

Ridge Meadows Recycling Society

Recycling Report

NOVEMBER, 2015



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Welcome to the New Sort

For those of you who picked up your new Red & Grey recycling boxes this summer, you have probably gotten used to our new **4-sort system**. If you don't have your new recycling boxes yet, you can order new ones online or at our office, or continue to use your old ones until they wear out.



We switched to the new 4-sort for a couple of reasons:
-many residents had issues with bags blowing away or tearing, so we wanted to replace them with stronger, more durable boxes
-the new MMBC program collects all newspaper, office paper, magazines, and cardboard together, so it no longer made sense to ask residents to continue sorting it

How do YOU feel about moving to a 4-sort?

2015 HOLIDAY RECYCLING PICKUP SCHEDULE:

No Blue Box Pickup Friday, Dec.25 or Friday, Jan.1

*** SPECIAL PICKUP ON *
* SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27 *
* FOR RESIDENTS WITH *
* FRIDAY RECYCLING PICKUP ***

Regular Friday pickup resumes January 8



Bill Elder Looks at the Problem with Plastics...

On most plastic containers there is a recycling number from one to seven. Most people think that if they see the number on the container and place the item in their recycling bin then the item will be recycled, unfortunately this is not true. Many plastic containers are simply not recycled as there is no market for the product. All plastics can be collected but for them to be truly recycled there must be an end market, a company who wants to buy the containers and make them into a new product.

The Ridge Meadows Recycling Society used to only collect #s 1, 2, 4 and 5 as we were confident that we could sell these containers to an end user who would actually recycle the plastic into a new product.

Now that MMBC is collecting all plastic containers, they send them all to Merlin Plastics - a local processing facility. The BC Ministry of Environment has regulations around marketing these commodities and what happens to them, but the abundance of plastic, - and in particular, the abundance of low-grade, difficult to recycle plastic - continues to be a concern.

I think it is time for an honest discussion about what to do about the huge amount of plastic containers we are using. A quick tour of any supermarket shows us that the majority of consumer goods are in plastic packaging. Local residents know that we now have a big red bin for plastics, it's the biggest bin because plastics take up the most room in our trucks and at the recycling facility.

Many debates are going on about the safety of plastics, the islands of plastic garbage in our oceans, the use of fossils fuels to make plastics etc. etc. For industry there are huge advantages to plastics. Plastic containers are light, resist corrosion, are durable and easy to manufacture. There is little doubt that plastics are here to stay but are there some things that could be done to try and control the overwhelming amount of plastics used in the world?

Here are some topics that need to be discussed with the idea of how can we reduce our dependence on plastics:

->Which plastics are most easily recycled? Could all products that must be in a plastic container be in the one that is most easily recycled? Ban all other plastics.

->Reduce the amount of plastics used in packaging and mandate that any plastic packaging must be the most easily recycled plastic.

->Ban all plastic water bottles, build more water fountains, it is amazing to think that up until the last few years we got along quite well without plastic water bottles.

->Investigate the feasibility of going back to re-usable glass pop bottles.

These are just a few ideas, and to be honest I'm not too hopeful that we can reduce the amount of plastic we use. With the recent news that Metro Vancouver has narrowed its search for an incinerator to 4 or 5 sites there will be little incentive for the plastic industry to change their practices. If the incinerator is built, problem solved, just burn the plastic.

"All plastics can be collected, but for them to be truly recycled, there must be an end market."

For most people concerned about the environment this is not a suitable solution but unfortunately unless there is massive opposition this is likely be the reality.

Bill Elder, Board Member, Ridge Meadows Recycling Society

Bill Elder has resided in Maple Ridge since 1972, and taught school with the local district until his retirement in 2002. He has a keen interest in improving the environment and has been a member of the Recycling Society for over 15 years.



Ridge Meadows Recycling Nominated for Business Excellence Award

We are thrilled to be nominated in the **Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Business Excellence Awards!**

We are in good company for "**Non-Profit of the Year**" along with fellow nominees Katie's Place Animal Shelter, MRPM Community Services, MR Community Foundation, PM Paddling Club, and the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society.

Congratulations to all nominees and thank you to the Chamber of Commerce for recognizing those that make our community great!



Maple Ridge National "Communities in Bloom" Winner



At the end of July, we were honoured to be one of the stops on the National "Communities in Bloom" judges' tour. We gave a tour of the Recycling Depot and showed photos from events we work on throughout the year (Earth Day, Waste Reduction Week), initiatives with Community Partners, our recycling pickup services, and other programs we provide to the community (Wildsafe BC education programs, the Low-Flow Toilet Tax Credit, the Brush Chipping Program, and Composter/Solar Cone/Rainbarrel Sales.

We were ecstatic to hear that Maple Ridge is the national winner for Communities with a population over 50,000! Way to go, MR!!

Have you seen the MR Recycling Depot Lately?



If you've been to the Maple Ridge Recycling Depot lately, you may have noticed our new signage. The colours now follow our new 4-sort system, which aligns more closely with Multi Material BC's collection methods and other recycling systems throughout Metro Vancouver. Different areas of the Depot are also colour-coded to help visitors.



BEFORE



AFTER

Q: Why are you now mixing together office paper, newspaper, and cardboard?

A: Before May, 2014, we collected these three paper streams separately because we sold them directly to paper markets. Office paper, being a higher quality, brought a higher price than newspaper, so it made sense to collect and sell it separately. MultiMaterial BC now owns & markets the materials we collect curbside, and since they don't separate the different grades of paper, we no longer ask residents to sort them.



Christmas Schedule Changes for Residents with Friday Recycling Pickup

2015 Holiday Recycling Schedule

There will be **NO BLUE BOX PICKUP** and the Maple Ridge Recycling Depot will be **CLOSED** on:
Fri, Dec. 25, Sat, Dec. 26, and Fri, Jan. 1 (2016)

The Maple Ridge Recycling Depot will be **CLOSING EARLY AT 3:00pm** on Christmas Eve (Thurs, Dec.24) & New Year's Eve (Dec.31)



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*** FOR RESIDENTS WITH ***
*** FRIDAY RECYCLING PICKUP ***

Regular Friday pickup resumes January 8



Happy Holidays from
Ridge Meadows Recycling!
www.rmrecycling.org



If your pickup day is Friday, mark your calendars!

There will be NO Pickup on Dec.25 or Jan.1, but we are adding an **extra pickup day for you on SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27**. If you have Friday pickup, make sure to set out your recycling before 7am and we'll pick it up!

Q: Why doesn't RMRS pick up recycling on statutory (government-legislated) holidays?

A: Our workers need a holiday, too! We've looked at a number of ways to handle stat holidays - shifting pickup days, having a 4 day-schedule & bumping stat days to Friday pickup, paying overtime to pickup on stats - and determined that skipping pickup on a stat holiday and continuing regular pickup the following week is the least confusing and most cost-effective method. If you have extra recycling, you can always bring it to the **Maple Ridge Recycling Depot 7 days a week between 8am - 5pm** - just not on a stat holiday :) During the winter holiday, we add a special pickup day for residents who will miss 2 pickup weeks in a row due to statutory holidays.

Mission Statement

"Ridge Meadows Recycling Society is a community-based, non-profit organization, advocating zero waste, operating responsible waste reduction services and providing environmental education. We employ people with developmental disabilities assisting their integration into the community."

Vision

"A waste free, socially responsible community."



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