

Moving Canada Toward Zero Plastic Waste: Perspectives from Ontario

Recycling Council of Alberta
September 20, 2018

WHO AMO IS & OUR WORK IN WASTE DIVERSION

- Represent the interests of 444 municipalities across Ontario
- Mandate is to support and enhance strong and effective municipal government in Ontario
- Lead by an Executive Team & Board of Directors of elected officials that represent a diversity of interests & populations
- Work with over 20 provincial Ministries, including the Environment, Conservation and Parks
- AMO Board has identified waste diversion as a key issue, and the smooth transition to full producer responsibility

MUNICIPAL 3RS COLLABORATIVE

- **Members:** Comprised of the following organizations



- **Purpose:** Develop & promote policies & programs on behalf of all municipalities in Ontario to support the transition to a circular economy
- **Joint Comments:** Provided a letter on the National Zero Plastic Waste Strategy to the Environment and Climate Change Canada

THE GROWING ISSUE OF PLASTICS

In 'world-first pact,' over 40 major businesses commit to fight plastic pollution

CNBC - April 26, 2018



Plastic particles found in bottled water

BBC - March 15, 2018



KEY FACTORS & RATIONALE FOR ACTION



More Complex Packaging Stream with Less Value



More Waste Products & Packaging Leaking into Our Environment



8 million tonnes of plastics are ending up in our oceans annually.



10,000 tonnes per year is estimated to be entering the Great Lakes.

Weak End Markets

China's tough new recycling standards
leaving Canadian municipalities in a bind

Globe and Mail - Jan 8, 2018

**China's policy change on accepting
recyclables has Calgary exploring
new markets**

CTV News Calgary, Jan 18, 2018

A Level Playing Field Needed for Brand Holders



Lack of Disposal Capacity



Municipalities Cannot Drive Systematic Change in Product Design



GREAT...BUT WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Municipalities have two main issues to deal with that they have no control over:

- 1. Production of Cheaper Materials** – there is an economic disconnect between traditional types of packaging and plastics, which are cheaper, more versatile, and can be made more easily than other products
- 2. Cost of Collection & Processing** – while the production of all of these materials is cheaper for companies who are making decisions based on the bottom line, it is not cheap to collect & process them at the end of the day

That is why full producer responsibility is needed – because it is the only way to combat both of these issues

THE SOLUTION: FULL PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

- Property taxpayers should not be responsible to manage and co-fund a recycling system when they have no influence over the types of materials entering the waste stream
- Government policies should focus financial and operational responsibility on those that can most effectively and efficiently drive change – producers of these products and packaging
- Regulating full producer responsibility for products and packaging is the critical mechanism for establishing a circular economy for plastics

PRIORITY ACTIONS GOVERNMENTS CAN TAKE

1. Focus on full producer responsibility, just as jurisdictions across the world have been
2. Establish national definitions, performance standards, and measurement protocols
3. Target action on reducing single-use plastic products and packaging
4. Target action on eliminating the use of problematic types of plastics and plastic additives

PRIORITY ACTIONS GOVERNMENTS CAN TAKE (2)

5. Set national mandatory targets that are at a minimum matching those that leading producers have already agreed to
6. Provide incentives for use of secondary materials over virgin material to support recyclable commodity markets
7. Public procurement requirements for zero waste plastic products and leasing goods instead of purchases
8. Establish permanent, dedicated and adequate funding for clean up of plastics and debris, and education/outreach

THE PLAN GOING FORWARD

- The Municipal 3Rs Collaborative will continue to work on a smooth transition to full producer responsibility for Ontario's waste diversion programs
- We will work with others to ensure that plastics remain in circulation within the economy and out of disposal sites and the environment
- We want to collaborate with other municipalities, by sharing experiences and learning best practices



Amber Crawford, Policy Advisor

acrawford@amo.on.ca

416-971-9856 ext. 353