

More Blue and Green for a better planet

by Regional Chair Gary Carr

Today, many of us are concerned about our environment and what we can do to help. One way we can all contribute is to reduce the amount of waste we generate in our homes by practicing the 3Rs – reduce, reuse and recycle.

In September 2007, Halton Regional Council approved changes to waste collection that will increase the amount of recycling and reduce the amount of garbage sent to Halton's landfill. These changes will help protect the environment, extend the life of our landfill, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create useful recycling and compost products.

The GreenCart

The most significant of these changes is the introduction of the GreenCart program to all homes in Halton in April 2008. The GreenCart is like a Blue Box for your kitchen scraps. It collects household food waste and compostable paper creating valuable compost material. Around 45 per cent of the average garbage bag in Halton contains food scraps and compostable paper. Compost is used in landscaping, agriculture and restoration projects.

The delivery of GreenCarts and Kitchen Catchers to residents will take place in March 2008 and weekly curbside collection will start on April 7, 2008. Delivered with the carts will be an information package to help use the GreenCart and answer questions you may have. For more information on the GreenCart visit www.halton.ca/greencart.

Blue Box materials can go in one container

Starting April 7, 2008, you can put all your recyclables in one Blue Box and will no longer have to separate them into two boxes. Currently glass, plastic, metal and polycoat (juice boxes and milk cartons) containers go in one Blue Box and acceptable paper materials in another.

Advances in technology and changes in the marketplace have allowed the Region to change the way of collecting and processing recycling materials, therefore pre-sorting is no longer necessary. In addition, plastic tubs and lids can be added to your Blue Box when the new collection takes effect.

What does this mean for your waste collection?

Effective April 7, 2008, the following changes will occur to waste collection:

- Implementation of a Region-wide GreenCart program with weekly collection to over 135,000 homes in Halton (currently a demonstration program in 5,000 homes)
- Weekly Blue Box Collection (currently every other week)
- Garbage collection every other week with a six-bag limit (currently weekly)

With the collection of your food scraps every week in your GreenCart, you'll find the amount of garbage decreases substantially. With the materials that can go into your Blue Box and GreenCart for recycling, your garbage will basically consist of items like plastic film, chip bags, granola bar wrappers and empty aerosol cans. Plus your garbage will have fewer odours because food materials, which contribute to odours, are collected weekly in the GreenCart.



Want to learn more?

In the coming months Halton will have information on the waste collection changes through advertising, community outreach and promotion. You can find more information on Halton waste management programs and services by visiting the website www.halton.ca/waste, or by calling 905-825-6000 or toll-free 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866).

Take it Back! comes to Halton



Take It Back! Halton encourages local businesses to "take back" many of the household materials they sell such as batteries and ensure these materials are reused, recycled or disposed of properly. The program promotes extended producer responsibility and is intended to promote the 3R's – reduce, reuse and recycle.

The program launched on October 31, 2007 with plastic shopping bags and will expand to include items such as batteries, car oil, compact fluorescent light bulbs, fertilizers, paints, pharmaceuticals, solvents, and thermostats.

Plastic shopping bags can be recycled into other products such as plastic lumber or plastic shopping bags.

If you are a resident looking for a list of participating retailers or if your business is interested in becoming a Take It Back! Halton partner, please visit www.halton.ca/takeitback for more information.

A plan to manage our waste

Blue Box and GreenCart collection are part of the 2006-2010 Solid Waste Management Strategy (SWMS), approved by Halton Regional Council in June 2006. The SWMS has a number of key components intended to protect and conserve the capacity of Halton's landfill site and divert 60 per cent of residential waste away from the landfill.

Halton's landfill is an important resource as it allows us to manage our residential garbage within our regional boundaries. Our landfill was expected to be full by 2023. The direction to reduce waste is a sustainable approach to waste management that will extend the landfill's life by another six to eight years and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The changes should help raise Halton's waste diversion rate to the target of 60 per cent from the current 43 per cent. We would like to thank all Halton residents for their enthusiastic participation in recycling.

You can view a copy of the 2006-2010 Solid Waste Management Strategy online at www.halton.ca/waste.

November Meetings at Halton Region Headquarters

Nov. 13, 9:30 a.m.	Health & Social Services Committee
Nov. 14, 9:30 a.m.	Planning & Public Works Committee
Nov. 14, 1:30 p.m.	Administration & Finance Committee
Nov. 21, 9:30 a.m.	Regional Council