

zero|waste

B e y o n d R e c y c l i n g

ZERO WASTE – A NEW TARGET AND APPROACH FOR A NEW CENTURY

Welcome to the first edition of Zero Waste. The new name, colours and graphics are a lot different than previous waste reduction programs and signify it's time to move "beyond recycling" and set our sights on Zero Waste.

banned paper, metal and other recyclable materials from the landfill, and successfully promoted backyard composting throughout the region. Today, we're the first jurisdiction on Vancouver Island and one of several forward looking local governments in Canada and around the world that have adopted Zero Waste as their long term waste reduction goal.

Through participation in 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) programs,

CHEAP, TOP-QUALITY BUILDING SUPPLIES!

Nanaimo is the home to the first Habitat ReStore in BC and the 19th in Canada. ReStore sells high quality new and used building supplies for great prices. Everyone benefits from using a Habitat ReStore...homeowners, recreational property owners, do-it-yourselfers, renovators, contractors and the building materials industry. Using a Habitat ReStore also benefits the environment by reusing salvageable, surplus and unused building materials instead of letting them end up in the landfill. Habitat ReStores are a resounding success wherever they are located.

ReStore is an initiative of Habitat for Humanity, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality housing to low income members of our community and other parts of the world. Through the work and dedication of volunteers, Habitat for Humanity has built three housing units in Nanaimo for low-income families since 1989. To acquire a Habitat for Humanity house, a family receives a no interest, no down payment mortgage and must put at least 500 hours of labour into the construction of their house. Everybody wins!

If you are looking to purchase building supplies visit Habitat ReStore at the location shown below. Habitat ReStore gratefully accepts donations of quality new and used building materials and supplies.

All Habitat ReStore profits go to Habitat for Humanity, "Eliminating poverty housing in the world, one house at a time."

*Suite 1 – 4128 Mostar Rd.
Nanaimo BC V9T 6C9*

Telephone: (250) 758-8743

Hours:

8:30AM – 4:00PM Tues - Sat



Zero Waste is a goal and a process that involves individuals, communities, businesses, and local, provincial and federal governments. It leads to a future where trash is a thing of the past. A time when garbage trucks no longer rumble down neighbourhood streets. Solid waste isn't managed or hidden in landfills but seen and used as a resource. Through redesign, reduction, reuse, repair, reclaiming, recycling, composting and other activities, we create local employment and sustainable economic development instead of garbage. This is the Zero Waste vision for the future in the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN).

The Evolution to Zero Waste

The RDN and its member municipalities, residents and businesses have led the way in innovative approaches to reducing the amount of garbage that must be landfilled. In 1991, we introduced Canada's first user pay residential garbage collection system. Since then, the RDN and its partners have expanded curbside recycling programs,

RDN residents and businesses passed a major milestone in 2000. We met and exceeded BC's Ministry of Environment goal set in 1989 that regional districts reduce their solid waste by 50% by the year 2000.

"We should be proud of the progress we've made, but we're still making too much garbage," says George Holme, Chair of the Regional Board. He points out that as a region we're disposing of 57,000 tonnes of garbage annually and, because of landfill capacity problems, exporting a quarter of it to an interior mainland landfill operation at a high cost to local residents.

"Our Regional Landfill will soon reach its capacity and we will be faced with exporting all our waste at a significant cost to everyone in the region," Holme says. "We have the opportunity to eliminate that cost while benefiting our environment and quality of life. That's why the Regional Board has embraced the concept of Zero Waste and adopted it as a policy."

DESTINATION ZERO WASTE – MILESTONES PASSED ALONG THE WAY

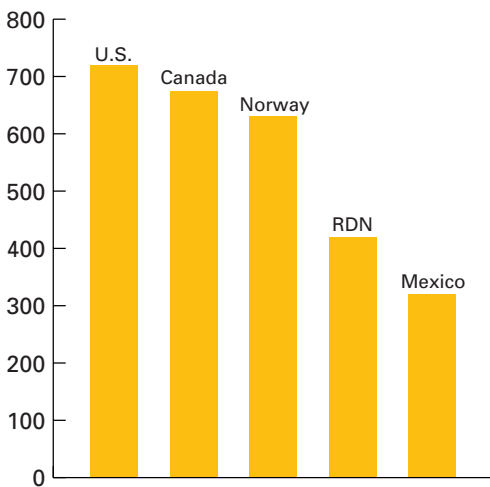
- 1990 RDN residents generate 2 kg of garbage per day per capita. Nanaimo Recycling Exchange established. Tipping fees or landfill disposal charges are \$20 per tonne. City of Nanaimo has a three-container limit on garbage and curbside recycling collection of newspapers and cardboard.
- 1991 The RDN sets basic garbage collection service at one container per week. Residents can put out unlimited newspaper, magazines, and glass and metal beverage containers in their blue box but must attach a \$2 tag to each garbage container that exceeds the 1-can basic limit.
- 1992 The RDN completes its Stage 1 review of the region's 1988 Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), one of the first SWMP's to be completed in BC. The review examined the RDN's existing waste disposal systems and developed options to address the problem of ever increasing volumes of garbage generated in the region.
- 1993 The City of Nanaimo sets its basic garbage collection service at two containers per week. \$2 garbage tags created. Cardboard is banned from the region's landfill.
- 1994 The RDN undertakes Stage 2 of its Solid Waste Management Plan Review.
- 1995 Tipping fees (landfill disposal charges) are \$65 per tonne. Recycling, reuse and reduction plans are now diverting 26% of waste from the Region's landfill. Solid Waste Advisory Committee formed with representation from residents, businesses, environmental groups, and elected officials.
- 1996 The City of Nanaimo expands its curbside recycling program to include all paper products, metal food and beverage containers and plastic milk jugs.
- 1997 The RDN expands its Blue Box program to include mixed household paper, cardboard, newspaper, magazines, plastic milk jugs, textiles, and glass and metal food and beverage.
- 1998 The RDN bans all paper and metal from the Regional Landfill and starts exporting 25% of the region's waste to Cache Creek. The Region's residents and businesses recycle 38,000 tonnes of material, a 40% recycling rate. The Province's deposit system is expanded to include all beverage containers except milk and milk substitutes.
- 1999 The City of Nanaimo's basic garbage collection service changes to match the RDN's residential program, with the equivalent of one standard-sized container collected each week. Because of public input, the RDN Board rejects the option of locating a new landfill in the regional district.
- 2000 The RDN and its municipal partners divert 57,000 tonnes of materials from the landfill or 54% of the 107,000 tonnes of total waste generated in the region. RDN residents generate 1.16 kg of garbage per day per capita.
- 2001 The RDN Board adopts Zero Waste as the region's long-term waste reduction goal. Tipping fees (landfill disposal charges) rise to \$90 per tonne with both residential and commercial haulers paying the same rate.
- 2002 The RDN and City of Nanaimo expand curbside recycling to include most household plastic containers. Plastics represent 10% of the weight of household garbage and 25% of its volume.

PLANET AT RISK

Consumerism and wasteful lifestyle puts planet at risk

Being at the top of the list isn't always best. Especially when it shows that Canadians are world leaders when it comes to consuming scarce energy and other resources and producing garbage. According to Statistics Canada, our country produces more than 21 million tonnes of garbage annually. That figure puts Canada in the top five in the world when it comes to per capita waste generated. The chart below shows among the 29 countries with advanced economies, the top "most wasteful countries" with the RDN included to indicate how we measure up.

Kg of trash per person per year



OUR INCREASING BURDEN ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Our human economy depends on the natural capital of the earth to sustain it. But what if we take more than the earth and our environment can sustain and deplete this natural capital? The "ecological footprint" is a tool developed by William Reese of the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning that measures the human load on the earth in terms of the area of productive ecosystems that a human population requires.

The ecological footprint shows how much productive land and water we require to produce the food and material goods we consume and to absorb the waste we generate. Residents of Canada, the U.S. and other western countries each require up to 30 acres of productive land and water to support their consumer lifestyles. By comparison, the per capita ecological footprint of even a rapidly developing country such as China is less than 5 acres.

If the entire population of the world consumed resources at Canadian levels, four additional earth-like planets would be required to continue sustainably. The environmental impacts of our unsustainable lifestyle include climate change, collapsing fisheries, and increasing loss of biodiversity.

HOW ZERO WASTE CAN LIGHTEN THE LOAD

Zero Waste means changing our attitudes towards the earth's resources. Michael Jessen, a waste management specialist who has written on "The Need for a Zero Waste Policy" in BC, says "the first thing we do is discard the idea of waste. Everything is made from resources and waste is a resource going in the wrong direction. To throw away resources is to be inefficient and noncompetitive."

As we move towards the goal of Zero Waste, we pay up front the full environmental costs of products and services. We prevent waste and ban products that don't facilitate their reuse, repair, recycling or composting. We redefine economic success from unlimited growth and consumption to delivering more services with less energy and resources. As individuals we use our democratic process to demand change, take responsibility for our purchasing decisions and refuse to buy products that aren't consistent with the goal of Zero Waste.

EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

BC takes the lead in “Industry Product Stewardship”

One of the key principles of Zero Waste is Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) or manufacturers taking responsibility for products after their sale. In BC, the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection has developed and guided Industry Product Stewardship programs for beverage containers and household hazardous wastes that have successfully shifted the cost of managing these materials from government and the taxpayer to private industry and the consumer. Here are some examples of how Industry Product Stewardship EPR has worked in BC:

Beverage Containers

In 1970, BC became the first jurisdiction in North America to establish a mandatory deposit refund system for soft drink and beer containers to control litter. In 1997, the Province enacted the Beverage Container Stewardship Program Regulation. This regulation required all beverage brand-owners of ready-to-drink beverages with the exception of milk, milk substitutes, liquid meal replacements and infant formula to establish a province-wide return collection system for beverage containers under a deposit-refund system. The regulation set the goal of a minimum 85 percent recovery rate and required that redeemed containers be either refilled or recycled.

Today Encorp Pacific, a federally incorporated not-for-profit stewardship agency, runs the system that recovers beverage containers in B.C. and ensures that they are recycled. In 2000, the “Return-It” program kept almost 600 million beverage containers from ending up as litter or in BC’s landfills.

Used Oil

In 1992, BC required that all sellers of oil take back used oil, at no charge to the consumer. The used lubricating oil program provided do-it-yourselfers with the opportunity to return used oil for recycling. Today the program recovers roughly 80% of the estimated 50 million litres of lubricating oil available for recovery each year.

Household Hazardous Wastes

In BC, Product Care, a non-profit industry-sponsored association, manages household hazardous

wastes (HHW) including paint, flammables, gasoline, and pesticides. These products covered under BC’s Post-Consumer Paint Stewardship Regulation and Post-Consumer Residual Stewardship Regulation are collected at a network of industry-funded depots throughout the province.

The Post-Consumer Paint and Post-Consumer Residual Stewardship Regulation Programs are funded through an “eco-fee” which is collected when the product is sold.

Paint comprises as much as 70% of the HHW waste stream. From 1994 to June 1999, the stewardship agencies involved in paint collection, collected almost 12 million equivalent litres of paint. According to the program operators, 78% of paint returns were recycled, 11% was reused for its original purpose, 8 % was fuel blended and utilized for the recovery of energy, and 3% was incinerated.

COMMUNITY GROUP ZEROES IN ON FOOD WASTE

If you’ve ever noticed fruit rotting under trees in your neighbourhood, you’ve probably thought “What a waste!”

Nanaimo Foodshare Society is launching a program to reduce the waste of precious, locally grown food. The new Fruit Tree Gleaning project will help people to access surplus produce in our community.

By growing and harvesting local organic produce, people reduce their purchases of non-organic, imported food. The benefits of Zero Waste include the reduction of food packaging and pollution from transportation and pesticides.

If you anticipate surplus fruit, nuts or produce from your garden this year, call Foodshare at 753-9393 to register your tree today.

CONTACTS AND WEB RESOURCES

Zero Waste Website Links

Recycling Council of BC
www.rcbc.bc.ca

Target Zero Canada
www.targetzerocanada.org

Grassroots Recycling Network
www.grrn.org

Zero Waste America
www.zerowasteamerica.org

Zero Waste New Zealand Trust
www.zerowaste.co.nz

Extended Producer Responsibility Website Links

BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection / Industry Product Stewardship
www.gov.bc.ca/epd/epdpa/ips/

Encorp Pacific
www.encorpinc.com

Product Care
www.paintandproductcare.org

Regional District of Nanaimo

Environmental Services,
6300 Hammond Bay Road,
Nanaimo BC V9T 6N2

Ph: 390-6560 (Nanaimo)
Ph. 1-877-607-4111 (Toll-free)

Email: zerowaste@rdn.bc.ca

Website: www.rdn.bc.ca

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