

News release

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Industry Makes it Easier for Ontarians to Recycle their Household Hazardous Waste

*Stewardship Ontario introduces **Do What You Can** Drop-Off Program*

TORONTO—Stewardship Ontario, the industry organization responsible for the Blue Box program and the Municipal Hazardous or Special Waste (MHSW) program, is making it easier for Ontarians to recycle old batteries, paint, solvents and other “household hazardous waste” with a new initiative under the MHSW program called **Do What You Can**.

The MHSW program aims to more than double the amount of ‘hazardous’ or ‘special’ waste diverted from landfill over the next five years. Materials targeted under the program include paint, solvents, non-rechargeable batteries, antifreeze, propane cylinders and other items commonly found in Ontario homes but which need special care when there are leftovers and used containers.

“Ontario is on a path towards a zero waste future,” said Ontario Environment Minister John Gerretsen. “It means looking at waste in new ways and seeing the opportunities inherent in materials we once thought of as ‘garbage.’ The MHSW program is an important part of this future. I congratulate those involved in this program and encourage all Ontarians to **do what they can** for the environment in 2009 and beyond.”

“Ontario residents have shown their willingness to recycle for more than 25 years and they keep telling us they want to do more. **Do What You Can** is another tool we can all use to work towards the provincial targets for less waste and a healthier environment,” said Gemma Zecchini, CEO of Stewardship Ontario. “From industry stewards who are the brand owners of these products, through the retail chain to consumers—we all know we can do a little more to make our communities more livable.”

Do What You Can encourages residents to take household hazardous waste and other special care items and their containers to one of a growing network of special collection locations. Well known retail building supply stores, RONA and The Home Depot, are now registered with Stewardship Ontario to collect paint and The Home Depot also will collect used single-use (non-rechargeable) batteries.

Other retail partners include the Jiffy Lube auto centres which, starting today, are accepting used oil filters, empty auto oil bottles, and antifreeze and containers from do-it-yourselfers who change the oil and antifreeze in their own vehicles. Pro Oil Change is piloting the program in two London locations.

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“RONA has been committed to sustainable development for a long time. The best example of this is how we participated in setting up Canada’s first paint recovery and reconditioning program in Quebec 10 years ago. Today we’re very proud to continue this commitment in Ontario through the ‘**Do What You Can**’ partnership by applying a life-cycle approach where paint is recovered in our stores, reconditioned and then offered back to consumers as recycled paint. Since last July, we have already recovered over 600,000 lbs of used paint, diverting it from Ontario landfills. We’re also happy to be recovering batteries as well, beginning March 1st – another step in helping to reduce Ontario’s environmental footprint,” said Claude Bernier, Executive Vice President, Marketing and Customer Innovations at RONA.

“Our partnership with Stewardship Ontario provides The Home Depot with the opportunity to expand our consumer recycling programs to include paint and battery recycling. Our customers recognize us as a leader in environmental solutions so this is a natural extension to our Eco Options program, which offers over 1,500 environmentally friendly products and our CFL recycling program. The synergies between Eco Options and the ‘**Do What You Can**’ program allows us to continue to contribute in new ways to the communities in which we live and work. We are pleased to be a ‘**Do What You Can**’ partner,” said Jeff Kinnaird, vice president operations, Canada East, The Home Depot.

It will be Stewardship Ontario’s job to pick up these materials from retail partners as well as those municipalities that collect them through event days and permanent depots, and to ensure that as much as possible is directed into 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycling) solutions. For anything that can’t be reused or recycled, Stewardship Ontario will handle disposal in an environmentally appropriate manner.

Most municipalities in Ontario have hosted household hazardous or special waste days for years. Under special agreements with Stewardship Ontario, municipalities will be expanding the services they offer their residents, making it more convenient to do the right thing when it comes time to dispose of leftover and unwanted hazardous or special waste materials. Municipalities will add an additional 6,000 days of service by expanding hours of depot operations and/or offering more event days to allow consumers to return their unwanted materials.

“We all have household products that can harm the environment if they are not disposed of properly,” said Peter Hume, President of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. “It’s up to all of us to do what we can to make sure that old paint, chemical solvents and used batteries aren’t sent to municipal landfills or poured down drains. Ontario’s municipalities are working with residents and industry to keep communities clean and safe.”

The MHSW program, including the **Do What You Can** initiative is funded through fees paid to Stewardship Ontario by the brand owners or importers of the designated products. Stewardship Ontario uses the funds to develop and operate the program which includes setting up research and development projects and conducting public education

initiatives aimed at building awareness of the opportunities to clear out basements and garages of leftover and unwanted hazardous and special waste materials.

The public face of the program includes a new interactive website, www.dowhatyoucan.ca that consumers can use to locate collection sites for a wide variety of hazardous and special waste.

“As the organization that oversees waste diversion programs on behalf of the Minister of the Environment, we are constantly looking for innovative and progressive ideas that will make Ontario a leader in waste reduction and diversion. We do this by forging partnerships between the public and private sectors and today’s launch is an excellent example of the benefits of this partnership,” said Glenda Gies, executive director, Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO). WDO is responsible for developing and implementing waste diversion programs in Ontario for blue box materials, municipal hazardous or special wastes, waste electrical and electronic equipment and used tires.

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LEARN MORE

Read more about the MHSW program:

[MHSW Program Overview](#)

[MHSW Media Backgrounder](#)

Find the closest collection location for MHSW: www.dowhatyoucan.ca

Other websites:

stewardshipontario/mhsw

wdo.ca

Ontario.ca/environment

Eco.rona.ca

Homedepot.ca/ecoptions

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