

Consultation Paper
Solid Waste Resource
Management Strategy

Thinking outside the landfill. Thinking

Let's turn
what we waste
into what we want.




NOVA SCOTIA
Environment



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1. Thinking outside the landfill. Think

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30 Different Workouts

This paper is intended to provide Nova Scotians with an opportunity to give input on the development of a renewed Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy for Nova Scotia. The renewed strategy will ensure the province meets the waste reduction target set in the Nova Scotia Government Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act 2007 (EGSPA).

What is a 'renewed' strategy?

A renewed strategy is one that builds on our success. It means we will keep the programs that work and enhance those programs. We will also add new programs to continue to improve the way we manage our waste resources.

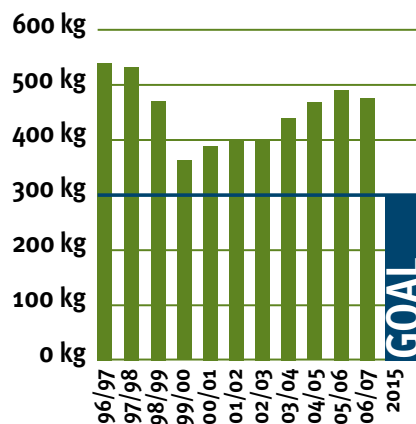
Nova Scotia leads Canada in solid waste resource management

In 1995, Nova Scotia created a Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy. Five years later, as a result of this strategy, we were the first province in Canada to cut in half the amount of waste we send to landfills. Nova Scotia continues to be recognized as a national and international leader in waste diversion with a disposal rate that is almost 50% lower than the Canadian average.

According to Genuine Progress Index (GPI) Atlantic, our waste management strategy creates benefits worth at least \$31 million a year. These include

- new businesses
- new jobs
- longer-lasting landfills
- energy and resource savings
- less air pollution including greenhouse gases

Disposal rate kg/person/yr



We can do better

Nova Scotia has set the most aggressive waste-reduction goal in Canada. Right now, each of us sends 477 kilograms of waste to our landfills every year. By 2015, we want to cut that number to 300 kilograms per person per year. That is a 37 per cent reduction in waste.

Why do we need to reduce waste?

Waste means we are not getting all we can out of our economic and natural resources. When we waste we

- rob ourselves of resources
- use up landfills quickly
- increase methane gas emissions
- contribute to climate change

Waste prevention and diversion programs like composting and recycling let us get the most out of our resources and protect our environment. When we reduce waste we

- put resources back into the economy
- make landfills last longer
- save energy
- cut greenhouse gas emissions

Nova Scotians need to work together

It will take the whole province, working together, to reach our waste-reduction goal. This is why we want your input. We need your knowledge and your ideas to help Nova Scotia reduce waste to no more than 300 kilograms per person per year.

This paper provides a starting point to think about ways to reduce solid waste. It includes

- guiding principles
- goals for a renewal strategy
- examples of what is already being done
- questions to guide your input

Consultation workshops will be held throughout the province to provide opportunity for interested stakeholders to discuss the future of solid waste management in Nova Scotia. If you would like to make a written submission send your comments to solidwastestrategy@gov.ns.ca before February 28th, 2009.

You can find a lot of information about our waste resource strategy in Nova Scotia Environment's Final Report on Nova Scotia's 1995 Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy: Not going to waste. www.gov.ns.ca/nse/waste/docs/SolidWasteStrategyFinalReport2008.pdf

Guiding principles

Pollution prevention–

making sure that everything we do and everything we use creates little, if any, pollution or waste

Shared responsibility–

encouraging everyone to take responsibility for waste management including all levels of government, institutions, private business, and individual Nova Scotians

Innovation–

finding new ways to reduce and manage waste that are good for the environment and the economy

Sustainable prosperity–

looking for solutions that protect nature, improve society, and strengthen our economy at the same time

Collaboration–

creating partnerships with a wide range of people from all walks of life to make sure we do all we can to reduce waste

Goals

Nova Scotia's renewed

Solid Waste Resource

Management Strategy

will aim to meet the

following seven goals.

Each goal is followed

by background, one or

more examples, and

one or more questions

for you to think about.

Goal

Develop and expand effective and environmentally sustainable waste-reduction practices and programs

Background

Some programs, policies, practices and other initiatives to reduce waste have proven to be very effective. There may be opportunities to take the success experienced in one region and apply it to other areas of Nova Scotia.

Examples of province-wide practices

- provincial landfill standards – all landfills in Nova Scotia must meet the same strict environmental standards to protect our surface and groundwater
- curbside collection of recyclables using blue bags
- disposal bans – Nova Scotia has banned a wide range of items from landfills including
 - cans, jars, and bottles used for food or drinks
 - corrugated cardboard
 - newsprint
 - compostable organic food and yard waste

Questions

- **What are some effective waste-reduction practices in Nova Scotia?**
- **What effective waste reduction practices could be applied to other regions of Nova Scotia?**

Goal

Increase participation in waste prevention and diversion initiatives within all sectors (residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial)

Background

Nova Scotians already send half as much waste to landfills as other Canadians. We dispose of less waste, we recycle, and we compost. At the same time, Nova Scotians are still throwing away things that could be recycled or composted. We need to find out two things

- what prevents us from reducing our waste as much as we can?
- what prevents us from fully taking part in all available diversion programs?

Example

The city of Los Angeles, California wanted more people to recycle their motor oil. People saw recycling as time-consuming and inconvenient. The city launched an advertising campaign that showed a new and convenient way to recycle motor oil. In three months, motor oil recycling went up by 23 per cent.

Questions

- **What makes it difficult for you to reduce waste at home, at work, and at play?**
- **What would make it easier for you, your family, friends, and colleagues to reduce waste?**

Goal

Use financial incentives and disincentives to keep waste out of landfills

Background

It costs money to dispose of waste. Waste prevention can be stimulated by introducing fees on products and processes that create waste. Also, what we throw away often could have been turned into something valuable either as a resource or a product. This value is lost when the item is thrown away.

Example

When tipping fees or landfill charges go up, waste collection companies increase their fees. This encourages people who have to pay for waste collection to look for alternatives.

Question

- **What incentives and disincentives would increase waste reduction, recycling, and composting where people live, work, and play?**

Goal

Make sure Nova Scotia leads by example and reduces waste in all provincial government work

Background

The government must show it is doing all it can to reduce waste. It has already put collection bins in government offices so staff can separate recyclables and compostables. It has also set up new environmental purchasing criteria.

Example

All government-printed business cards and envelopes are certified by the Forestry Stewardship Council to show they are made with recycled materials and printed using vegetable, soy, or agri-based ink.

Question

- **What else can government do to show its commitment to reducing waste?**

Goal

Increase product stewardship

Background

Municipal taxpayers bear most of the cost for managing waste. Product stewardship programs look to shifting at least some of that responsibility to manufacturers and waste producers. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), manufacturers should be responsible for the effect their products have on the environment, including the effect of the product's disposal. This is one type of product stewardship program and it is called "extended producer responsibility" or EPR. The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) recommends making manufacturers responsible in two ways

- have manufacturers look after the collection, transportation, reuse, and recycling of their products
- encourage manufacturers to design products that produce little, if any, waste even when they are disposed of

Some Nova Scotia industries that already take part in EPR programs include dairy, paint, and electronics. Future EPR programs could target materials such as household hazardous waste, and construction and demolition waste.

Example

The Nova Scotia government passed a regulation that made electronics manufacturers responsible for their product waste. In response, the manufacturers formed Atlantic Canada Electronics Stewardship or ACES. ACES developed Nova Scotia's first industry-led program in which manufacturers are responsible for programs to collect, transport, reuse, and recycle products such as televisions, computers, and printers.

Questions

- **What needs to happen for more manufacturers and waste producers to take responsibility for managing their waste?**
- **What kind of responsibility should retailers and consumers have for the waste they produce?**

Goal

Stimulate research and development in waste prevention and diversion while creating potential economic opportunities for Nova Scotia

Background

We need to find more ways to turn waste materials into valuable resources and we need to find markets for those resources. Many materials we waste today have the potential to be valuable products. These include

- window glass
- used gyproc
- old furniture
- treated or coated wood

If we can build industries in Nova Scotia that turn products like these into valuable items and sell those items at home and around the world, we clean up our environment, strengthen our economy, and create jobs at the same time.

Example

Three Nova Scotia companies work together to make new boxes out of recycled corrugated cardboard. Scotia Recycling collects the cardboard. Minas Basin Pulp and Power turns it into liner board. Maritime Paper Products uses the liner board to make new boxes.

Questions

- **How do we encourage people to look for new ways to turn waste into valuable resources?**
- **Where and how do we identify and develop markets for those resources?**

Goal

Stimulate opportunities to divert the amount of construction and demolition waste sent to landfills

Background

Almost a third of all waste sent to our landfills comes from construction and demolition sites. Reducing this waste is essential in order for us to reach our goal of 300 kilograms of waste per person per year by 2015.

Example

A Halifax company takes old asphalt shingles that would have been sent to landfills and turns them into marketable products such as recycled asphalt.

Questions

- **What, if anything, makes it difficult for those in the construction and demolition industries to keep waste out of landfills?**
- **How can we make it easier to keep this waste out of landfills?**

What happens next?

The information received during the consultation process will help to develop a renewed solid waste resource management strategy for Nova Scotia.

In the summer of 2009 a summary of the input received will be made available.

The Waste Resource Management staff will draft the renewed waste strategy. The Strategy Renewal Advisory Committee (a committee of stakeholder representatives) will advise the department on the strategy's content. A draft renewed Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy will be recommended to government in the fall of 2009.

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