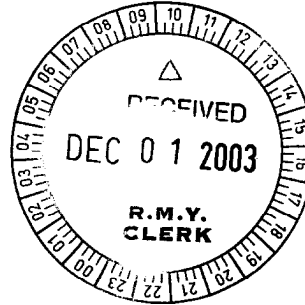




Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H3

NOV 26 2003

Mr. Denis Kelly
Regional Clerk
Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket ON L3Y 6Z1

**REGION OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE****FILE No. - 107**

Dear Mr. Kelly:

Thank you for your letter of September 29 informing me of York Regional Council's resolution requesting action to reduce packaging requiring disposal.

I share your Council's enthusiasm for waste reduction, and can appreciate its concerns regarding the environmental issues associated with excess waste. The Department encourages waste reduction, and recognizes pollution prevention as an effective means to promote both economic and environmental sustainability.

Although the management of solid waste remains a challenge in Canada, some national progress in waste diversion from disposal has been documented. Recent Statistics Canada data shows that from 1994 to 1998 non-hazardous waste disposal dropped by over 5 per cent per capita. These reductions have been accomplished due to the growth of municipal and other recycling programs and innovations in such areas as the composting of organic wastes. In addition, packaging waste disposal was reduced by 51.2 per cent between 1988 and 1996, meeting the packaging waste reduction goal of 50 per cent by 2000, four years ahead of schedule. This goal was set by the former National Task Force on Packaging, under the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, which set and pursued targets and policies for the minimization of packaging waste during the 1990s.

The most recent Statistics Canada data show that between 1998 and 2000, residential, industrial, commercial and institutional waste diverted from final disposal increased each year from 222 kilograms (kg) per capita in 1998 to 244 kg per capita. Unfortunately, during that same period, the total non-hazardous waste generated increased from 925 kg per capita in 1998 to 1020 kg in 2000. This clearly suggests that we cannot be complacent, and that more needs to be done to address this serious concern.

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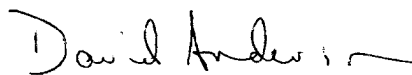
One way to decrease the amount of waste destined for landfill is to encourage the use of recycled materials in products. An increased use of recycled materials in products depends heavily on the ability to collect materials in sufficient, reliable volumes of appropriate quality, and to sell these materials to a buyer. Most importantly, it depends on the parallel development of markets and uses for the collected materials.

It is frequently suggested that the federal government develop legislation for recycled content. Such legislation could require that a certain percentage of recycled materials be used in new products or packaging. Many provinces have the authority to legislate recycled-content requirements for packaging, but none has chosen to enact such laws to date. However, as you are aware, the Province of Ontario has established Waste Diversion Ontario as a multi-stakeholder not-for-profit board, which is charged with the responsibility to establish Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs.

EPR programs, both domestically and internationally, encourage producers to take back and recycle their products at the post-consumer stage. Environment Canada actively supports the continued development and implementation of such programs. EPR shifts the responsibility of managing post-consumer products and packaging materials from the provinces and municipalities to the producers, brand owners and first importers who manufactured or introduced them. This shift, in turn, creates a financial incentive for producers and brand owners to optimize efforts to deliver products and packaging that are designed with environmental considerations in mind. EPR programs exist for such products as tires, paint, used motor oil and chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) refrigeration chemicals. Environment Canada is actively involved in negotiations for a national, industry run and funded take back program for end-of-life computers and other electronics. More information on EPR in Canada, including a program inventory, is available on Environment Canada's "Extended Producer Responsibility and Stewardship" Web site, at www.ec.gc.ca/epr.

I appreciate being apprised of the Council's concerns, and hope that the information provided is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Anderson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Anderson, P.C., M.P.