

# PPSReview

**MANAGING WASTE RESPONSIBLY**

**Product & Packaging  
Stewardship Review**

**An information service for municipal governments**

**Vol 8, Issue 3, June 2008**

AS LOBBYIST RETAINED

## Ontario minister says he'll review WEEE plan "quickly"

As of press time, the Waste Electrical and Electronic (WEEE) Program Plan for Ontario remains on Environment Minister John Gerretsen's desk, looking for a signature. It was submitted to the Minister in March after being approved by the board of Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO).

Speaking at the annual general meeting of Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) in Toronto, April 17, 2008, Minister Gerretsen said his ministry "will review the proposal and all the comments and we will do it quickly."

His remarks came just a few days

after it was revealed that the WDO had hired lobbyist Chris Benedetti to smooth the way for the WEEE plan.

Mr. Benedetti, who also acts for many of Ontario's largest companies (and thus stewards), including Sony, Procter & Gamble and Canadian Tire, as well as Refreshments Canada and Food & Consumer Products Canada (FCPC), is the chair of the Recycling Council of Ontario, which currently has a seat on the WDO board.

Refreshments Canada and FCPC each has a chair on the WDO board; P&G is on the board of Stewardship

Ontario, the blue box and Municipal Hazardous or Special Waste (MHSW) industry funding organizations (IFO); Canadian Tire has a seat on Ontario Tire Stewardship, the moribund tire IFO, and Sony has a seat on Ontario Electronic Stewardship (OES), the electronics IFO.

The WEEE plan was posted for comments on the Environmental Registry, with a closing date for comments of May 9.

On April 7, WDO, OES and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario wrote to Premier McGuinty "encouraging the Government of Ontario to give [the plan] your full support."

See WEEE page 3/8

## Tires: more indications Ontario will act

A couple of days after the March issue of *PPSReview* noted tire stewardship may be back on the table in what is now John Gerretsen's office, the *Toronto Star* ran a story to the same effect and later at the Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) annual general meeting, April 17, 2008, the Ontario Environment Minister himself confirmed it.

In a curious *mea culpa* speech acknowledging the delays in moving ahead with other plans, including the tire plan, Minister Gerretsen said his ministry "will not leave you hanging as we have in the past."

The Province, he said, will "move aggressively" on the program.

"If a program comes in, we will deliver this time," suggesting he will be looking for a new plan and not reviewing the largely discredited plan approved by the WDO board in September 2004. (It will take a formal program request letter from his office to settle the issue—*editor.*)

Minister Gerretsen said he understands if there is "a certain amount of cynicism" over the tire issue.

"You can place the blame right on us."

### **INSIDE THIS EIGHT-PAGE ISSUE**

<b>News in brief</b>	<b>2/8</b>
<b>PEI can-ban lifted</b>	<b>4/8</b>
<b>Green Keys in ON</b>	<b>6/8</b>
<b>Saskatchewan WEEE</b>	<b>7/8</b>
<b>Jay Arthur</b>	<b>8/8</b>

# Briefly...

## TRASH ROBOT GREETES PHILIPS SHAREHOLDERS

Shareholders attending a meeting for Philips, one of the world's largest manufacturers of electronic devices, were greeted by a 26-foot (8 m) tall robot made from electronic trash at a meeting in Amsterdam in early April. The trash robot was made by the environmental group Greenpeace to protest Philips' stance on waste. Greenpeace also hoisted a banner reading "Philips: simply take back and recycle" on the building where the meeting was taking place. Greenpeace argues that the company should be responsible for managing their own e-waste. Executives at Philips have stated that part of the responsibility for managing e-waste should lie with consumers and governments. They also pointed out that Philips is the leader in the Dow Jones sustainability index for personal and household goods.

*Resource Recovery Forum, April 8, 2008*  
[www.resourcesnotwaste.org](http://www.resourcesnotwaste.org)

## BOTTLED WATER NOW IN GLASS

Cedar Springs, a Horseshoe Valley area water bottler from Ontario, is now providing its products in 11-litre refillable glass bottles. Each bottle, which fits on a standard water cooler, has a \$10 deposit. In a recent advertisement in the *Globe and Mail*, the company claims that glass is the "safest and most durable food grade material available." Municipalities have been struggling to deal with the oversized 15-litre PET water bottles that have appeared in the Ontario marketplace in the past couple of years. The bottles are too large for most curbside recycling systems and often end up in the residue stream.

*Cedar Springs Water, May 2008*  
[www.cedarspringswater.ca](http://www.cedarspringswater.ca)

## COMBATting CLIMATE CHANGE WITH BAGS FROM TEA LEAVES

Japanese green tea and tea beverage manufacturer ITO EN, Ltd. and its partner, packaging manufacturer Pack Corp., have developed a new type of paper bag. The bag is made from used tea leaves left over from ITO EN's manufacturing process. The companies claim the used tea leaves are an untapped material that absorbs and fixes carbon dioxide.

*Japan for Sustainability, April 8, 2008*  
[www.japanfs.org/db/2034-e](http://www.japanfs.org/db/2034-e)

## AND IF PAPER BAGS AREN'T YOUR CUP OF TEA, TRY THIS...

The Instituto de Agroquímica y Tecnología de Alimentos (IATA), Spain, is developing nanotechnology-based materials for packaging. One of the projects researchers at IATA are working on looks to use chitosan, an antibacterial polysaccharide found in crustacean shells, as a protective film to prevent food spoilage. The film would be much thinner than a human hair. Extracts from plants and fruits are also being examined. The ultimate goal for IATA is to develop natural solutions to food packaging that keep plastics biodegradable.

*Plastic Industry News, May 16, 2008*  
[www.prw.com](http://www.prw.com)

## UK HOUSEHOLDS THROW AWAY ONE THIRD OF ALL FOOD PURCHASED

Government waste experts in the UK surveyed the garbage of 2,100 homes and found that one third of all food purchased is thrown away – 4.4 million apples alone are thrown out each day. The study projects that 6.7 million tonnes of food worth £3 billion (\$5.9 billion CDN) is thrown out annually, 40% of it fruit and vegetables. In addition to the physical waste, the carbon generated through growing, shipping and packaging the food is considerable, amounting to 18 million tonnes of carbon per year. According to the Waste and Resources Action Program (WRAP), the main reason for throwing out food is that it goes bad before it is consumed. As part of its Love Food Hate Waste campaign, WRAP is encouraging people to consider how much food they buy and how best to store it. For example, WRAP reports that half of all Britons store fruits at room temperature rather than refrigerating it to extend its lifespan. The full report is available at [www.wrap.org.uk](http://www.wrap.org.uk).

*Resource Recovery Forum, April 11, 2008*  
[www.resourcesnotwaste.org](http://www.resourcesnotwaste.org)

## NEW WEBSITE FOR SO

Stewardship Ontario (SO) launched its revamped website in early May. The site has been redesigned to feature two major sections — one for Municipal Hazardous or Special Waste and one for the Blue Box Program. The Recyclers' Knowledge Network website has also changed. Stewardship Ontario hopes the update will make the site easier to navigate

([www.stewardshipontario.ca](http://www.stewardshipontario.ca)).

**Product & Packaging Stewardship Review** is published by Ben Bennett Communications as part of the Fair Comment Project. It is emailed as a communications service aimed at providing a broad range of stewardship and associated information from Canada, the United States and overseas.

The current and past issues of PPSReview 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.

© Ben Bennett Communications, 2008

NOTICE: THIS PUBLICATION, AND THE VIEWS EXPRESSED, HAVE NO CONNECTION WITH THE ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL RECYCLING COORDINATORS OF GUELPH, ONTARIO.

**PPS  
Review  
June  
2008**

**Page 2/8**

# BC adds mercury-containing items, thermostats to its stewardship list

The Province of British Columbia intends to add mercury-containing light bulbs and thermostats, and expand the electronic products included in the product stewardship program. The Recycling Regulation of 2004 makes producers responsible for the lifecycle management of their products.

## No mention of recyclers' concerns in WEEE letter

*Continued from Page 1/8*

The organizations say the proposed WEEE plan will successfully encourage the reuse of products where feasible and ensure non-reusable items are diverted from landfill to recycling. The authors state the process included extensive stakeholder review, public comment and "prudent" revision to address identified concerns.

Not mentioned in the letter are the ongoing concerns of companies currently recycling electronics (as reported in the January 2008 edition of *PPSReview*).

In a March 19, 2008, letter to Sean DeVries, President of OES, Robert Brodie of Computer Recyclers Inc. of Ottawa states that, "If allowed to become law, the WEEE program will put many of the currently established processors out of business."

In his letter Mr. Brodie claims that the \$165 per tonne incentive fee paid from the program, and the way in which processors are selected and material is to be processed, will put his company in the position of being unable to operate profitably.

For more information on the WEEE plan see [www.ontario.electronicstewardship.ca](http://www.ontario.electronicstewardship.ca).

*(For Jay Arthur's take on the lobbying issue see Page 8/8.)*

In a press release dated April 24, the Province says that Ministry staff will start working with industry and other stakeholders to determine the scope and to define the products to be included. BC Environment Deputy Minister Joan Hesketh said it is "expected" that the electronics added will include telephones, fax machines, cell phones and other hand-held devices.

Manufacturers will develop and implement their own product stewardship programs to comply with the changes to the regulation. These programs should be ready for public comment in 2009.

Metro Vancouver held a symposium, Next Steps for Packaging Waste Management and Producer Responsibility in BC, at the end of May. The purpose of the symposium was to document the views of the participants on the scope and objectives of extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging, following indications there be more information on government action on packaging in the near future.

Public policy tools and incentives to promote packaging waste prevention and design for recycling were also to be discussed.

## Temporary e-waste depots for Manitobans again this year

Manitoba will host a second year of temporary e-waste recycling collection points. From May to November, Manitobans will be able to drop off TVs, VCRs, cell phones and more at depots across the province at no charge. All items collected through the program will be recycled.

In an April 22 press release, Science, Technology, Energy and Mines Minister Jim Rondeau said, "The e-waste initiative is a service that was well received by Manitobans last year, and the public demand for drop-off points that will ensure electronics are recycled in a free-of-charge, environmentally safe manner is growing."

The Minister went on say the temporary depots support the long-term plans for an industry-lead, sustainable management program for residential and commercial electronic waste. Minister Rondeau indicated that the required product stewardship regulation under the Waste Reduction and Prevention (WRAP) Act would be introduced later this year.

Work on the e-waste regulations began as far back as 2002 with the Electronic Product Stewardship of

Manitoba pilot project. The draft guidelines for the Electrical and Electronic Stewardship Regulation were posted in 2007, with comments accepted until November 13 of that year.

As drafted, initially industry will be required to provide a system for recovering rechargeable batteries; televisions; computers, monitors and printers; personal digital assistants and other similar hand-held devices; cellular and other telephones; microwave ovens; and parts and components for any of these items. After the first year of the program, the list would expand to include VCRs; DVD players; digital and video cameras; and other items.

For more information visit [www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/pollutionprevention](http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/pollutionprevention).

**PPS  
Review  
June  
2008  
Page 3/8**

# Prince Edward Island lifts long-standing “can-ban”

As of May 3, 2008, Prince Edward Islanders can legally purchase carbonated beverages in non-refillable containers. A deposit-return system will now apply to all beverage containers sold on the island, except

## LCBO to ban bags

The Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) has announced it will no longer carry plastic bags once existing supplies are exhausted.

The LCBO is following the lead of Nova Scotia, where there are plans to phase out plastic bags this fall. Quebec liquor stores are planning to do the same in 2009.

The LCBO announcement was quickly followed by a statement from the Canadian Plastics Industry Association (CPIA), describing the LCBO move as “a political decision, not a decision based on science.”

“We’re tremendously disappointed,” said Serge Lavoie, CPIA President and CEO.

In the meantime, four months after banning plastic bags, many retailers in Huntingdon, Quebec, are saying customers aren’t missing them, according to an April 21, 2008, Canadian Press article.

The IGA in Huntingdon has seen 82% of people bringing their own bags, while 18% use paper bags. The general manager says after a few weeks of having customers complain about the ban, many are now saying that using reusable bags is more convenient.

Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, was the first Canadian community to ban plastic bags. A year later, the mayor reports that most people forgot they ever had disposable bags. The trend to banning or restricting the distribution of plastic bags is spreading across towns and cities in Canada and around the world.

those for dairy, milk substitutes and nutritional supplements.

In an April 15 press release, George Webster, the Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry, says, “There has been a strong consumer demand over the years for beverages sold in a variety of types of container — metal, plastic, glass or carton.”

Minister Webster goes on to say, “This system allows those containers to be available while giving the consumers and incentive to bring the container back for recycling.”

Consumers will pay a 10-cent deposit on each container purchased, and will receive a 5-cent refund when the container is returned to one of ten licensed depots across the province. A higher deposit of 20-cents (with a 10-cent refund) will be charged on alcohol containers over 500 ml in size.

The difference in the deposit-refund will be split into two pots. Two-and-a-half-cents will go to fund the administration of deposit-return system.

## Manitoba grocers see decline in plastic bag use

Major grocery chains in Manitoba have dropped their orders for plastic bags in the first half of 2008.

A survey by the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD) found that their member stores, including stores of major chains such as Safeway, Sobeys and Superstore, dropped bag orders by 5% in the first five months of 2008.

In an interview with CBC News on May 13, 2008, Justin Sherwood, CCGD’s western vice-president, said that a “large percentage” of the decline could be attributed to consumers using reusable bags. He reported that similar declines in plastic bag use are being seen across the country.

In the interview, Mr. Sherwood goes on to argue for a comprehensive approach for reducing bags, including reducing bag use and providing facilities for consumers to recycle plastic bags.

The remaining funds will support environmental projects, including pollution prevention and watershed protection.

The system was modeled after existing deposit-return programs in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The ministry states that, “harmonization [among the provinces] is important to prevent cross border shipment of empty containers to get a refund when no deposit was paid.”

The system is being administered under contract by Encorp PEI. System operation and the running of the container recycling depots is also being contracted to private companies.

PEI expects the system to manage 50 million recyclable containers and 18 million refillable containers each year. Monthly, an average Islander will pay about \$3.00 in deposit and get back \$1.50 in refunds.

For more information visit [www.beveragecontainers.pe.ca](http://www.beveragecontainers.pe.ca).

He calls on municipalities to provide facilities for recycling bags.

A recent study of plastic film recycling in Ontario has concluded that promoting in-store programs can lead to higher recovery, better material quality and lower costs. The *Plastic Film Collection and Processing Study* was conducted by the Association of Municipal Recycling Coordinators (AMRC). The report is available on the AMRC website ([www.amrc.ca](http://www.amrc.ca)).

**PPS  
Review  
June  
2008**

**Page 4/8**

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Canada needs comprehensive EPR “to catch all the rabbits”

By Carol Suhan

Several months ago an opinion piece (To Catch A Rabbit... in *PPSReview* January 2008, and subsequently reproduced in *Solid Waste & Recycling* magazine) endorsed an extended producer responsibility (EPR) program designed specifically for “household cleaners and detergents” packaging.

I read the article with great interest – and some unease. As a municipal employee charged with regional solid waste management, I feel that a market segmented approach could create real challenges for citizens and local governments alike.

Specifically, I am concerned that the piecemeal approach to EPR for packaging would do nothing to reduce municipal recycling program costs and could potentially alienate the public. Like other municipal waste managers I work with, I believe that unless all packaging, or at least all of one material type such as glass, is included in a new EPR program, no savings result.

### **MOST IMPORTANT**

Although saving municipalities money – taking waste management costs off the tax bill – is one of the most important objectives of EPR programs, it is not the only one. Research and experience has shown unequivocally that convenience for the customer and program simplicity is critical for successful collection programming.

Municipal staffs therefore, support EPR for **all packaging** and creating a simple, easy to use collection system. (This is in fact the approach that seems to be in favour at the BC Ministry of Environment that will in time probably roll out a

process for arriving at that point.) With comprehensive recyclables collection programs in place, it would be a relatively simple matter for stewards to assume responsibility for existing contracts or municipal operations without any disruption in service to the public.

Adequate language in stewardship plans can protect existing levels of service and even provide for improvements in currently underserved areas. Based on existing costs, this EPR approach would save the Regional District of Central Okanagan (largely urban, population 170,000) about \$1.2 million annually and the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (largely

**“...the piecemeal approach to EPR for packaging would do nothing to reduce municipal recycling program costs and could potentially alienate the public.”**

rural, population 32,000) over \$500,000 annually.

The municipal representatives also believe that the piecemeal approach would be confusing to the public and could result in creating a negative attitude towards EPR in general. I suspect that most people would be unwilling to drive or carry recyclable materials to a collection point when those same materials are already being collected at curbside.

### **MAJOR DIFFERENCE**

There is a major difference between establishing an EPR program for products that were not readily recyclable, such as electronics, and changing a system (curbside or depot recycling) that has been strongly promoted for decades. There is no question that a move away from convenient recycling programs would be disastrous for resource recovery.

This is particularly true if there is no financial incentive to drive behavioural change. Even when there is a financial incentive, as exists with the beverage container deposit/refund system, many people still place containers in the municipally funded recycling system. (In the Central Okanagan about \$30,000 worth of refundable containers were placed in the curbside collection program in 2007.) And that occurs in spite of the fact that the deposit/return system predates both EPR and curbside recycling as a management technique.

### **TOO LARGE A CATEGORY**

One may also argue that packaging is simply too large a category to be effectively brought under a single EPR program. But I would counter that if WDO can figure it out, if only within the constraints of 50% compensation, then it should be a simple matter to do the exercise with 100% financing as the objective.

Establishing a comprehensive EPR program for all packaging is feasible. If you don't round up all the rabbits at once there will always be more to catch.

*Carol Suhan is with the Regional Waste Reduction Office of the Regional District of Central Okanagan, BC. Carol is also a director with the Recycling Council of BC (RCBC) and co-chairs the BC Product Stewardship Council.*

**PPS  
Review  
June  
2008  
Page 5/8**

## AS MHSW PLAN ABOUT TO LAUNCH

# Ontario municipal recyclers see red over new Green Key

As the finishing touches are being put in place for the July 1 roll-out of the Municipal Hazardous and Special (MHSW) Waste Program Plan, Ontario municipal recyclers are asking the Province to take action on Coleman Canada's Green Key.

The key, when inserted into a 466-mL propane cylinder, keeps the valve open, which would vent any remaining gas into the atmosphere.

In a letter to Premier Dalton McGuinty, Sherry Arcaro, Chair of the Association of Municipal Recycling Coordinators calls on the Province to direct Coleman Canada to remove the Green Key from the store shelves "until an assessment of the environmental implications of venting propane, and the impacts on residents' and workers' health and safety can be conducted —

at Coleman's expense."

The municipal recyclers are concerned over what they perceive to be an attempt by Coleman to move a material designated under the MHSW plan into the blue box system.

The letter outlines specific concerns with the practice of home-venting the cylinders. These include:

- safety of venting gases into homes
- environmental and climate concerns over venting what could potentially be a large amount of propane into the atmosphere
- improperly vented cylinders being sent to a material recycling facility, which could lead to explosions as the cylinders move through balers
- continuing concerns with partially used propane cylinders being left in parks and conservation areas.

At the conclusion of the letter, the AMRC chair urges the Province to investigate a system for recovering propane cylinders at the point of purchase, in keeping with the accessibility enhancements called for in the MHSW program plan.

In the meantime, Stewardship Ontario has been working on the nuts and bolts of rolling-out the MHSW program plan. In April, Stewardship Ontario held information forums for municipalities and transporters and processors. Rules for stewards in 2008/2009 have been posted on Stewardship Ontario's website. Also posted is a draft Municipal MHSW Shared Responsibility Agreement.

Visit [www.stewardshipontario.ca](http://www.stewardshipontario.ca) for more information.

## Industry associations to pick reps jointly for new-look WDO board of directors

The industry associations will decide who gets five of the seats on the new-look Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) board, and they have been asked to send in their choices between June 23 and July 11.

On May 2, WDO Chair Gemma Zecchini wrote to 14 industry groups, most of whom are already involved in the WDO board and/or committees, to appoint their nominees jointly, but how they do it is up to them.

They are the Food & Consumer Product Manufacturers of Canada, the Retail Council of Canada, Canada's National Brewers, the Canadian Newspaper Association, the Canadian Consumer Specialty Products Association, the Canadian Paint and Coatings Association, the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors, Refreshments Canada, the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers, the Rubber Association of Canada, the Ontario Tire Dealers Association, the

Ontario Community Newspapers Association, Electronics Product Stewardship Canada, and the Canadian Hardware and Housewares Manufacturers Association of Canada.

In addition to the list of nominees, the associations are asked to specify how any of them "may be subsequently removed and replaced." They are also urged to sign a non-disclosure agreement. The aim is to have the new directors approved at the WDO's July 23 meeting.

Environment Minister John Gerretsen made some slight changes to WDO's new-look board proposal submitted in January.

In April of this year, Minister Gerretsen approved a new WDO board of 16 members:

- 5 representatives from a revised list of industry associations
- 1 municipal representative from the City of Toronto
- 3 municipal representatives from

northern, southern and rural Ontario (appointed by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Regional Public Works Commissioner of Ontario)

- 1 representative appointed by the Recycling Council of Ontario and the Ontario Environment Network
- 1 senior representative from the Ministry of the Environment
- 5 representatives appointed by the Minister to "represent the public interest"

**PPS  
Review  
June  
2008**

**Page 6/8**

## A SWEEPing success in Saskatchewan

More than 3 million pounds of waste electronics have been collected in the inaugural year of the Saskatchewan Waste Electronic Equipment Program (SWEEP).

The Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council reports that since February 1, 2007, 32,500 computers, 40,000 monitors and 46,500 keyboards and mice have been collected. Printers, laptops and televisions are also collected in SWEEP. The waste electronics are returned to SARCAN recycling depots (where beverage recyclables are returned for deposits). They are then disassembled into their component materials, which are sent for recycling.

SWEEP is a non-profit corporation established by manufacturers, retailers and other stakeholders. The program is funded by environmental handling fees paid on the purchase of new electronic equipment.

For more information, visit [www.sweepit.ca](http://www.sweepit.ca).

## CCME releases tool to evaluate products for EPR programs

Continuing in its work on extended producer responsibility (EPR), the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) have released an evaluation tool and guidance document to help companies prioritize products for EPR.

The evaluation tool, an Excel spreadsheet, asks users to consider a series of questions (criteria) for each of the products they are considering as part of an EPR program. The tool is designed to be flexible, allowing unique circumstances to be included. The tool can be used to determine whether or not an EPR program would suit a product (or family of products) and can help prioritize among a list of candidate products.

The accompanying guidance document outlines a process for identifying priority candidates for an EPR program.

Both the evaluation tool and guidance document are available for free download on the CCME's website ([www.ccme.ca](http://www.ccme.ca), under "products").

## Campbell director of blue box efficiency fund

Andy Campbell is the new Managing Director of Ontario's Blue Box Continuous Improvement Fund (CIF), which replaces the current Effectiveness and Efficiency Fund. The announcement was made on April 24 by Waste Diversion Ontario, Stewardship Ontario and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

In his new position, Mr. Campbell will work with municipalities to identify and implement best practices for blue box waste diversion and develop new capital infrastructure. He will also work with industry to develop new markets. The CIF is expected to invest \$40 million over the next three years. Mr. Campbell can be contacted at [andycampbell@wdo.ca](mailto:andycampbell@wdo.ca).

## COMING EVENTS

### June 10—12

MWIN Annual General Meeting  
Niagara Falls, ON  
(519) 620-9654  
[www.mwin.org](http://www.mwin.org)

### June 25—27

Recycling Council of British Columbia Conference  
Vancouver, BC  
(604) 683-6009  
[www.rcbc.bc.ca](http://www.rcbc.bc.ca)

### August 24—27

Association of Municipalities of Ontario Conference  
Ottawa, Ontario  
(416) 971-9856 ext. 330  
[www.amo.on.ca](http://www.amo.on.ca)

### September 10—12

Ontario East Municipal Conference  
Kingston, Ontario  
(613) 925-1498  
[www.omec.ca](http://www.omec.ca)

### September 17—19

Composting Council of Canada National Conference  
Château Mont-Sainte-Anne, Quebec  
(416) 535-0240  
[www.compost.org](http://www.compost.org)

### September 22—26

Union of British Columbia Municipalities Convention  
Penticton, BC  
(604) 270-8226  
[www.civicnet.bc.ca](http://www.civicnet.bc.ca)

### October 8—10

Recycling Council of Alberta Conference  
Jasper, Alberta  
(403) 843-6563  
[www.recycle.ab.ca](http://www.recycle.ab.ca)

**PPS  
Review  
June  
2008**

**Page 7/8**

# Opinion Piece

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

## Any similarity to real life is entirely possible and not entirely coincidental

By Jay Arthur

About three years ago, the esteemed publisher of this illustrious piece of yellow journalism got a little hot under the collar about freedom of the press. He sent me to the bleachers and penned his own column based on the tried and trusted “publish and be damned” line.

Some members of the Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) board were concerned that the essence of their discussions was being published before they had formally approved the minutes, and the publisher felt obliged to point out that’s what the media does.

I am of course very sensitive to the peace of mind of the members of the WDO old boys’ and girls’ club, dwelling as they do in great comfort in their ivory tower. And to be fair, it is actually getting pretty crowded in the tower. In addition to the actual designated board members, there are the alternates, the guests and the observers, not to mention staff, mandolin players, acrobats and court jesters.

Henry the Eighth had the same issues, but the printing press was a relative newcomer, there was no Internet and he had some penalty clauses in his agreements that proved quite handy.

Not so in 2008. Most of what goes on at the WDO meetings is the stuff of legend long before the secretarial record is formally approved at subsequent gatherings.

It is all the more interesting therefore, that the latest little scandal to rock the royal court did not occur at a meeting but found its way into the media nevertheless, albeit briefly, courtesy of a mundane piece of provincial paperwork known as the lobbyists’ list.

Of course, any information on this (memos from senior staff, for example)

would be confidential so we can only hypothesize about the reasoning behind the hiring of certain individuals to perform certain tasks.

Let us, for the sake of argument, imagine what would happen if King Hal decided it would be nice to have some plan to manage the leftovers from the weekly jousting tournaments—broken lances, assorted armour, used stirrups, ladies’ scarves and the like.

He commands the dukes, earls and other nobles to come up with a plan, leaving his senior bureaucrat—in this case one Thomas Cranmer—to look after

**“Sussex of course is no stranger to the hallways of Hampden Court having been there on many occasions lobbying for others suitors...”**

the details. The nobles have done this kind of thing before and most of the players are old friends and enjoy a lot of mutual royal business.

They set to work, and before long they come up with the required plan, beautifully written on the finest parchment, and illuminated with great finesse by local monks.

You might think that having shown such faith in his advisers by honouring them with such a prestigious task, that would be enough to inspire confidence that their plan would find royal favour.

Cranmer, however, anxious to please His Majesty, and mindful of what happened to some of the previous holders of his office, takes it upon himself to retain the services of the Earl of Sussex to petition the king and his inner circle to ensure the plan is accepted.

Sussex of course is no stranger to the hallways of Hampden Court having

been there on many occasions lobbying for others suitors. (He could almost retire with the money he made from the Boleyn family.)

On this occasion, however, people are whispering that having Sussex wandering the corridors of power is not seemly.

As one of those appointed to come up with the waste jousting and tournament equipment (WJTE) plan—a plan that some of the smaller tournament service guilds feel is too slanted towards the McLancelots of this world—Sussex has a conflict of interest. He is well-

known for his McLancelot connections, not mention his work for the MegaTourney Compagnie.

So there is great excitement when a hastily scribbled epistle from Cranmer says it is *because* Sussex has worked for the companies that would be favoured

by the WJTE plan that he is the right man to lobby for it.

If the McLancelots also support the WJTE plan, then the interests of the knights appointed to develop the plan and this client are said to “align”.

This, as you can imagine, comes as great relief to the unwashed masses gathered outside the gates of the ivory tower, because they—ignorant peasants that there are—had thought the complete opposite.

As for what the nobles think, well, we’ll have to wait for the minutes.

**PPS  
Review  
June  
2008**

**Page 8/8**