

PPSReview

**Product & Packaging
Stewardship Review**

MANAGING WASTE RESPONSIBLY

An information service for municipal governments

Vol 3, Issue 3, July 2002

At last! Support for Ontario 3Rs

Ontario municipalities finally have some light at the end of the funding tunnel.

Seven years after the Province discontinued funding support for municipal recycling programs, the Ontario Legislature passed Bill 90 (the Waste Diversion Act) in June, with royal assent coming on June 27.

Under the act, the environment minister may "designate" certain wastes, call for the setting up of industry funding

organizations (IFOs) and require 50-cents-on-the-dollar support from industry for waste diversion programs.

The province's blue box program is the first to be designated.

On the administrative front, the priority will be the setting up Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) with a board of directors and authority to promote waste diversion in the province. Letters were sent out to prospective WDO members shortly after the act became law.

While the Province will play an arms-length role in WDO, the environment minister will appoint a senior civil servant to participate as a

non-voting member. He will also appoint two people who are not in the public sector, one of whom may have a vote.

There will be no funding provided by the Province. Indeed the Act actually calls on WDO to raise enough

"...Mr. Bassett indicated an IFO could have funding plans for packaging and HHW developed "in no later than 90 days, following the request from the WDO", and further, "the IFO will make initial payments to municipalities within 90 days of approval of the program by the WDO and the Minister."

funds to cover the MOEE's administrative expenses, in addition to supporting waste diversion programs.

According to a news release issued by the ministry, WDO will set up and fund waste diversion programs for a list of other materials, including scrap tires, used oil, household hazardous waste (HHW), organics (such as kitchen waste), pharmaceuticals, electronics, batteries and fluorescent lighting tubes. This is the first time that pharmaceuticals, batteries and fluorescent tubes have been specifically mentioned as likely targets for stewardship, although HHW has been on the list for some time (and

was the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's choice for the second material designation). Other than blue box wastes, Bill 90 does not specify which other wastes could be designated under the act.

How long it will be before municipalities see any funding is not clear, but CSR's CEO Damian Bassett has committed his members to prompt action.

In his presentation on Bill 90 to the Standing Committee on General Government last year, Mr. Bassett indicated an IFO could have funding plans for packaging and HHW developed "in no later than 90 days, following the request from the WDO", and further, "the IFO will make initial payments to municipalities within 90 days of approval of the program by the WDO and the Minister."

The MOEE has set July 17 and August 14 for information sessions in Toronto (see Calendar, Page 5/6).

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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. Welcome aboard! 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...

NEW YORK DROPS GLASS AND PLASTICS

The City of New York has dropped glass and plastics from its recycling program. Facing a US\$5 billion budget deficit, the move was made as a cost-saving measure by new mayor Michael Bloomberg. Glass has been dropped for at least two years, plastics for at least one year.

Various sources

UK NEXT FOR BAG LEVY?

The environment minister in the United Kingdom, Michael Meacher, is reported as being in favour of the levy option on plastic shopping bags. Ireland recently introduced a 20-cent levy on plastic shopping bags to reduce waste. Mr. Meacher is reported to be considering a similar move for the UK if there are no major problems with the Irish levy.

*WARMER Bulletin, July 2002
and the Guardian*

REVERSE VENDING MACHINES IN FLORIDA

Shoppers in three Florida cities can now receive payment for recycling aluminum and plastic beverage containers at drop-off centres located outside certain Wal-Mart stores. The centres are equipped with rePlanet machines made by Tomra of North America Inc.

Waste News, June 2002

GERMANY PUSHES AHEAD

The German Federal Constitutional court rejected objections from industry on the implementation of a new deposit-return program. The program will begin January 1st, 2003, with deposits equivalent to about 25-cents for cans and bottles below 1.5 litres and 50-cents for larger beverages. Milk and wine containers will continue to be exempt.

*Recycling Laws International (www.raymond.com),
July/Aug 2002*

MORE YEN THAN DOLLARS SPENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES — REPORT

A new report published recently by the US-based Raymond Communications, Inc., suggests that Japanese firms now lead the world in environmental investments. According to "Electronics Recycling: What to Expect from Global Mandates," the giant Matsushita Electric invested US\$497 million on environmental compliance, recycling, "zero waste," and eco-design projects in 2000. Sony Corp. spent about \$154 million, but does not include eco-design in its figures. In comparison, IBM Corp. spent \$109 million on compliance only. (No other American firm disclosed its investments.) Raymond Communications publishes the newsletters *State Recycling Laws Update* and *Recycling Laws International*.

Raymond Communications (www.raymond.com)

HAWAII BOTTLE BILL NOW LAW

Hawaii has officially become the nation's 11th bottle-bill state and the first state to enact a container deposit law since 1986. Gov. Benjamin J. Cayetano signed the state's bottle bill into law June 25. The law will impose a 5-cent deposit on all beverage cans and bottles except for milk containers beginning in 2005. It also will phase in another charge of up to 1.5 cents per container that the state Health Department will use to support recycling. According to *Resource Recycling* magazine, public records indicate the National Soft Drink Association (Washington) spent \$35,971 this past spring in an unsuccessful attempt to stop the Hawaii Legislature from approving the container deposit law.

Various sources

ILSR REPORT NOW AVAILABLE ON LINE

The Institute for Local Self-Reliance's comprehensive 80-page report on refilling of beverage containers entitled: "Reduce, Reuse, Refill!" is now available from the GrassRoots Recycling Network website (www.grrn.org/beverage/refillables/).

*GrassRoots Recycling
Network/
Institute for Local Self-
Reliance*

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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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GUEST COLUMN

It's time for the fast food industry to take responsibility for its waste

by Angela Griffiths

Fast food is here to stay, but the time has come for the fast food industry to make a substantive commitment to reduce the waste generated by its operations.

Pressure from environmental groups in the 1980s resulted in some changes in packaging. We rarely see polystyrene hamburger containers or coffee cups in fast-food restaurants. But there has been little change since then.

New report from CRI tells the story of "trashed cans"

In 2001, 100 billion aluminum cans were sold in the United States. More than half, over 50 billion, were landfilled, incinerated or became litter.

This and much more information comes from *Trashed Cans*, a new report from the Arlington, Virginia-based Container Recycling Institute (CRI), written by Jenny Gitlitz.

The 53-page report details the serious environmental implications of aluminum can wasting in America. *Trashed Cans* sells for US\$20 for non-profit, public interest organizations and government agencies. It is available at somewhat higher prices for businesses.

The report includes data on aluminum can recycling from 1972 - 2001. To order the report visit the CRI website (www.container-recycling.org).

There are many things that fast food outlets can do now to reduce their impact on the environment.

1. Reduce the amount of packaging

No meaningful statistics exist on the amount of solid waste generated by the fast food industry. Although some restaurants may source-separate behind the counter, there is little evidence of source separation out front. This means that all of the packaging and food materials generated by the fast food industry are currently sent to a landfill.

2. Use Reusable Containers.

Introducing reusable containers is probably the most effective way of reducing waste. Stores can also encourage customers to bring in their own containers by giving them a reduced price. Price reductions for bringing in reusable containers should be enough to act as an incentive. A five-cent reduction in the price of coffee is not enough. I suggest a half-price coffee. Perhaps more importantly though, is for restaurants to train staff, so that the first question they ask is, "Would that be in your own mug/container?" This would act as a reminder and send the message that this is the preferred option for those visiting the restaurant. Stores could also use more reusable food trays, cups, condiments containers, etc.

Promotions that require the purchase of a disposable container should be discontinued. Surely, with the technology we have available today, we can design a compact computerized reusable contest, either at the counter or at the drive-through.

3. Recycle/ Compost

There are innovative packaging materials out there which are compostable or recyclable. People have become accustomed to separating waste at home and should be able to continue the practice when eating out. It is especially important to implement source separation in fast food restaurants because many of the visitors are children who need to see that waste separation is the norm.

4. Take responsibility for litter.

A significant amount of litter in urban areas arises from fast food industry packaging. Fast food restaurants are often surrounded by a sea of litter. Although it is true that "restaurants don't litter; people litter," these restaurants have an obligation to the neighbourhoods and communities they occupy to clean up their patch and keep it free of litter originating from their restaurant. Many communities have long-running litter pick-up programs that enlist volunteers. The industry could build on and support these efforts, in part by acknowledging the role that their industry plays in the litter problem.

These are simple measures that the industry could undertake to show that they are committed to reducing their waste and the environmental impact of their operations. In Nova Scotia we have successfully reached our 50% waste diversion goal. I urge the fast food industry to adopt 50% diversion as a goal and just do it!

Angela Griffiths is executive director of Clean Nova Scotia.

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Private member's bill calls for deposit return for LCBO

An Ontario Liberal MPP has brought in a private member's bill calling for a deposit-return system to be set up at Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) stores by July 2003.

Bill 125 was formally introduced by Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence) June 24, just a few days before Bill 90 (the Waste Diversion Act) received royal assent and became law.

Mr. Colle's bill would amend the Liquor Control Act to require the Liquor Control Board "to establish programs to ensure that all liquor sold to the public on or after July 1, 2003 by government stores and stores owned and operated by wineries or manufacturers of beer or spirits is in containers for which a deposit is charged at the time of sale and refunded on the return of the container."

With a 2001 profit of over \$900 million, Mr. Colle said that the LCBO can well afford to set up a deposit-return recycling program "that could well save money in the long run for the

LCBO and for municipalities who are stuck every year with 74,000 tonnes of glass that is difficult to recycle and has few markets for revenue."

It is up to the government of the day to decide whether or not debate on private member's bills will be allowed and there has to date been no indication

"Our own provincial government has the gall to collect \$40 million as an environmental levy from the LCBO, yet it only gives \$5 million of that \$40 million toward recycling."

that this will be the case for this bill.

(It should be noted that private member's bills very rarely reach third reading or receive royal assent, and there are currently 147 private member's bills and 26 government bills before the house. Private bills are seen more as a way to encourage discussion on a particular issue.)

The previous week, Mr. Colle had criticized the government and Bill 90 for its failure to address recycling costs

borne by municipalities.

The LCBO "is spending hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money on building these palatial Martha Stewart-type stores that smack of opulence and waste," but only contributes \$5 million towards recycling costs, he said.

"What have you got against Martha Stewart?" said Ontario Minister of Environment and Energy, Chris Stockwell, in response.

"With \$905 million in profit last year, how can they (the LCBO) not have any money to invest in the 3Rs? Sadly, it's the cash-strapped local municipalities and their overtaxed property ratepayers who are forced to pick up the tab and collect tonnes of LCBO bottles that fill the blue boxes across the province," continued Mr. Colle.

"Our own provincial government has the gall to collect \$40 million as an environmental levy from the LCBO, yet it only gives \$5 million of that \$40 million toward recycling," he added. The parliamentary record, *Hansard*, shows no further response from the minister.

"It's a double standard," said Mr. Colle later. "The Provincial government has downloaded costs and rules for the rest of us, but when it comes to the LCBO and its partner, the Provincial government, we aren't supposed to question that this provincial government monopoly doesn't take responsibility to reduce, reuse and recycle like the rest of us."

Toronto would save \$1/2 million with no liquor bottles to recycle

\$558,000. That's how much the City of Toronto would save each year in theory if liquor bottles did not have to be collected in the blue box and were recovered through another system (like deposit-return).

In a staff report to the city's works committee, June 10, works and emergency services commissioner Barry Gutteridge noted the city would actually save \$1,331,000 in operating expenses. This amount comprises \$1,095,000 in net blue box costs and \$236,000 in garbage collection and disposal costs. This assumes all containers would be diverted from the waste and recycling streams by a different system.

The city currently receives an annual payment from the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) each year, ostensibly to offset glass recycling costs. This amount, which last year was \$773,000, would no longer be paid if the containers were not collected in the city's blue box program. (The annual LCBO payments were instituted a few years ago by the provincial government in response to the city's attempts to force the LCBO to adopt a take-back program via a city bylaw. The Province quickly brought in legislation removing that option and the LCBO payments were announced shortly afterwards.)

Another report to the works committee has confirmed the city is unable, legally, to require a deposit return system as a licensing requirement.

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Now, here's a "challenge"

The US-based GrassRoots Recycling Network (GRRN) took its latest campaign to Washington to coincide with efforts to bring national deposit legislation to the US. GRRN is supporting Senator Jim Jeffords' (I-VT) National Beverage Producer Responsibility Act, Senate Bill 2220 (see *PPSReview*, May 2002).

In anticipation of the hearing on the bill scheduled for July 12, GRRN launched "the New Pepsi-Coke Challenge" to find out which of the nation's two major beverage brand-owners does a better job of recycling. The challenge asks citizens which company, Pepsi or Coke, is better for the environment.

GRRN will be conducting the test at different sites in the Washington, DC area, assisted by one 25-foot Pepsi and one 25-foot Coke bottle. Residents are asked a number of key questions and the results will be tabulated and distributed nationally.

For example:

- Which company has a solution for the 114 billion beverage containers wasted every year in the US.?
Pepsi____ Coke____ Neither____
- Which company has pledged its support for Senate Bill 2220, Senator Jeffords' National Beverage Producer Responsibility Act?
Pepsi____ Coke____ Neither____

Senate Bill 2220 sets a performance standard (80 % container recovery) which industry must meet, but the bill allows industry the freedom to design the most efficient deposit-return program to reach the standard.

GRRN is a North American network of waste reduction activists and professionals promoting producer responsibility and Zero Waste as critical elements of a sustainable economy. Contact: Bill Sheehan (706) 613-7121 or check the GRRN website (www.grrn.org/beverage/jeffords).

COMING EVENTS

July 17

MOEE information session on Bill 90/WDA
Training Room A, 3rd floor,
MOEE, 40 St. Clair Ave. W.,
Toronto, ON.
Call (416) 314-4637

August 14

MOEE information session on Bill 90/WDA
MOEE, 40 St. Clair Ave. W.,
Toronto, ON.
Call (416) 314-4637

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

RUMOUR DEPARTMENT

Who will the Minister of Environment select to represent the non-public sector role on the Waste Diversion Ontario board? He has two seats to fill. One is non-voting; the other "may" be voting, according to the newly-proclaimed Waste Diversion Act.

Logically, the seats would be occupied by an environmental group, or some other NGO, or a prominent non-aligned citizen with a broad experience of the issues. At the very least, one would assume it would be someone not represented by the others sitting around the table.

What a surprise it would be then if one of them turned out to be a former Metro politician who makes her living as a lobbyist for industry and spends many hours in the hallways of Toronto City Hall.

Whatever "side" she may be lobbying for, it could hardly be described as non-aligned.

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Opinion Piece

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

Time for Ontario municipalities to take off the gag and speak up

by Jay Arthur

Well, finally! Bill 90 is passed. The long wait for funding is not quite over, but we are at least on our way.

We have the enabling legislation. Now all we need is the stuff that follows. And all indications are that it is not far behind. The big question now will be how long it actually takes to get the cheques out of industry's coffers and into the pockets of the long-suffering municipalities.

The stage is now set for some very interesting times. By the time you read this the official letters will have gone out to the potential directors of Waste Diversion Ontario.

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario will appoint its guys. CSR will appoint its guys. The newspaper guys will send their big guy (from the dailies) to the big table and their little guy (from the weeklies) to the observation deck where there is a great view but no vote. The Retail Council will send its representative.

The Brewers, who have nothing to do with the blue box but a lot to do with efficient recovery systems, will be there, as will the LCBO, which knows nothing about recovery systems but really should learn.

The chemical guys will draw lots to see who gets to be a voting member and who gets to be just an observer. The fibres guys and the waste haulers will make up the party with their reps on the observation deck.

Scurrying quietly in at the back will be the non-voting bureaucrat appointed by the minister. And he or she will be followed by two other minister appointees, neither from the public service.

One of these individuals will have no vote. The other? Well, we're not sure. Whilst the legislation is quite

clear about the other board members who get votes, this individual has to satisfy him or herself with just the prospect of full participation. The minister "may"

give this person a vote. Or he may not.

At any rate, it will be quite the gathering around the table when they sit down to do business.

"What will the municipal reps have to say? Will they continue to play the cap-in-hand role, saying little and being grateful for any handouts they can get? Or will they do their job and truly represent the municipal point of view?"

We can be fairly sure what to expect from some sides of the table. Their positions on these matters have been fairly consistent.

The users of packaging will be reading from the CSR song sheet and there will be much talk of efficiencies and the need for a level playing field. There will be no mention of the need to make packaging decisions up front to enhance and maintain the efficiencies. There will be no talk of plastic spouts on polycoat containers or nylon in PET bottles.

The LCBO will talk about anything except take-back. The Brewers will talk of nothing else.

The newspaper guys will talk about the notion that they pay their way anyway and will once again put forward "free" and frankly not terribly useful ad space as an alternative to actually putting any cash on the table.

The chemical guys will want everyone to stop suggesting there is anything harmful about their floor cleaners and will present everyone

with a plastic cupful of Mr. Cleen as a mid-day refreshment. All the CSR reps will drink it.

The Retail Council will join all moves to prevent the words "take" and "back" from appearing in the same sentence.

All eyes will be on the minister's appointees. If one is to be the "conscience" of the board, what is the other there for?

But the big question is: What will the municipal reps have to say?

Will they continue to play the cap-in-hand role, saying little and being grateful for any handouts they can get? Or will they do their job and truly represent the municipal point of view?

AMO's record to date has been less than spectacular. This is clearly not a priority and given the relatively few dollars involved, and this is understandable. The focus has been very much on getting the bill through.

Well, it's through.

If the WDO board is to be what it is supposed to be—a coming together of the private and public sectors for the common good—then now is the time for the municipalities to speak up.

Now is the time to push for real action on product design and markets instead of public relations.

Now is the time for efficiency studies to look at the entire system, not just the parts.

Even if it's not on the song sheet.

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