the bill. It's right there: Section 24.

"A waste diversion program developed under this Act for a designated waste may include the following:

1. Activities to reduce, reuse and recycle the designated waste."

Some of the other industry guys won't like it, so I would hold back on the

notion that this could serve as model for other sectors.

The makers of brand new bottles won't be thrilled. There doesn't seem to be a strong economic reason any more for them to pay a half decent price for the recovered clear glass and they want nothing to do with the coloured glass bottles. They would much rather see them broken into tiny pieces and used in place of aggregate or for sand-blasting. Is that what recycling is supposed to be about? I don't think so.

The big wineries won't be thrilled either as they can get their new bottles for peanuts, given their size. They'll get over it.

You can be sure the province's largest city will be on board with a LCBO take-back program.

And no one said the liquor bottles necessarily have to go back to the LCBO. Why not the beer store? The Brewers are always going on about what a great system they have. And with all these new agency beer/liquor stores it makes sense, doesn't it, to take *all* the empties back?

So, when you get a minute, Mr. Minister, dig out your position paper, and have another look at Bill 90.

Then invite the LCBO to sit down with the Brewers and see what they can come up with.

Even without the LCBO funding, recycling coordinators across the province will raise a glass in your honour.

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