



# CARTON COUNCIL

[www.recyclecartons.ca](http://www.recyclecartons.ca)

## Upcoming Events



**September 20-21, 2022**

### **Conference on Canadian Stewardship**

The CCC is a proud sponsor of the upcoming [Conference on Canadian Stewardship](#), which will take place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. The CCC's Managing Director looks forward to part-taking in this engaging and thought-provoking bi-annual event.

## Past Events

The CCC's Managing Director was present at the [Salon des Technologies Environnementales du Quebec](#), held in Quebec City, May 17-18.

The CCC was a proud sponsor of the [Municipal Waste Association's Spring Workshop](#), held in Huntsville, May 24-26.

The CCC was a proud sponsor of the [Canadian Waste to Resource Conference](#) organized by the Ontario Waste Management Association and held May 30-31 in Blue Mountain, Ontario. CCC's MD facilitated a Track on Extended Producer Responsibility.

## CARTON COUNCIL OF CANADA NEWSLETTER

# Summer 2022

## NEW FUNDING PROGRAM LAUNCHED TO REINVIGORATE CARTON RECYCLING IN ONTARIO — BLUE BOX REFORM PRESENTS OPPORTUNITY

### **A WORRISOME DOWNTURN IN THE REPORTED RECOVERY RATE FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE CARTONS IN ONTARIO HAS SURFACED IN THE LAST FEW YEARS.**

The rate determined by Stewardship Ontario which was 52.7% in 2019, now sits at just 40.3%. As Canada's most populous province and biggest carton consumer, the situation in Ontario is a particular cause for concern. Notably, no similar regression has been reported anywhere else in the country.

The carton recovery rate in Ontario is calculated by dividing the estimated quantity of post-consumer cartons sold to end markets by material recovery facilities (MRFs) in a given year by the quantity of new cartons thought to have been put on the market in the province by producers that same year. While the precise reasons for the drop are unclear, known challenges experienced by some Ontario residential recycling programs in recent times, including COVID, labour shortages, access to technology and market conditions, are likely contributing factors.

As part of efforts to address the situation, Carton Council of Canada announced a new funding program this past May. Up to \$70,000 have been made available to all municipalities and waste management companies that operate a MRF in Ontario and to the service boards, solid waste authorities, not-for-profit organizations and other entities involved in residential recycling.

Any project from the above organizations that aims to increase carton recovery in the province is eligible to receive a portion of the funds. The

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**\$70,000 in new funding**  
available to increase carton recovery  
in Ontario

Submit your project  
by July 4



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funds can be applied to any relevant initiative including consulting services, audits, pilot projects, new equipment, MRF refurbishments and awareness campaigns. Cartons need not even be the sole focus; they can be part of a broader program.

The massive preparations underway in the province to transition to a fully producer-led Blue Box program are naturally capturing much of the attention and energy of the sector's actors these days. Carton Council of Canada believes this period nonetheless presents an important opportunity for service providers—both public and private—to make improvements in order to get ready for the new system and position themselves as strategic long-term partners to Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs). Applying for a portion of the available funds may help this process.

[Learn more about this program](#) and how to apply for funding. The deadline for submission is July 4, 2022.

### ONTARIO BLUE BOX REFORM: HERE'S WHAT THE PROS ARE UP TO, AND HOW THEY PLAN TO SUPPORT CARTON RECYCLING

It's far from an overstatement to say that the development of Ontario's new Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Blue Box program is a complex affair. To inject an element of competition, provincial policy makers encouraged the participation of multiple producer responsibility organizations (PROs) in the new system, which is now scheduled to begin gradual deployment in little more than a year. Three full-service PROs have consequently thrown their hats into the ring: [Circular Materials Ontario](#) (CMO), [Resource Recovery Alliance](#) (RRA) and [RYSE Solutions](#), who are now called upon to collaborate. A fourth, supplementary PRO, [Canadian Beverage Container Recycling Association](#) (CBCRA), is also part of the picture to assist with the out-of-home collection of beverage containers.

To try to shed some light on this fast-evolving file for the benefit of carton users (that is, food and beverage producers that package their goods in gable top or aseptic cartons) and recycling-sector partners in Ontario and across Canada—and admittedly for ourselves as well!—Carton Council of Canada recently reached out to the four organizations. All were kind enough to take some time from their busy schedules to answer our questions. Here's some of what we learned.

While the PROs must work together to design and eventually run a common collection system, they will be competing on what happens to materials once collected and how to service producers. Carton users, like all other producers, must therefore choose one of the PROs to fulfill their new recycling obligations in the province. Each of the three main PROs presents a slightly different offer to meet those needs. Circular Materials, for instance, highlights its not-for-profit, producer-led model; RRA, the depth of the experience of its staff with EPR programs across Canada; and RYSE, its personalized approach that's particularly well suited to small and mid-sized producers. Each is currently still in the process of signing up producers and more information on everything they bring to the



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table is available on their websites. CBCRA, however, is a bit different on that front. Through a partnership with CMO, beverage producers that sign up with the latter are automatically represented by CBCRA as well.

CMO will submit an “Initial Report” to Ontario’s regulator, the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRA), that will outline the set-up of the new system. The report due July 1 will contain a plan for the collection of Blue Box materials at sites mandated by the new regulation (called “eligible sources”), which include residences, schools and specified public places, like certain municipal parks and playgrounds. The new system is scheduled to be fully operational by the end of 2025. To ensure the collection of recyclables remains unaffected during the transition, contracts will be offered to municipalities to continue to offer their services until that point.

In addition to participating in meeting recovery targets for five broad material categories (paper, rigid plastic, flexible plastic, glass and metal), beverage producers will have to collectively achieve a 75% recovery rate for their containers, including cartons, between 2026 and 2029, and 80% beyond that point. To meet those objectives, beverage producers have realized they will need to arrange collection at other sites beyond the mandated eligible sources. CBCRA will be responsible for ensuring collection of these containers from non-regulated public spaces (e.g., pools and municipal buildings) as well as from private locations such as theme parks, sports venues, and businesses.

Other details concerning cartons are still sparse at this time. In general, we reassuringly took away from our exchanges that food and beverage cartons of all sizes would receive the same level of attention from the PROs as any other type of recyclable container. We’ve also received assurances that cartons will be featured on the harmonized materials list which will come into effect in 2026. This would mean that all types of cartons will be accepted for recycling from all eligible sources in the province. In the meantime, municipalities will continue to determine what residents can put into their blue boxes. Currently, a handful still unfortunately don’t accept cartons. As for sorting, the indications at this time are that PROs will likely require materials recovery facilities (MRFs) to produce dedicated carton bales, which allow for cartons’ optimal recycling, although this still needs to be confirmed.

Once the collection system has been arranged, other steps will follow quickly in view of next year’s launch. The main PROs will undertake joint promotion and education activities as part of the common collection system. On its end, CBCRA will conduct its own initiatives to support meeting beverage container targets and has already begun planning a province-wide awareness campaign that will include cartons. As the PROs are individually responsible for the other aspects of the Blue Box program after collection, each will need to procure the required sorting services from MRFs. Then will come arrangements with end markets for the materials’ actual recycling. CMO even alluded to the possibility of collaborations with counterparts in other provinces to favour domestic recyclers. One thing’s for certain, the months ahead continue to promise a flurry of activity.

### MRF PROFILES: CITY OF KINGSTON, CITY OF PETERBOROUGH

In the last few months, Isabelle Faucher, Managing Director of Carton Council of Canada, has had the opportunity to visit two of Ontario’s Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs): one located in Kingston, Ontario; the other, in Peterborough, Ontario.

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CCC's Managing Director (left) and Eden Cameron, Waste Services Coordinator at the City of Kingston (right) standing in front of a bale of cartons.



The City of Peterborough's MRF was upgraded in 2019, with an estimated \$6-8 million in investment in equipment. The City took this opportunity to install signage identifying key stations throughout the facility.

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### City of Kingston Material Recovery Facility

On April 14, 2022, Isabelle had the opportunity to visit the City of Kingston's sorting facility. There, she met with Eden Cameron, Waste Services Coordinator, and spoke with Adam Mueller, Supervisor, Solid Waste Disposal.

The facility services more than 57,000 households in Kingston and many surrounding municipalities as well. It has an estimated annual throughput of 11,550MT, and sold almost 113 MT of carton tonnage in 2021. They have been making a carton grade since at least 1999. A small retrofit took place 1.5 years ago to upgrade the MRF's sorting equipment. Emterra provides processing services, but the City markets the recyclables itself.

In Kingston, cartons are collected as part of the fibre stream instead of the container stream so they don't compete with other 3-D materials. At the MRF, cartons are hand sorted at the end of the fibre line. For cartons that are erroneously found in the container stream, sorters pick them out and redirect them to the fibre stream, when this is possible.

According to the Kingston team, they see significantly more products packaged in cartons coming through the facility than in recent years (e.g., broth and dairy alternatives such as almond milk) and, in their experience, the cartons are usually clean.

Acknowledging that the market fluctuations for cartons can be challenging, the Kingston MRF team encourages other MRFs to consider a carton grade, reporting that cartons represent 5-6 loads/per year for them, which they see as well worth the effort to keep this material out of landfill.

Under the new Blue Box Regulation, Kingston is set to transition its program in 2025 and is still in the process of determining how it wishes to proceed in terms of post-collection operations.

### City of Peterborough's Materials Recovery Facility

On May 10th, Isabelle was also able to visit The City of Peterborough's Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). Here, she was able to speak with both David Deem, Senior Operations Manager (for both the Peterborough and Renfrew MRF) and Todd Petherick, the MRF's Plant Supervisor. Both are employed by Emterra.

This city-owned MRF services both the City and County of Peterborough and operates a 2-stream program: one stream is for containers while the second is for paper products and film plastic. The Peterborough plant operates one shift per day, processes approximately 10 tons per hour, and produces an estimated 15,000 MT per year.

According to the team, production of a carton grade is a requirement of the City of Peterborough that has been in place for many years. The MRF was upgraded in 2019, with an estimated \$6-8 million in investment in equipment. The process is now all automated through a single, ultramodern Human Machine Interface panel - it takes only the push of a single button to produce a fibre recipe. Fibres and containers are processed on different days, with the system switched accordingly.

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In Peterborough, cartons are hand-picked off the container residue line. The team here estimates that approximately 95% of the polycoat bale is made up of cartons, while approximately 4.5% are hot beverage cups.

What the facility lacks in size (the facility is approximately 15,000 square feet), they make up for in innovation. The small footprint inspired the Peterborough team to install a set of ceiling conduits through which materials, including cartons, are air blown to their respective bunkers.

Both the Kingston and Peterborough MRFs demonstrate that even small MRFs can be mighty. In each case, the MRFs have leveraged their expertise, creativity and resources available to them to have a significant, positive impact on the recycling of cartons.

### CARTON COUNCIL OF CANADA LAUNCHES 2022 COMMUNITY EDUCATION AWARD IN QUEBEC

On April 22, 2022, the Carton Council of Canada launched the organization's second Community Education Award program developed to support and enhance recycling education in Canadian communities.

This year, the first fifteen Quebec-based organizations to sign up for the program will be eligible to receive \$2,000 each by demonstrating their proactive recycling education efforts, featuring food and beverage cartons. Eligible organizations include municipalities, sorting centres, service boards, and any other organization that has recycling education as part of its mandate.

The deadline for registration was June 3rd and participants have until November 25th to submit their entries. We look forward to communicating the results of their efforts sometime in December.



#### Inform Your Residents on How to Recycle Their Food and Beverage Cartons!

Up to 15 communities in Quebec can receive \$2K each for recycling education efforts that include cartons.



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### ECOSCHOOLS CANADA AND CARTON COUNCIL OF CANADA PARTNER ON CARTON RECYCLING VIDEO

[EcoSchools Canada](#) is an organization dedicated to nurturing environmental leaders, reducing the ecological impact of schools, and building sustainable school communities. EcoSchools offers a [certification program](#) for K-12 schools that nurtures environmental learning and climate action.

Carton Council of Canada has been pleased to partner with EcoSchools over the last two years. Most recently, this collaboration has focused on the production of communication tools to support carton diversion in schools. As part of this sponsorship, EcoSchools filmed a short [video on carton recycling](#) at the Toronto French School in October 2021.



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