

MEMBER COMMUNICATION

ALERT N°: 07/033

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Milena Avramovic, AMO Senior Policy Advisor
(416) 971-9856 ext 342

Province Announces Industry-Funded Waste Diversion Program for Electronics and Provincial Policy Statement on Waste Plans

Issue: The Minister of the Environment, the Honourable Laurel Broten, has announced a new, industry-funded, Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment Program and municipal waste planning requirements.

Background:

Today, the provincial government took additional steps to respond to AMO's call for an integrated provincial waste management strategy by extending full producer responsibility for disposal of Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE), such as computers, televisions and other electronic equipment, that is no longer useful to consumers.

The Minister has directed Waste Diversion Ontario to develop an industry-funded waste diversion program for electronic waste. The first phase of the program, expected by February 1, 2008, will address products that are among those with the lowest diversion rates. Phase I of the program will deal with: desktop and notebook computers; monitors; desktop printers; and televisions. Phase II will address: telephones; audio players and recorders; radios; speakers; and cameras.

Ontario is facing the combined pressures of a growing population, a lack of landfill capacity and dwindling options to deal with waste while municipal resources are increasingly taxed in the effort to manage waste and diversion programs. AMO has advocated for some time for the creation of an integrated waste management strategy that progressively manages products entering the waste management stream, including:

- Enhanced Design for Reduction or Reuse,
- Product Reuse,
- Material Recycling and Composting,
- Resource and Energy Recovery, and
- Disposal via Landfill.

The introduction of extended producer responsibility for waste electronics will help to divert millions of consumer electronic items from landfills every year and ensure potentially toxic components of these products, such as lead or mercury, are properly disposed of.

At the same time, today's announcement also introduced a draft policy on waste management that will better enable municipalities to plan for waste management and diversion in a more integrated way. The policy statement would recognize advances already made by many municipalities in terms of long-term waste management planning and assist those municipalities which are at earlier stages of this process. It would also recognize the difference between small and large municipalities.

New municipal waste management planning and the provincial policy for an integrated waste management system are important steps in creating a waste management system that recognizes producer responsibility, respects municipal ratepayers, gives municipalities options for waste management and diversion and allows responsible energy creation from waste.

Today's announcement follows previous provincial initiatives responding to AMO's position on waste management including:

- The LCBO deposit return initiative;
- Recognition of the importance of new technologies include energy recovery technologies;
- New Regulations under the *Environmental Assessment Act* and amendments under the *Environmental Protection Act* for waste recycling, alternative fuels, and new/emerging technologies; and
- A new policy for the diversion of Municipal Household Hazardous and Special Waste.

Action:

AMO will continue to monitor the implementation of the Province's integrated waste management strategy and report to members. Members are encouraged to review and comment on the proposed provincial waste management policy statement on the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry at www.ebr.gov.on.ca; EBR number 010-0420. Comments will continue to be received by MOE on the EBR until July 27, 2007.

This information is available in the Policy Issues section of the AMO website at www.amo.on.ca.