



Stewardship Ontario grant will open markets for Niagara Region's broken Blue Box glass, diverting more from landfill

TORONTO (March 17, 2005) – Stewardship Ontario will grant \$75,000 to Niagara Recycling and its partner, the Regional Municipality of Niagara, to help implement a project that will reduce significantly the amount of mixed broken glass sent to Niagara landfill sites while increasing the Region's revenue from recycled glass.

“This grant will allow Niagara Recycling, in conjunction with the Regional Municipality of Niagara, to develop a new plant design that incorporates a process that will transform recycled mixed glass into a material that can be used in the sandblasting and water filtration markets,” said Damian Bassett, CEO of Stewardship Ontario.

In a move to improve Blue Box glass recycling in the province, Stewardship Ontario has approved grants totaling \$285,000 under its Glass Diversion Fund to support four new glass recycling projects. The project in Niagara Region is one of them. The Glass Diversion Fund helps develop higher value end markets for recovered mixed glass from Ontario's Blue Box program by supporting local businesses with new recycled glass initiatives.

The fund was created in response to a growing amount of mixed (clear and coloured) broken glass that is unacceptable to traditional glass recycling markets. During the past five years, curbside recycling programs have begun to collect glass with other containers and the outcome has been a growing amount of mixed broken glass.

“The improvement in plant design at Niagara Recycling will allow the glass to be marketed toward higher value end uses. The project is intended to help Niagara move from paying to dispose of its mixed glass to potentially generating revenue from the same material,” said David Payne, the Regional Municipality of Niagara's director, Waste Management Services. In addition to providing a potential solution to the Region, the Regional Municipality of Niagara also anticipates processing an additional 14,000 tonnes of glass generated by other Ontario municipalities.

According to Norman Kraft, general manager of Niagara Recyclin, “Changes in the Blue Box recycling collection system over the past few years have resulted in a reduction in the amount of marketable glass recovered at recycling processing centres. This trend, along with the low market value for sorted glass, prompted us to develop a plant design that incorporates proven grinding, screening, drying, contamination removal and glass transport technology. The goal of this project is to take all of the glass from the Niagara Region’s recycling program and transform it into a silica-free, revenue generating material for the sandblasting and water filtration markets. This is a unique plant that will divert a minimum of 90 per cent of all glass processed.”

Stewardship Ontario is an industry funding organization created to collect money from industry to help pay for the Ontario municipal Blue Box recycling program. Brand owners and first importers who use packaging or printed papers that are handled through Ontario’s municipal waste management programs are required under the *Waste Diversion Act, 2002* to contribute to a fund that pays 50 percent of the net cost of municipal residential Blue Box recycling systems. Stewardship Ontario is authorized under the *Act* to collect the funds from industry and distribute them to municipalities.

Ensuring viable end markets for recycled materials is vital to the Blue Box program. Stewardship Ontario is making \$2 million available to stimulate market development, which will ultimately lead to more stable markets and help control Blue Box program costs.

As part of this, Stewardship Ontario launched its Glass Action Plan in April 2004. It comprises two funds: a \$500,000 Glass Diversion Fund which supports measures to improve the marketability and expand end markets for mixed glass from Ontario’s Blue Box programs and the Glass Market Development Investment Fund comprising up to \$2 million. This fund is used to invest in Ontario’s glass processing infrastructure.

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Backgrounder attached

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Backgrounder on Waste Diversion Ontario and Stewardship Ontario

Waste Diversion Ontario (www.wdo.ca)

Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) is a non-government corporation created under the *Waste Diversion Act* on June 27, 2002. WDO was established to develop, implement and operate waste diversion programs for a wide range of materials that currently include Blue Box Waste, for which a program is approved, Used Tires, for which a program is posted on the Environmental Registry for comment, and Used Oil Material and Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment, for which programs are being developed. Waste diversion programs are developed after materials are designated by the Minister of the Environment. The Minister recently asked WDO to work with representatives of the affected electrical and electronics industries to develop a diversion program that would include more than 50 products, ranging from appliances to computers to cellphones and TVs. Materials such as Household Special Waste, Organic Materials, Pharmaceuticals and Fluorescent Tubes may be designated by the Minister in future.

The WDO has been authorized by the Act to work co-operatively with those industries that produce and distribute these products to establish programs to divert waste materials.

Stewardship Ontario (www.stewardshipontario.ca)

The WDO designated Stewardship Ontario as the industry funding organization for Blue Box Wastes (glass, metal, paper, plastic and textiles collected in municipal recycling programs). All packaging and printed paper that fall within these categories are included in the Blue Box Program Plan and in the fees calculation. Companies designated as stewards for Blue Box Wastes can discharge their legal obligations under the Act through membership in Stewardship Ontario and paying the applicable steward fees. Currently, more than 1,760 companies (see www.stewardshipontario.ca/xls/Prereg_list.xls) have registered with Stewardship Ontario as stewards. Fees vary based on the types, amounts and recyclability of packaging materials and printed papers used, i.e. packaging that is not recyclable or that has weaker markets has been designated a higher fee than packaging that has stronger markets.

Glass Market Development Action Plan

The Blue Box Program Plan recommended development of a Market Development Action Plan on Glass (which was launched in April, 2004). A total of \$2.5 million dollars of funding is available through two funds in this program that offer targeted funding for specific measures aimed toward improving the marketability and end market applications of Ontario's mixed residential glass. The LCBO submits fees to Stewardship Ontario for beverage alcohol containers, including containers sold through wine stores owned and operated by Ontario wineries. The LCBO's \$5 million annual contribution to the Blue Box system has exceeded its "obligation" under the Waste Diversion Act, based on the cost of managing the material for which it is responsible. This excess contribution, totalling \$2.32 million thus far, makes up the bulk of the Glass Diversion Fund. The remaining \$140,000 is contributed by other stewards that use glass packaging. Since the Blue Box funding program began in 1998, the LCBO has contributed \$30 million to municipalities to cover beverage alcohol container recycling costs and will contribute an additional \$5 million for this purpose next year.

Non-obligated Companies

Many companies that introduce packaging and printed papers into the Ontario marketplace fall under the “de minimis” rule in the Blue Box Program Plan. If their sales are under \$2 million annually they are exempt from registering or paying fees. If their sales are over \$2 million but they produce less than 15 tonnes of “Blue Box Wastes” annually, they are exempt from paying fees but must register with Stewardship Ontario (www.stewardshipontario.ca)

Blue Box Program Plan

A copy of the Blue Box Program Plan can be found at:
<http://www.stewardshipontario.ca/plans/bbpb2003.htm>

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