



**PACKAGING POLICY & STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM
UPDATES:
CANADA, USA & INTERNATIONAL**

FALL 2019 | VOL. 7 ISSUE 2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
Canadian News	3
U.S. News	7
International News	9
Helpful Links	10

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Welcome to the PAC NEXT 2019 Fall edition of the Packaging Policy & Stewardship Program Updates. As noted in the spring edition, please take a look at the PAC NEXT report [Who's Who of Zero Plastic Waste Initiatives](#), which provides an overview of corporate commitments and their affiliation to zero plastics waste initiatives. And there's plenty to chew on in this edition...

Globally - a growing number of organizations have joined the New Plastics Economy's Global Commitment, uniting participants behind a common vision to address plastic waste and pollution. As well, we see strenuous debate and some new legislation connected to the expanding marketplace for 'biodegradable' and 'compostable' packaging.

Canada - movement on EPR in a number of provinces (including Individual Producer Responsibility in Ontario), and a timely Smart Prosperity Institute working paper on EPR in Canada. Also, a provincial plastic bag ban, and a move to greater consistency in BC's beverage container redemption program.

USA - lots of action in California including the Governor's recent veto of Bill AB792, potentially significant national legislation to tackle plastic waste, and some sizeable recycling infrastructure developments.

Andrew Macdonald
PAC NEXT

CANADIAN NEWS

Canada-wide Strategy on Zero Plastic Waste: Phase 1 Action Plan approved

Building on the [Ocean Plastics Charter](#), the **Canada-wide Strategy on Zero Plastic Waste** provides a framework for action. Approved by the CCME in June, [Phase 1 of the Strategy's Action Plan](#) focuses on: product design, single-use plastics, collection systems, recycling capacity and domestic markets. Phase 2 to come in 2020 (see p. 3 of Phase 1 doc for details). The government's website highlights key current actions:

- banning single-use plastics that cause harm **as early as 2021** where supported by scientific evidence and warranted, and taking other steps to reduce plastic waste.
- working with provinces and territories to develop consistent **EPR** programs so the same rules for collection and recycling apply to all companies that produce plastic products.

CCME's 2019 stakeholder workshops yielded six priority areas that inform Phase 1:

1. Extended producer responsibility
2. Single-use and disposable products
3. National performance requirements and standards
4. Incentives for a circular economy
5. Infrastructure and innovation investments
6. Public procurement and green operations

Specific to EPR the plan cites four key action areas (p. 4):

- Common material categories and product definitions
- Performance standards to guide reuse and recycling programs
- Options to encourage innovation and reduce costs
- Clear monitoring and verification approaches

EPR tools and guidance developed by CCME will be completed by the end of 2020 and available for application at the discretion of jurisdictions.

Smart Prosperity Institute (SPI) - EPR Working Paper

In October SPI released a working paper [Extended Producer Responsibility in Canada](#). It describes Product Stewardship, and Shared and Full EPR programs. The discussion section touches on incentives to improve environmental performance, reducing free ridership, enforcement, and interprovincial coordination.

The Canadian Stewardship Services Alliance (CSSA) held its Annual Stewards Meeting Oct 24th. In the [Report to Stewards](#) Chair John Coyne notes that:

“Provinces without EPR are looking to implement it and those that currently have EPR are considering full responsibility. As stewards we cannot and should not be on the sidelines as these discussions take place.”

Two fall articles note EPR progress in Nova Scotia and Alberta:

Nova Scotia: A September [article](#) reports that NS municipalities have called on the provincial government to institute EPR, having submitted a formal proposal to the Department of Environment in the spring. A report written for the municipalities by engineering firm AECOM Canada Ltd. highlights EPR as a means of improving the efficiency of solid waste management systems. Environment Minister Gordon Wilson said he first wanted to see the study, the results of which are reported in this [article](#).

Alberta: A September [Calgary Herald](#) article reports that municipalities have been lobbying the Alberta government to move forward with EPR. Environment Minister Jason Nixon has pledged to “move forward on the recycling file.”

Commodity Price Decreases Affect CSSA Budgets

Page 5 in the CSSA Report to Stewards notes that commodity price changes affect all CSSA program budgets, but the timing of the impacts varies program to program. Price decreases since 2017 were attributed primarily to China’s import ban. Most affected were printed paper and paper packaging, whereas plastics, glass and metals pricing have been fairly stable.

The Report also includes 2018 reviews/2019 updates from the four main stewardship organizations. Highlights include:

Recycle BC:

- Revised five year Packaging & Paper Product EPR Plan approved by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy June 28, 2019.
- New plan focuses on program performance and reporting enhancements, expanded accessibility, and special projects including the First Nations Recycling Initiative.
- Beginning in 2020, Recycle BC will begin reporting on GHG emissions associated with the collection and processing of PPP.

Multi-material Stewardship Western (MMSW):

- MMSW notes that the process of updating the collector payment model developed in 2018 continues in 2019 with further studies of Saskatchewan supply-chain expenses.
- MMSW notes that the cost studies are major undertakings - the current study will conclude in 2020 and inform payment model changes for the 2021 budget.
- MMSW launched an educational campaign in September to remind residents about the importance of proper recycling to reduce contamination.

Multi-material Stewardship Manitoba (MMSM):

- Manitoba Government announced it will consult on the elimination of single-use plastic bags - MMSM will participate along with industry members.
- Canada Fibers Ltd.'s newly constructed MRF began accepting and processing the City of Winnipeg residential material on October 1, 2019.

Stewardship Ontario (SO)

- Blue Box Program transition to full producer responsibility initiated by an August direction letter from the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP).
- Stewardship Ontario required to submit a wind up plan to the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRA) by June 30, 2020.
- Expected that Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority will approve the plan by Dec 31, 2020. Ontario government will develop and consult on regulations to support the new responsibility framework for PPP.
- The first communities will be transitioned beginning January 1, 2023, with the entire province operating under the new framework by December 31, 2025.

Other notable Canadian news:

Éco Entreprises Québec (ÉEQ)

- On Oct 23rd ÉEQ hosted an online Schedule of Contributions consultation, where approximately 350 participants learned about significantly increased contributions to fund curbside recycling, and the factors impacting those contributions.
- Consultation documents can be found [here](#), and EEQ's position on EPR is worth reviewing in the Oct 18th posting '[EPR at the core of an effective system](#)'.

In **PEI** the **Plastic Bag Reduction Act** came into effect July 1, 2019. Details can be found on the PEI government [website](#). Key provisions include:

- As a business, you can no longer provide plastic checkout bags to customers.
- No biodegradable or compostable checkout bags are permitted.
- Paper bags are an option (with a minimum charge of \$0.15 per bag) or reusable checkout bags (with a minimum charge of \$1.00 per bag).

In **BC**, a [Resource Recovery article](#) reports, the majority of beverage containers in British Columbia had their deposit values increase from 5 cents to 10 cents at the start of this month, creating more consistency in the provincial redemption program.

City of Toronto: On Nov 10th the City finished collecting feedback on approaches and timelines to reduce specific single-use and takeaway items in Toronto. To stay connected to this process one can sign-up to the City's Long-term Waste Management Strategy [email list](#).

CSSA's Material Cost Differentiation (MCD) Project update

The MCD Project is developing the methodology to consistently measure the impacts that material characteristics have on the cost of recycling system activities. The MCD's 13-member Steward Consultation Committee (SCC) provides feedback to the MCD project team and external experts. Updates can be found [here](#). The Sept 2019 update notes the project team and the SCC expect to meet in late 2019 or early 2020 in preparation for consultation with the broader steward community.

U.S. NEWS

RECOVER Act

As noted in [Waste Dive](#), the ‘Realizing the Economic Opportunities and Value of Expanding Recycling’ (RECOVER) Act (H.R. 5115) was introduced on November 15, America Recycles Day, and is sponsored by U.S. Representatives Tony Cárdenas and Larry Bucshon. The bill is designed to improve national recycling infrastructure and create recycling-related jobs in the US. It would allocate \$500 million in matching federal grants to eligible states, local municipalities and tribal governments to invest in improving their recycling infrastructure, programs and education. Of note is the federal government’s increasing role in recycling, as well as the bill’s preclusion of EPA funds to support incineration.

AMERIPEN Salon Series: National R&D Strategy

The 2019 AMERIPEN Salon Series brought together stakeholders from across the value chain to address challenges to the continued success of the packaging industry. There were four salons, the reports for which may be found [here](#). The second salon was ‘Defining a National Research and Development Strategy for Circular Packaging’, with these key takeaways:

- Desire for more value chain dialogue to help proactively explore impacts from packaging shifts
- Exploration of tax incentives for R&D and increased recycled content use
- Development of an end market portfolio by material. This would help communicate design restrictions as well as promote reuse options

Senators drafting major legislation to tackle plastic waste crisis

The Oct. 29th [statement](#) from Senator Udall notes, “In the coming days, we will be circulating a discussion draft of our landmark [federal] legislation to transform our antiquated and inefficient recycling system to put more responsibility on the producers who package and sell these products in our communities. One of the core principles of environmental law is ‘the polluter pays’, and cleaning up and preventing plastic waste from entering our environment should not be the sole responsibility of the taxpayer.”

California Governor vetoes recycled content legislation

As reported by [Plastics News](#), on Oct. 12th California Gov. Newsom vetoed recycled-content legislation (AB792) for plastic bottles, saying he supported the goals but opposed last-minute changes designed to mollify the beverage industry. According to Plastics News the bill would have created the world's toughest legal mandate for recycled content in plastic bottles - up to 50% by 2030. The Legislature returns to session in January, when bills can be reconsidered.

Sweeping Plastics initiative submitted in California

A November [Resource Recycling](#) update describes an initiative, called the California Recycling and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act of 2020, that gives regulators the power to charge producers fees for selling single-use plastic packaging.

Compostable Product Labelling Laws

An October [Packaging Digest article](#) notes that new bills aim to address confusion with compostable package labelling. Washington's HB 1569 (effective July 2020) and California's proposed (but recently tabled) SB 54 outline labeling requirements for all compostable products, including product packaging, food serveware and bags. Washington's bill requires that all compostable products be labeled in a way that is "easily and readily identifiable" and include a certification logo or the word "Compostable."

Bans and Taxes on Plastic Products

This October [Waste Dive article](#) provides a useful look at the competing forces in debates around plastic product bans and taxes, with examples from various US cities and states. The article notes a site, [PlasticBagLaws.org](#), that tracks US plastic bag legislation and which reports around a dozen states have some form of preemption law in place.

PureCycle Technologies scaling its Ohio production capacity

In September [PureCycle Technologies announced](#) it successfully completed purified waste carpet from its Feedstock Evaluation Unit (FEU), transforming discarded carpet into clear, odorless, Ultra-Pure Recycled Polypropylene (UPRP) resin through its proprietary plastics recycling technology. The FEU is the first of two phases for PureCycle's plant in Hanging Rock, Ohio. The second phase is planned to come online in the summer of 2021.

Aluminum Recycling Infrastructure investment in Georgia

In November a [Resource Recycling update](#) reports that Novelis, the world's largest recycler of aluminum, will invest tens of millions of dollars expanding its recycling capabilities and improving safety at its Georgia plant.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

New Plastics Economy (NPE) Global Commitment Report

The Canadian Stewardship Services Alliance signed the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, and in October the Global Commitment [2019 Progress Report](#) was released. Page 43 notes that the use of recycled-content is also being stimulated by governments. This includes post-consumer recycled content minimum thresholds, and EPR regulation.

NPE: Reuse book launched

In June the New Plastics Economy initiative launched a [Reuse book publication](#), which provides a framework to understand reuse, identifies six major benefits of reuse, and maps 69 reuse examples. Based on an evaluation of more than 100 initiatives and interviews with over 50 experts, it aims to inspire and help structure thinking. It provides a basic description of how different reuse models work as well as typical implementation challenges.

NPE: new Pioneer Projects

Also in June NPE announced three new [Pioneer Projects](#), and corresponding reports.

- Holy Grail - tagging plastic packaging to facilitate accurate sorting and high-quality recycling
- Lodestar - an alternative modelling to the conventional Plastics Reprocessing Facility (PRF) which offers potential advantages of combining mechanical and chemical recycling in a single facility
- Proof - the design and prototyping of a plastic-based flexible packaging solution that facilitates higher quality recycling and contains recycled content

Complications associated with global sales of recovered plastics

[This Resource Recycling article](#) provides an interesting snapshot into where (in this case US) recovered plastic goes internationally, noting some of the complications with global sales.

UK MPs call for tax on all single-use plastic packaging

In September the [UK's Independent reported](#) that the government has unveiled plans to improve recycling rates, with a greater responsibility on producers to pay for the costs of dealing with packaging. It also called for a plastic packaging tax – which will tax packaging with less than 30% recycled content – to have lower fees for higher levels of recycled material.

European Bioplastics responds to European Waste Management position paper on Biodegradable and Biobased Plastics

In September 2019 European Bioplastics (EUBP) provided a [detailed response](#) to FEAD's (European Federation of Waste Management and Environmental Services) position paper "Biodegradable and Bio-Based Plastics". EUBP argues that FEAD's understanding of how a circular economy can be achieved is incomplete.

HELPFUL LINKS

Canadian Stewardship
Services Alliance

<http://www.cssalliance.ca/latest-news>

BC

<https://recyclebc.ca/stewards/steward-news/>

Alberta

<https://www.recycle.ab.ca/public-policy>

Saskatchewan

<http://www.mmsk.ca/notices-alerts>

Manitoba

<http://stewardshipmanitoba.org/mmsm/whats-new/>

Ontario

<http://www.stewardshipontario.ca/latest-news/>
<https://rpra.ca/latest-news/>

Quebec

<http://www.eeq.ca/en/news-and-documentation/news/>

Nova Scotia

<http://www.novascotia.ca/nse/waste/>

New Brunswick:

https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/elg/environment/content/land_waste.html

Newfoundland & Labrador:

<https://www.cnwmc.com/>

PEI <https://www.iwmc.pe.ca/>

North West Territories

<https://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/en/services/waste-reduction-and-recycling>

Yukon

<https://yukon.ca/en/waste-and-recycling>

Nunavut

<https://plasticactioncentre.ca/directory/plastics-in-nunavut/>

U.S.

<https://www.ameripen.org/>
<https://www.epa.gov/smm/advancing-sustainable-materials-management-facts-and-figures-report>

Europe

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/target_review.htm
<http://www.europen-packaging.eu/downloads/1608.html>

Waste Dive: Solid Waste &
Recycling News

<https://www.wastedive.com/>

Resource Recycling:

<https://resource-recycling.com/>

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