



Solid Waste Association of North America

Pacific Chapter – BC & Yukon

Networking, Training, and Certification for Integrated Waste Resource Management

MoE Special Information Session - Synopsis “Packaging and Printed Paper” Extended Producer Responsibility Thursday September 15, 2011 Sheraton Vancouver Airport (Richmond Inn) Richmond BC

As there is some confusion and concern amongst waste management practitioners about changes to the waste stream, ownership, stewardship, and how these are going to impact the current waste management/recycling infrastructure in BC, the SWANA Pacific Chapter was pleased to be able to act as a facilitator for the MoE – building on the MoE initiated a set of meetings at various Regional Districts over the province in the earlier part of the year and bringing background information to a larger audience in advance of sets of consultation meetings in October and November 2011.

On **Thursday September 15, 2011**, the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with the Solid Waste Association of North America Pacific Chapter – BC and Yukon hosted a live meeting/limited access conference call regarding Packaging and Printed Paper. The Recycling Regulation was amended on May 19th, 2011 to add packaging and printed paper as a new product category. For a copy of the Regulation and more information on the amendment, please visit the Ministry website at www.recycling.gov.bc.ca.

80 persons attended the session in person, and an additional 25 dialled in via conference call from four regional centers in Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Kamloops and Nelson.

Please note that the following is only a synopsis of some key points brought forward at that meeting. Anyone with detailed concerns is advised to refer to the PDF of the MoE Presentation and to the contacts outlined in it.

A preliminary list of concerns was generated through the registration process. These were summarized as hand-outs for the session and allowed MoE staff to context their presentation.

A PDF file of the MoE presentation is integral to this synopsis and may be found on the Chapter website www.swanabc.org

Preliminary Areas of Concern Regarding the Regulation were noted on registration forms:

- How to set up new district recycling system in the context of new packaging program
- Performance measures in stewardship plans; ensuring materials are managed according to the 5R hierarchy
- Clear examples of paper products and packaging
- End markets. Municipal control and accountability of collection contractors
- Impacts on local government

- EPR plan structure
- Contamination of existing programs
- What happens to established depots
- Effect of program on existing municipal recycling programs
- Sustainable conservation of discards
- Changes to collection methods/contracted services fee structures/recycling rates
- Building on the success of existing EPR programs
- Recycling of Expanded Polystyrene forms used for electronics and food packaging

Preliminary Points made in the MoE presentation included.

- Recycling Regulation is intended to acknowledge the end-of-life costs of a product and life cycle responsibility.
- Reference to the Canada wide action plan of the CCME
- BC Recycling regulation of 2004 aims to be results based, flexible, and enables a more level playing field.
- Stewardship plans may be individual or cooperative. A variety of performance measures.
- Sustainability and hierarchy are key. This is a BC made program that differs from any other current program in North America.
- Timeline for consultation and development of this new stewardship plan goes into 2012. These meetings are preliminary.

- Key sources of information and contacts are:

Updates on meetings and consultations are being hosted by RCBC
www.rcbc.bc.ca/education/product-stewardship/packagingepr

further information on Multi Materials BC please contact
alangdon@retailcouncil.org

further information on packaging EPR policy contact
Teresa.Conner@gov.bc.ca

Question and Answer Sessions followed. During that part of the session concerns were raised on several recurring themes regarding:

- Recovery rates in existing programs like those for beverage containers and milk containers- methods of reporting. It was noted that as plans are developed reporting structures are put in place- but they are reviewed

- Why were packaging and printed paper grouped together? How would contamination of existing markets be addressed? It was noted that these sorts of concerns would have to be addressed as a plan was developed.
- What was the role of existing haulers and recyclers- processing and marketing? It was noted that the aim of the consultation is to engage these service providers early on so that differences in protocols and impacts on existing programs could be documented and addressed.
- How would concerns regarding the potential emphasis toward single stream and increased comingling of recyclables be addressed (the erosion of value added recycling products was seen as a potential threat)? It was noted that these concerns should be brought forward to the industry stewards and it would be wise for interested parties to stay current with the development of an industry plan and all opportunities to comment.
- Municipalities and curbside programs are regarded as the “go to” by the general public – how will an approved stewardship program impact on existing service levels. It was noted that this was a grey area and that in addition to the time to develop a plan (2012) there would have to be an additional time of transition in service provider contracts.
- What was foreseen for packaging products that have no viable recycling (toothpaste tubes and health care products appearing in blue boxes and depots were used as a graphic example)? It was noted that specifics such as this were best brought forward now so that they could be addressed as part of any plan while maintaining principal of the hierarchies. This might mean changes in design of packaging as opposed to a direct impact on collection and processing and marketing.
- How can a municipal service level be assured? It was noted that a blue print for this was not available, service levels have not been defined yet, and such would be for a draft plan to address.
- Average consumer is overwhelmed by myriad of regulations. How will this be addressed? It was noted that in this particular stewardship plan packaging is an overarching element and that any plan developed would have to consider the impact on the consumer both at time of purchase and at time of disposal.
- How can measures of performance be tracked? It was noted that in the case of fees and financial reports each target from a plan needs to be reported on separately and could be defined in a stewardship plan.
- Is there a requirement to assess any technology proposed by industry to deliver a plan? It was noted that while this is not currently part of the requirements, if there is concern noted in the consultation process it would need to be addressed in the plan development and take into account the complexities of any noted concerns.
- Concern regarding freedom of marketing of products, and competition? It was noted that while this has not yet been raised in public meetings it should be considered in the plan development if voiced as a concern.

The session wrapped up noting that this was the early stage of consultation, industry representation will be coming on board in a series of meetings beginning in October 2011 and that it was most important for all stakeholders to participate in talks to MoE and stewards.