



Questions & Answers regarding amendments to the Recycling Regulation and how that impacts implementation of a curbside collection program for recyclable materials:

1. What has the Regional District done to investigate the possibility of city wide curbside recycling services in Prince George?

The Regional District has recently completed work on exploring options to increase the diversion of recyclable materials from residential sources in the City of Prince George. The final report, *Enhancing Waste Diversion from the Prince George Residential Curbside Solid Waste Stream*, was based on the recommendations within the 2008 Regional Solid Waste Management Plan which suggested that a city wide curbside recycling program in Prince George could help reduce the amount of recyclable materials ending up in our landfills. A 2007 study found that roughly 50% of the waste disposed in our landfill is recyclable, so the introduction of a curbside collection service for recyclable materials would be a significant waste diversion tactic. The feasibility study concluded that an additional 6,290 tonnes of material could be diverted from residential sources but would require a capital investment of \$5.5 million dollars with an annual operating cost of \$2.7 million. The resulting cost to homeowners would be in the order of \$100 – 130 per household per year.

The feasibility study can be found through the following link:

<https://rdffg.civicweb.net/FileStorage/8A455F69499E4759ACF6E25E7B12926F-WorkspaceoKEPWFeasibilityStudyonEnhancingWasteDive.pdf>

2. What is the Regional District going to do about curbside recycling services right now?

While the feasibility study work was wrapping up, the Province amended the *Recycling Regulation* legislation to require the producers of packaging materials and printed paper products to be responsible for the end of life management of the products they create including the provision of collection and recycling services. This change is significant in that it shifts the responsibility for paying for and implementing waste diversion services from local governments to the private sector.

Going forward, we are uncertain what role, if any, local government may play in the future delivery of recycling services for packaging materials and printed paper products. We anticipate that this new initiative will be similar to existing stewardship programs for products such as beverage containers, tires, used oil, paints where local governments play a minor role in service delivery. Of course with this uncertainty it would not be prudent to make capital investments in collection equipment or enter into long-term contracts with recyclable material processors. So we will refrain from any decisions around enhancing existing services until the future of packaging and printed paper recycling is fully understood.

3. When will you know more about the implementation of these changes?

The regulation requires that the Producers prepare a Stewardship Plan by November of 2012 and that collection services be implemented by May 2014. The producers need to determine how they will fulfill their obligations under the regulation, and what type of collection system they will use and who their partners, if any, may be in the delivery of services. It is anticipated that all communities will receive some level of collection service for packaging materials and printed paper products.

We understand that the producers have initiated work on developing the Stewardship Plan. The Regulation requires that stakeholder consultations occur as a component of the Plan development. We expect these consultation sessions to commence this fall with local officials and recycling service providers participating in these sessions. We expect to know more about the implementation strategy by next November (2012).

Current products and materials covered under this regulation include beverage containers, tires, paints, used oil and electronics. For more information on the Province's stewardship regulation go to: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/recycling/>

4. What are the benefits of this regulatory change?

We see a number of benefits to this change including:

- An incentive that should result in a significant reduction in packaging materials used and entering the recycling and waste streams. Experience from other Stewardship initiatives has demonstrated that the private sector becomes more creative in product design and the types of materials used since they now have end-of-life responsibilities.
- We should see more materials being collected than what local government programs currently are able to collect due to the regulatory requirement of the private sector to do so and also due to a larger economy of scale that should be created with one entity responsible for province wide service delivery. As an example, the Regional District's program is based on a Market's First approach which means we will only collect materials that have a stable end market and are recycled into viable end products. There are a number of materials that don't fit this test and would not be collected under our program.
- Cost savings to local government through the following:
 - Recycling collection and processing services costs will be paid by the private sector
 - Less packaging waste in the solid waste stream which could result in savings for solid waste collection services
 - Waste reduction education and promotion initiatives will be delivered by the private sector.

5. Could something be introduced in the interim?

The implementation of a curbside program would require significant investment and implementation planning. Since our future role is uncertain it would not be prudent to invest time and energy in a system that may not be feasible or relevant in the long term. Fortunately we are in a good position without having made any capital investments or long-term contractual obligations.

6. What can I do in the meantime with my recyclable materials?

You can still make a significant contribution towards waste diversion by using one of the 15 different multi-material drop depots in the Prince George area or by retaining the services of an existing private curbside collection service. For more information on what and where to recycle refer to our website: http://www.rdffg.bc.ca/Services/Environment/Solid_waste/Recycling/Recycling_%20Locations_Brochure_2011.pdf and http://www.rdffg.bc.ca/Services/Environment/Solid_waste/Recycling/index.html

7. Does this mean curbside collection of recyclable materials will never happen in Prince George?

Absolutely not. Curbside collection has been identified as one of the most effective ways of decreasing the amount of materials going to the landfill that could be recycled. The challenge is that packaging materials and printed paper products make up a significant amount of the materials that would be collected in a curbside program. With the Province now shifting the responsibility of

collection and recycling of those materials to the producer, the volume of materials collected could be cut, and the cost of the collection of those materials is now the responsibility of the producer.

The level of collection service will be an important consultation issue for local governments and private individuals when industry solicits stakeholder input on its draft stewardship plan.

8. *What about compostable materials?*

The Regional Solid Waste Management Plan calls for the review of opportunities to collect, process and market yard & garden waste and food waste. This work is ongoing and the Board will be receiving recommendations in 2013.

9. *What happens now?*

Ministry of Environment is holding stakeholder meetings to discuss the changes. More meetings are expected to take place this fall. The program will come into effect in May of 2014.

10. *Where can I get more information about the amendment to the Recycling Regulation?*

On the web, at: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/recycling/>