

## Curbside Recycling for Region 10

A message from the Chair:

As Chair of the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission Board of Directors, and thus the policy spokesperson for the Board, I am pleased and in fact thrilled to announce that the Board has approved the implementation of a curbside recycling program. The motion to implement the system was made and approved on Thursday, October 19th, 2017 at a Special Board Meeting, and our target timeline for implementation is the fall of 2018.

The Board wanted to find a system that was easy to use and would, as a result, increase participation by citizens. We also wanted to find a system that was more environmentally friendly, cost-effective, and diverse in terms of products that could be recycled, than the current system. The Board's Ad Hoc Recycling Review Committee put hours of research and discussions into all the options, and, as a result, we believe the new system meets all those goals. The new system is following the proven format instituted by the Miramichi Regional Service Commission a few years ago, which made the switch from a system nearly identical to our current drop-off style program to the curbside system. Although there are small pockets in our region where this new program will not be able to be implemented immediately due to internal reasons in those areas, the program will be available to the majority of households in the region.

Households in the region, both rural and municipal, will receive a large blue recycling cart, which is in fact lightweight and has wheels attached for ease in moving it. All eligible recyclables will simply be put in the carts unsorted. Then, on the day of pickup, citizens will simply roll the cart to the curb or road, and the haulers will empty the carts. The plan is to adopt an alternating schedule with our current haulers, so that one week they will pick up regular garbage and the next week they will empty the carts of recyclables. It really couldn't be simpler! The Miramichi Service Commission went from an estimated 4% diversion rate (the amount of recyclables collected under the drop-off system) to a 12% diversion rate in the first year of operating their curbside program.

Our current program provides limited options for recyclables as only certain plastics, papers, and cardboard products can be recycled. But with the new program, the variety will be greatly expanded and will include aluminum cans; glass will still be excluded for safety of the haulers and sorters.

The new system is also much more environmentally friendly than our current system. Right now, citizens have to burn fuel to take their recyclables to our large blue bins which are scattered around the region. Then, five days a week, the commission's special trucks are on the road burning even more fuel picking up those same recyclables. With the new system, citizens will not be burning fuel to recycle, and the Service Commission will also eliminate the burning of extra fuel to recycle, since pickup of the recyclables will use trucks that are already on the road anyway.

Finally, it is important for our citizens to know that, as a Service Commission, our budget impacts their property taxes. Our duty is to be accountable to the taxpayer for how well we spend their tax dollars, and to find ways to provide the best services in the most cost-effective manner possible; that duty is something that the Board of Directors takes very seriously. After all, each one of us, as citizens, has at one time or another complained that our municipality, our provincial government, or our federal government should find ways to "do more with less". As a regional governance Board, we are committed to finding those efficiencies, enabling us to "do more" for our regional citizens "with less" cost to those same citizens.

Our new recycling system is much more cost-effective than the current program. Not only are we eliminating the capital and operating costs associated with the current extra pickups from the large bins (costs such as maintaining, replacing, and fueling those special trucks, and maintaining and replacing the large industrial bins) but we are also able to eliminate sorting costs with this new program

The recyclables that are picked up curbside will be shipped to an external facility for sorting. We have found a sorting facility in Quebec that, unlike all other sorting facilities available, will provide us a ten-year contract with zero cost to us for the sorting! The Quebec government subsidizes the sorting program since it provides jobs and training to citizens with alternate needs who may not be employable without this facility and its training programs. So, in fact, we are also helping fellow Canadian citizens find dignity and purpose through this recycling program. We are happy to partner with them in their cause, all while providing a greatly expanded, user-friendly service to our region's citizens at a significantly reduced cost.

The complete rollout of the new program is about a year away, and we expect current staffing levels to be maintained throughout the rollout. The Commission will do its best to see that any current staff who will eventually be affected by the rollout's necessary restructuring will fill any valid open positions. through attrition or the upcoming expanded construction phase at the landfill site.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank the citizens of the region for attending our public meetings on this issue and for encouraging the Board to identify and implement a more effective recycling system. I also want to particularly thank the members of the Board who sat on the Recycling Committee and invested so many hours into research and discussion of the various options available; without their passion, dedication, and commitment, this new program would not be on the horizon.

Stay tuned for all the developments in the New Year when the rollout will get underway!

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Sincerely, and with thanks,  
Joyce Wright  
Chair