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Most Canadian boxes, cartons now 100% recycled content

(29 June 2015) - Most boxes and cartons manufactured in Canada are now 100% recycled content, made completely from old boxes and other used paper material collected from the back of factories, supermarkets, office buildings, or from residential Blue Box programs.

“We have 13 mills across Canada producing nothing but 100% recycled content board,” explains John Mullinder, executive director of the industry’s environmental council, PPEC. The council surveys the industry every two years and has been tracking recycled content since 1990.

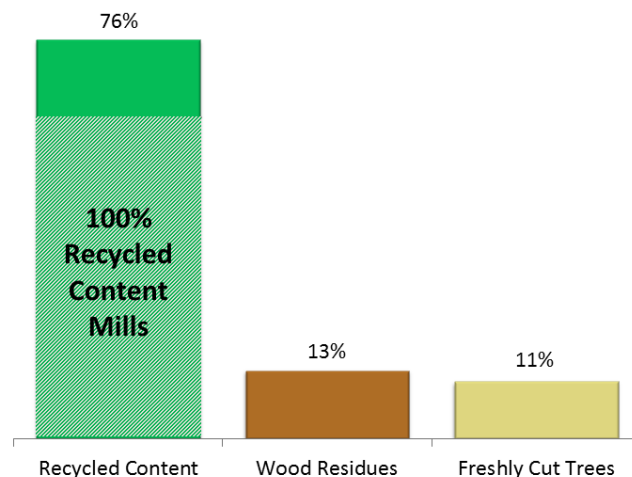
“There has been a significant increase in average recycled content over the years,” he says, “from 47% back in 1990 to almost 80% today. Most Canadian packaging mills, in fact, now make a 100 percent recycled content product, that’s the way they were built. A few mills blend recycled material with wood residues (chips, shavings and sawdust left over from lumber operations), and three mills use wood residues or freshly-cut trees. When you add it up,” he says, “the Canadian industry hardly uses any freshly-cut trees to make packaging at all.”

Any fresh trees that are harvested for packaging purposes all come from commercial forests that have been [independently certified as sustainably managed](#). And under provincial law, these forest areas [must be successfully regenerated](#) through tree planting and direct seeding or naturally. [The harvest and regrowth of Canada’s commercial forest is currently in balance, according to Natural Resources Canada](#).

For more information on how recycled content is defined and measured, how it differs between packaging types, and its relationship to virgin material, see PPEC’s background report [Understanding Recycled Content](#).

- 30 -

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Source: PPEC Domestic Shipments, 2014

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