

# PPSReview

**Product & Packaging  
Stewardship Review**

**MANAGING WASTE RESPONSIBLY**

**An information service for municipal governments**

**Vol 6, Issue 4, April 2006**

TIRE PLAN DEFERRED, OIL PLAN CANCELLED

## Broten chooses HHW as next stewardship target in Ontario

Ontario Environment Minister Laurel Broten will be asking Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) for a phased-in diversion program for household hazardous waste (HHW), a program that includes used oil containers and filters.

With seven speeches on her schedule for Thursday, April 20, the minister swept into the WDO's annual general meeting at the Metropolitan Hotel in Toronto, made her announcement and left without taking questions,

although her deputy minister was able to stay for the balance of the meeting.

The minister said in the near future she will be asking WDO to develop a program for "household hazardous and special waste", and she will want to see it developed "in a timely manner."

In addition to used oil containers and filters, the plan is to include paint, chemical cleaners, fluorescent tubes and batteries. She anticipates will be a phased-in program.

Minister Broten is also anxious to see a diversion program for waste electronics, which were designated in late 2004.

Minister Broten said she is cancelling further development of the existing oil plan and is deferring any further development of the existing tire program.

Before announcing the HHW designation, the minister asked rhetorically if the existing programs are "meeting expectations".

"We have to be frank. The end results are not as good as we'd like them to be," she said.

"Obviously, we need to increase diversion rates."

Minister Broten credited WDO with helping to ensure the viability of the blue box program.

"Now it's time to go the distance. The WDO will play key role and the Province will support you all the way."

## Another grant (\$940K) from Ontario to cover WDO's expected shortfall

Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) chair Gemma Zecchini has publicly thanked Ontario Environment Minister Laurel Broten for "the million dollar cheque".

Speaking at the WDO annual general meeting, April 20 in Toronto, Ms Zecchini noted the cheque (actually for \$940,679) "does come in handy."

The minister had earlier joked that "unlike the last WDO meeting, I've come empty-handed."

(The cheque was presented by the minister to the WDO board at its March meeting.)

The unconditional grant is to cover payments the WDO would have received from tire, oil and electronics industry funding organizations if plans had been approved. The funds will be used to offset program development costs if a program does not go ahead.

(The recovery plans for tires and oil, both designated March 23, 2003, have now been deferred and cancelled, respectively and it has been more than 16 months since electronics were designated and a diversion program requested by the Ontario Environment Minister. The blue box plan, requested September 23, 2002, was approved February 1, 2004).

Like the \$280,000 payment made to the WDO in December, the grant comes from the Grants for Environment Partnerships Program. As was the case when the first payment was made before Christmas, a search of the MOE website produces the following message:

*"No documents found that match your query: Grants for Environment Partnerships Program."*

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# Briefly...

## CHOPSTICK TAX FOR CHINA

The Chinese government is bringing in a 5% tax on disposable wooden chopsticks. Billions of pairs of disposable chopsticks are discarded each year. The BBC reports that China produces about 45 billion pairs of chopsticks a year, consuming millions of birch, poplar and bamboo trees. The move came as China said it would raise some consumption taxes next month in a bid to help the environment and narrow the gap between rich and poor. Taxes on yachts, luxury watches, golf clubs, gas-guzzling cars and wooden floor panels are rising by 5-20%. The disposable splints of wood, usually between 8 and 10 inches long, have long been a target for Chinese environmentalists. School children have written to the Chinese prime minister asking for a ban on disposable wooden chopsticks, while students have persuaded some college cafeterias to replace them with spoons. In recent years, the government has actually encouraged the use of chopsticks, in a bid to reduce the spread of infectious illnesses by sharing eating utensils.

*Resource Recovery Forum, March 22, 2006  
www.resourcesnotwaste.org*

## SAN FRANCISCO CALLS FOR FULL EPR

On February 14, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed a resolution that supports statewide legislation and local initiatives requiring manufacturers to take responsibility for collecting and recycling their products and packaging at the end of their useful life. The resolution wording notes: "By covering the costs of collection and disposal, local governments are subsidizing the production of waste because manufacturers know that whatever they produce the local government will foot the bill for recycling or disposal." The Product Policy Institute has been assisting San Francisco and other California communities in the development of policies and programs that conserve resources and reduce local taxes by transferring

responsibility for product discard management back to the makers of products and their customers.

*Product Policy Institute (www.productpolicy.org)*

## PSI FORUM SET FOR JUNE 14-15 IN CHICAGO

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is holding its 2006 Product Stewardship Forum in Chicago, June 14-15. The forum will feature experts discussing the many aspects of product stewardship. PSI is a U.S. non-profit membership-based organization located in Boston, Massachusetts. PSI works with state and local government agencies to partner with manufacturers, retailers, environmental groups, federal agencies and other key stakeholders to reduce the health and environmental impacts of consumer products. PSI has also organized a series of networking conference calls on electronics, thermostats, paint and pharmaceuticals management. For more information, visit the PSI website ([www.productstewardship.us](http://www.productstewardship.us)). (*This site has no connection with [www.productstewardship.org](http://www.productstewardship.org), which is PPSReview's website—editor*)

*Product Stewardship Institute  
www.productstewardship.us*

## NEW ONE-WAY KEG FROM CARLSBERG

On March 15, Carlsberg launched a new draught beer system for professional and private users under the name DraughtMaster™. The professional system offers customers a number of benefits, says a company news release. These include easy handling, one-way (i.e., non-returnable) kegs, 21 days shelf-life from first serve, perfect temperature control, and easy cleaning and maintenance. The new system was launched in Denmark, Norway, Portugal and Sweden. Later, the system will be launched in other countries, inside and outside Europe. "Could anything be more environmentally regressive?" asks *Solid Waste and Recycling* magazine editor Guy Crittenden. See the editor's blog ([www.solidwastemag.com](http://www.solidwastemag.com)).

*www.carlsberg.com*

**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 Canada, the United States and overseas.

The current issue of PPSReview, and past issues, are available for viewing on the Internet ([www.productstewardship.org](http://www.productstewardship.org)).

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

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## LIES, DAMNED LIES AND FACT SHEETS DEPARTMENT

# What is the real story on the efficiency of Ontario glass recycling? Read on...

A letter from O-I Canada that was copied to municipal councils on the state of glass recycling in Ontario, and the responses it generated, has clearly demonstrated that there are two schools of thought on what recycling is and how well it's doing in the province.

O-I Canada is Ontario's only "bottle-to-bottle" end market for recycled glass. In 2005, the company says it purchased more than 115,000 tonnes of recycled glass for use in the production of new glass packaging, most of it from the Beer Store and from Michigan and Quebec where the deposit systems ensure high quality glass. Because of the lower quality resulting from single-stream collection, usable cullet from Ontario blue boxes "continues to dwindle at an ever increasing rate," it says.

O-I's letter, dated January 31, says glass recycling in Ontario "is failing and failing badly."

Two weeks later a letter from Unical, a Quebec-based glass processor, which just won a major processing contract through Stewardship Ontario's \$2 million Glass Market Development Investment Fund, disagreed with O-I's analysis.

Unical said when its new plant is built as part of the contract, it will be accepting much more mixed broken glass from Ontario programs.

The company says the deposit-return system for liquor and wine bottles called for in O-I's letter would "dramatically increase" costs to Ontario residents "and give wrong signals to municipalities about the need for recycling system innovation and cost control."

### 15-LITRE WATER JUGS

## Peel wants full stewardship: recycling and waste costs

In March, Peel Regional Council passed a resolution urging the Ontario Government to make bottled water companies pay 100% of the costs of managing new 15-litre polyethylene-terephthalate (PET) water jugs in municipal recycling and waste systems or be required to use a deposit-return system. And it's urging other municipalities to follow suit.

Large opaque blue polycarbonate bottles used in water coolers have for many years been sold with a deposit and returned to the retailer for reuse. In the past few months, recycling operators have noted with concern a similar-sized container appearing in blue boxes.

While the material is eminently recyclable, the size of the jugs causes problems in recycling plants and the jugs often end up in residue streams.

### Agreed statistics and conclusions drawn (in brackets)

Glass bottle and jars introduced into the Ontario marketplace in 2004	198,000 tonnes
Recovered in the Ontario blue box system	120,000 tonnes
(Thus, not recovered )	78,000 tonnes
Recovered glass turned into new containers	27,100 tonnes
Recovered glass turned into fibre glass	32,660 tonnes
(Thus, recovered glass not turned into new containers or fibre glass — e.g., aggregate substitute)	70,240 tonnes

### Disputed

Item	SO	O-I
Recovery rate for glass in Ontario	65%	65%*
Recovery rate in Alberta	79%	94%
Recovery rate in Nova Scotia	72%	89.2%
Recovery rate in British Columbia	68%	89.6%

\* O-I says the "real" combined (i.e., bottle-to-bottle or bottle-to-fibre glass) recycling rate is 30% - thus 70% is not recycled.

Unical offers no evidence to support its new-found expertise on the operational cost of Ontario recycling. Twelve days later Stewardship Ontario issued its own letter on the topic and included its own *Key Facts on Glass Recycling in Ontario* to back up its position.

Stewardship Ontario CEO Damian Bassett's letter was also distributed to Ontario municipalities, along with Unical's letter.

A week later, O-I issued a response to the *Key Facts* and to close the loop, it too was sent to municipalities.

Despite the differing opinions on the effectiveness and efficiency of Ontario glass recycling system, the two sides do agree on a number of points (see above chart).

What they do not agree on is whether turning mixed broken glass into lower grade products that are not bottles or jars can be considered recycling. They also disagree on, and whether it make sense to spend millions of stewards' and municipal taxpayers' dollars to process mixed broken glass when a different collection system could make Ontario-generated glass available for the manufacture of new glass containers.

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# LCBO spokesmen, media busy as boxed wine controversy continues

The move by the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) towards wine in aseptic cartons made the news again earlier this month when the LCBO's Summerhill, Toronto store began selling wine in single-serve, 250-ml Tetra Paks. Priced at \$13.95 for a four-pack, LCBO says the Three Thieves' "Bandit" wine is now available in 200 stores across the province.

Like the release of the one-litre *French Rabbit* wine packages last year, a portion of sales of the new wines (50 cents a package of four cartons) will go to an environmental program—in this case a new habitat for Toronto-area frogs.

And while the provincially-owned corporation has announced new facilities are coming on stream to fill Tetra Paks with wine, finding a place to take the few empties that are recovered is still proving a challenge.

The LCBO's new line of wine and its refusal to consider a deposit-based collection system have been seeing reactions from municipal recycling programs—and keeping its staff busy responding.

## USE THE LEVY

On March 6, the board of the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority (EWSWA) reaffirmed its position that a deposit system be introduced for LCBO containers. The authority notes in a covering letter to Environment Minister Laurel Broten that almost \$50 million was raised by the Province last year through the 10 cents-per-bottle environmental levy paid on all wine and spirit bottles and it wonders why Essex-Windsor property taxpayers should bear the cost (or even part of the cost) of collecting LCBO containers. It also notes the \$900 million profit made by the LCBO. (On March 1, Peterborough County Council also passed a resolution calling for a deposit system to be set up, using the levy.)

The following day, the *Windsor Star*, which reported on the EWSWA

resolution, received a letter from LCBO Environmental Strategy Project Leader (and co-chair of the Stewardship Ontario Blue Box Funding Formula Review Steering Committee) Lyle Clarke. Mr. Clarke said the aseptic carton's light weight and compact size makes it a better environmental choice than glass bottles, even under a deposit system.

Nowhere, he said, are imported spirits, wine or beer bottles cleaned and refilled. In its letter to the minister, EWSWA said it was not suggesting international wines be sent back for refilling. It noted the environmental benefit of reusing or recycling glass is lost if it has to be moved more than 50 kilometres beyond its source. Mr. Clarke makes no claims about the benefits or disbenefits of cleaning and refilling domestic wine bottles.

## WITHIN REACH

The recovery rate for glass bottles in the blue box is 65%, which he says is "within reach" of the 68-79% achieved by deposit systems. Mr. Clarke's statistics are the same numbers used by Stewardship Ontario and are hotly disputed by advocates for deposit systems (see Page 3/8). Mr. Clarke make no reference to the current recovery rate for aseptic containers (about 13%).

On March 8, *National Post* writer David Menzies revealed the new composite packaging so heavily promoted by LCBO as environmentally superior has to be shipped out of the province for processing once collected in the blue box as no facilities exist in Ontario (*most is actually being shipped overseas because of contamination issues at the Michigan mill that was taking the material—editor.*)

Mr. Menzies also said the return rate for wine bottles in British Columbia is actually 86%.

This prompted Mr. Clarke to put pen to paper again. He notes Mr. Menzies is "a long-time critic of

LCBO" and says consumers like the new wine in aseptic cartons. Claims that shelf space is being offered to suppliers based on their willingness to use the new packaging are "totally false", he said.

## NEW PACKAGING CAPACITY

Just five days after Mr. Clarke's letter, the LCBO issued a release saying new facilities would soon be available in Ontario for filling Tetra Paks "to package wine from Ontario and around the world".

"A number of suppliers have advised the LCBO that they are interested in offering products in this format but are unable to do so because of a lack of available packaging capacity," wrote Bob Downey, LCBO Senior Vice President, Sales & Marketing.

"In response, the LCBO has been working to facilitate the creation of such capacity in Ontario, so that our suppliers can offer even more choice in this popular and environmentally-friendly package format."

The LanPak Inc., plant, located in Richmond Hill, plans to start filling *Tetra Pak Prisma* packages with wine in June.

The company's Vintner's Closed Enviro wine packaging system takes wine from bulk containers to sterile, state-of-the art filling equipment for packaging in a variety of pack sizes and formats.

More information will shortly be available at the company's website ([www.lanpak.ca](http://www.lanpak.ca)), which at press time was still under construction.

# Mulclair takes on Coke in Quebec and things don't go better for anyone

With the departure of Quebec Environment Minister Thomas Mulclair the controversy over Coca Cola's removal and reinstatement of the voluntary deposit on non-carbonated soft drinks has abated.

CBC News reported the company reversed its decision after a meeting with M. Mulclair, February 6.

At the turn of the year, Coke had removed the 5-cent refundable deposit on bottles of non-carbonated brands such as Minute Maid juices, Fruitopia, Five Alive and Nestea. The move was immediately criticized by the minister as "unacceptable" and a "step backwards", and he sought a meeting with company representatives.

After Coke's subsequent reversal of its new policy, M. Mulclair said that a parliamentary committee would be looking at alternative methods of

increasing Quebec's recycling rate this spring.

Quebec law currently mandates a deposit on carbonated drinks, but not on non-carbonated drinks. The minister had indicated he might extend the law to include non-carbonated drinks.

In late February, however, M. Mulclair resigned abruptly from the cabinet after a shuffle would have placed him in a lower-profile ministry.

He was replaced by Claude Bechard.

M. Mulclair, whose removal as environment minister followed a number of disagreements with Quebec Premier Jean Charest, told the *Montreal Gazette* the premier had "taken him to task" about his fight with Coca Cola.

He said the premier made it clear he (the premier) spoke for the government and didn't want to read about such issues in the newspapers.

## Stewardship Ontario releases annual report, 2005 payment details

Stewardship Ontario has issued its annual report for 2005.

In addition to the usual financial data and updates on SO activities for the year, the 70-page report includes

stewards' fees for 2003-2006, details of market development projects, updates on the Canadian Newspapers Association/Ontario Community Newspapers Association in-kind advertising program and a summary of projects approved under the Effectiveness & Efficiency Fund.

Also included are generation and recovery information for each material grouping. Newspapers and magazines top the list at 514,530 tonnes generated and 387,840 tonnes recovered (75.4%), while 39,803 tonnes (18%) of plastics were recovered from the 221,700 tonnes generated.

The report is available on the Stewardship Ontario website ([www.stewardshipontario.ca](http://www.stewardshipontario.ca)).

Stewardship Ontario has also released details of payments to municipalities in 2005.

Payments ranged from \$299 for the Township of Kerns, to \$9,859,825 for the City of Toronto. Total 2005 steward payments were \$51,284,588.

## EPR CONFERENCE Service fees versus taxes

By Clarissa Morawski,  
Principal, CM Consulting

In March, the City of Calgary was host to the fourth National Workshop on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) presented by Environment Canada and Alberta Environment. Every two years delegates from across Canada, the United States and Europe are invited to participate in an two-day event that seeks to get to the heart of the issues that surround EPR.

This year's agenda did not present overviews of existing stewardship programs in Canada. Instead, there was a series of panels to discuss what seem to be the most highly-debated issues surrounding EPR: financing, measuring performance, and design for environment.

In general, there was consensus that the existing model throughout most of Canada, where collective agencies that take on the legal obligation for

stewards, does not seem to have a direct impact on design for environment. It was agreed that other factors need to be a part of the program like procurement, performance standards, and reporting and monitoring guidelines.

As usual, there was great debate over financing, with a particularly interesting presentation from Robert Seidel, a lawyer with Davis & Company. Mr. Seidel reviewed the potential legal ramifications around the issue of "service fees" versus "taxes".

He said that this is burning issue today, especially with the additional pressure of the Consumer Association of Canada's lawsuit relating to the use of front consumer fees and unclaimed deposits from the beverage container program in British Columbia.

Proceedings from the workshop will be posted on the Alberta Environment web site soon ([www.environment.gov.ab.ca](http://www.environment.gov.ab.ca)).

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# Beverage container stewardship to move from LDB to industry in BC

The British Columbia Liquor Distribution Branch's (LDB) is to transfer its existing empty beverage container product stewardship responsibilities to industry.

Since a new beverage container stewardship regulation was enacted by the Ministry of Environment (MOE) in 1998, the LDB has chosen to handle product stewardship responsibilities for suppliers of beverage alcohol containers sold in non-refillable glass, plastic and bag-in-box containers.

The board says the beverage container stewardship system has grown to the point where it feels "it is no longer appropriate or necessary" to assume product stewardship responsibilities on behalf of industry.

The plan is to transfer LDB stewardship responsibilities to industry before October 2006, when the MOE requires new or amended product

stewardship plans to be submitted.

The LDB has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a consultant to assist the LDB in this initiative. The consultant was to consult with the various stakeholder groups, including

industry associations and based on these consultations was to develop an appropriate implementation plan.

A conference call for industry representatives was to be held in mid-April to discuss the LDB's plans.

## Despite lobbying, New Brunswick stewardship bill awaits third reading

New Brunswick product stewardship legislation (Bill 15) is awaiting its third reading in the legislature.

In the meantime, industry is lobbying Environment Minister Trevor Holder on the "visible fee" issue.

Three groups, CSR, the Retail Council of Canada, and the Food & Consumer Products of Canada, have written a joint letter to Minister Holder asking him to alter Bill 15's new product stewardship legislation. The way it is currently written, the bill would prohibit separate stewardship fees on bills.

The letter notes that in Alberta and British Columbia recycling and recovery fees are "directly traceable to actual packaging and product recycling costs."

A program that does not have these fees visible in New Brunswick "will impair consumer awareness of the recovery/recycling costs for designated products and packaging, thereby

reducing consumer compliance," the letter states.

Bill 15, an Act to amend the Clean Environment Act, received first reading December 9 and its second reading December 13. It would establish a stewardship board in New Brunswick that "shall make arrangements and enter into agreements and contracts, raise revenues, charge fees and finance its undertakings, deal with property, engage and pay personnel, establish its rules of procedure for meetings and the conduct of its business and affairs, manage a designated material and otherwise be established and act in accordance with the regulations."

As mentioned, the legislation also prohibits industry from charging separate fees to consumers with respect to the costs associated with implementing and operating a product stewardship plan.

The legislature resumed after its winter break on March 28.

At press time, Bill 15 was scheduled for consideration with several other bills in the committee of the whole.

## Manitoba plans new tire program

Manitoba is planning to strengthen its tire stewardship program with a new regulation under The Waste Reduction and Prevention (WRAP) Act.

The new regulation will require the tire industry to develop a plan to manage all scrap tires in the province. Public comments will then be sought on the industry plan.

## If you get *PPSReview* via your fax machine, you really should read this...

Please note, in an effort to save paper, group faxing of this newsletter will be discontinued later this year. The email version will however still be available—see below. If you are unable to receive email, please call (519) 823-1188 and we will fax you the newsletter directly.

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## Split WDO vote okays changes to blue box funding formula

Changes coming from the Blue Box Program Plan (BBPP) Funding Formula Review undertaken by Stewardship Ontario were presented to the Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) Board, March 22.

The recommendations were revised from those presented at the February 14, 2006, public consultation meeting based on feedback received after the meeting.

### **CPIA OPPOSES CHANGES**

The Canadian Plastics Industry Association (CPIA) does not support the changes, particularly the disaggregation of plastics steward fees, claiming they will have “negative commercial and economic ramifications for both stewards and suppliers of plastic packaging.”

In a submission dated February 27, CPIA argues the very nature of certain plastic packaging and the qualities needed to keep food fresh (thus reducing waste), for example, mean it will never be easily recyclable.

“These stewards are being financially penalized for advancing the first R—reduction of waste,” wrote CPIA President and CEO Serge Lavoie.

He also notes having fees on plastic packaging three to four times higher than the alternative materials may drive stewards from a plastic package that is recyclable to a package that is not recyclable but has a lower fee.

CPIA urged Stewardship Ontario to base 2007 fees on the existing funding formula and retain one fee for plastics. The review should be deferred and be part of the five-year review of the Waste Diversion Act.

### **PPEC VERY DISTURBED**

The changes to the fees upset the Paper and Paperboard Packaging Environmental Council (PPEC), which immediately wrote to the WDO Board urging it to send the package back to Stewardship Ontario for further revision.

The recommendations in their current form are “an entirely new proposal” notes PPEC Executive Director John Mullinder. PPEC had strongly supported the proposals presented at the February 14 meeting and is “very disturbed” at the “last minute” changes to wording and implementation of plastic steward levies.

Technical changes and general policy recommendations were approved as presented at the February 14 meeting.

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario supports a formula change that shifts the onus for managing low recovery and poor market packaging to those materials through higher fees. The shift will provide an incentive to develop “more and better markets” said AMO in its March 1 submission.

After much discussion about the challenges face by plastic steward and the need to improve markets for non-PET and HD plastics, the WDO Board accepted the recommendations as presented by Stewardship Ontario, although there

## COMING EVENTS

### **April 25 - 27**

East Coast Environmental Conference  
(Nova Scotia Association of Waste Reduction Coordinators & the Nova Scotia Environmental Industry Association)  
Halifax, NS  
(902) 464-7739

### **April 26 - 29**

24th Annual Northwestern Ontario Municipal Conference  
Thunder Bay, ON  
(807) 626-0155

### **May 3 - 5**

Ontario Small Urban Municipalities Conference  
Leamington, ON  
(519) 393-5877

### **May 10 - 12**

Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Conference  
Blind River, ON  
[www.fonom.org](http://www.fonom.org)

### **May 31- June 2**

Recycling Council of British Columbia  
32nd Annual Conference and Exhibition  
Kamloops BC  
(604) 984-6455  
[www.rcbc.bc.ca](http://www.rcbc.bc.ca)

### **June 1**

Ontario Recyclers Workshop  
(WDO, AMO and SO)  
Ottawa, ON  
(416) 594-3456  
[www.stewardshipontario.ca/funding/ee/orw\\_main.htm](http://www.stewardshipontario.ca/funding/ee/orw_main.htm)

was split vote. Six directors supported the motion; one was opposed and four abstained.

A summary of the comments from the review can be found on the Stewardship Ontario website ([www.stewardshipontario.ca/pdf/consultation/workshop\\_14feb2006/Feb14\\_consultation\\_comments.pdf](http://www.stewardshipontario.ca/pdf/consultation/workshop_14feb2006/Feb14_consultation_comments.pdf)).

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# Opinion Piece

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

## What's in a name; who's in the game?

by Jay Arthur

One of the two worst-kept secrets in the corridors of Queen's Park nowadays is that Ontario's Minister of the Environment is about to declare that household hazardous waste (HHW) is "designated" under the Waste Diversion Act.

You can just imagine how thrilled the good folks at the Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) Board will be to hear the news. They are already carrying the financial burden of three floundering "designees".

Tires and oil programs are mired by a combination of infighting and incineration politics, and electronics is... well, just mired. (What is taking so long?)

Anyway, all this miring means no money is coming in from the industry funding organizations (IFOs) that were supposed to pay for WDO's day-to-day operations. And this leads us nicely to the second worst-kept secret in those hallowed corridors: the fact that WDO needs bailing out again.

You can't blame them. Given the way this whole Waste Diversion Act system was set up, this kind of financial mess was almost inevitable. Did anyone honestly think it would be easy to develop and sell diversion programs for oil and tires?

So it is hoped that if the Minister does indeed designate HHW she will do something to clear the log-jam on the three orphans.

The tire plan process has been like watching a bad soap opera from Day One, and has been, frankly, a bit embarrassing for the Province, not to mention the WDO board, I imagine. Had the WDO finances been better, perhaps the board would have been a little less ready to rubber stamp a plan

that was clearly flawed from the start. Not that showing a ministerial green light to the Lafarge tire-burning application has helped. But you can't blame the WDO folks for that either.

And give them credit, they did turn the first oil plan down.

Maybe oil will come back as part of the HHW plan, as some have urged.

**"..... the next time you see a child about to pour paint thinners into his orange juice, I have a feeling the word "special" is not likely to be part of the conversation as you seek to educate the him about why that particular cocktail mix is not a good idea."**

The big questions on everyone's mind are what she would actually call it and who would be the IFO if the Minister did designate HHW.

Many of the producers of household products that are deemed as potentially hazardous have taken to describing them as "special", as in household special waste. Given that "special" is not a term one readily associates with hazard this seems to run contrary to the whole notion of advising the public to be careful.

And the next time you see a child about to pour paint thinners into his orange juice, I have a feeling the word "special" is not likely to be part of the conversation as you seek to educate him about why that particular cocktail mix is not a good idea.

But the move to the name change has been very successful, and many municipalities are even using the euphemism. It will be interesting to see how the Minister terms these products if the designation rumours are true.

There is no obvious group of HHW stewards so the question of who becomes the IFO looms large. Many of

the HHW stewards are already stewards for blue box materials.

Certainly, CSR has been positioning itself for the HHW IFO job and after getting the nod on electronics with no previous experience in the field, is likely quite confident that a three-peat is on the cards.

The existing relationships with many of the HHW stewards would be a big plus and if it can't find the expertise amongst the existing 22 Stewardship Ontario staff, CSR can always buy it. Indeed, a job posting for a Program Implementation Support Manager last month sought someone to "provide technical support in the area of management of other

waste streams and other stewardship programs for example, the management of household hazardous waste (HHW) and waste electronics products."

Also lurking in the shadows is another organization: the British Columbia-based Product Care, with lots of experience in managing HHW programs and less of the baggage that CSR brings to the table for Ontario municipalities.

Whoever gets the job, let's hope to heaven that the Minister can offer the WDO board some assurance that a plan can be developed (and approved) before the next financial crisis hits.

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