



Paper & Paperboard Packaging
Environmental Council (PPEC)

- PRESS RELEASE IMMEDIATE -

Paper industry echoes concerns about burning

(03 April, 2007) The paper industry is concerned that burning too much garbage will sabotage Ontario's recycling efforts.

That's because a lot of what people throw away is perfectly recyclable paper of one kind or another.

"We want all the good quality paper or board that we can get," says John Mullinder, executive director of the Paper & Paperboard Packaging Environmental Council (PPEC). "Ontario paper mills recycle some 2.3 million tonnes of used paper or board every year, turning them into new boxes to ship Ontario products worldwide and to make recycled-content newspapers for North American publishers.

"The problem is that we can't get enough used paper or board in Ontario, forcing the mills to import almost a million tonnes from the United States just to meet demand. When Canada is one of the world's largest importers of recovered paper; when the recycling markets are there for most household paper materials; and when the value of the paper far exceeds its calorific value; it makes no sense to burn. We haven't promoted the expansion of paper collection in the Blue Box over the years through investments in million-dollar paper mill equipment, just to see it all go up in smoke."

PPEC acknowledges that energy-from-waste (EFW) has a part to play in an overall provincial waste management strategy, which doesn't appear to exist at the moment, and is concerned that burning garbage is being seized upon as a quick political and/or technical fix to get around pending waste transfer problems with Michigan.

"In our view, EFW should only be used on residual materials and those that are too contaminated with food residue or chemicals to be safely used again to deliver products. Only municipalities that have met a very high recycling and composting rate should be allowed to entertain this option. The province has to step up to the plate and show some leadership on this issue, leadership based on sound science and not political expediency."

It would also be helpful, says the council, if the province were to promote greater Blue Box recycling (and therefore less garbage in the first place) through an incentive-based approach rather than hiding behind the current ("this is not a tax") industry funding formula that effectively means the more you

recover, the more it costs, penalizing the materials being collected (mostly paper) over those going straight to landfill.

(30)

PPEC serves as a national umbrella group for producers and converters of paper-based packaging. The producers are the mills that produce containerboard, boxboard and kraft papers, and the converters those who turn these materials into corrugated boxes, boxboard cartons, and paper bags and sacks.

Because of its cross-over membership, PPEC also represents more than just packaging interests. Several of its mill members also produce and/or recycle non-packaging paper grades such as newsprint and writing paper.

Paper Facts

- ❑ Paper materials currently represent some 71% (by weight) of the dry recyclables available in Ontario households for recycling.¹
- ❑ Paper is by far the major material captured by the Blue Box (some 82% of its contents).¹
- ❑ Paper recovery from households in Ontario is currently 65% (with some paper categories in the 70% to 80% range).¹
- ❑ Paper is the major revenue source for municipalities (providing \$62.9 million in 2005, some 62% of total Blue Box revenues).¹
- ❑ Ontario paper mills recycle some 2.3 million tonnes of used paper or board every year (to make new boxes to ship Ontario products worldwide or recycled-content newspapers for North American publishers).²
- ❑ Some 80% of our feedstock comes from industrial sources right here in Ontario (from the back of supermarkets, factories, office towers and shops) or is imported from the United States.²
- ❑ One large grocery supermarket chain recycles four times as many corrugated boxes every year than all 200 Ontario municipal Blue Box programs put together. Toronto's Blue Box supplies just 5% of what the mills recycle, Ottawa 2 per cent.^{2 1}
- ❑ We import almost a million tonnes of used paper or board from the United States every year because we can't get enough in Ontario.²
- ❑ We lead all industries in levels of recycled content (an average of almost 60% for domestic shipments of paper-based packaging).²

¹Waste Diversion Ontario, Stewardship Ontario household generation, capture and revenue data for 2005.

²PPEC analysis of mill data supplied by the Pulp & Paper Products Council.

- Paper is the only packaging material made from a renewable resource.³
- Less than 12% of Canadian boxes, bags and cartons are actually made from freshly-cut trees.²

- Almost 70% of the paper boxes, bags and cartons used in Canada are re-used or recycled.⁴
- Most paper packaging can be recycled or composted.³

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³PPEC (www.ppec-paper.com) Factsheets.

⁴National Packaging Survey commissioned by Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (1996).