

Ridge Meadows Recycling Society

Recycling Report

OCTOBER, 2014



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Revealing the Mysteries of the ORANGE BAG...

The Orange Bag is known by many aliases – the “Red” Bag, the “Can” Bag, and the “Metals” bag are some of the most well-known - but perhaps the most accurate is the “**Can and Carton**” bag. This is because in addition to placing **steel, tin, & aluminum cans** in the bag, Maple Ridge residents can also put **milk, juice, and soup cartons** in it. Any tetra-pak style cartons and gable-top cartons are accepted in the Orange Bag. Did you know you can also put **aluminum foil and aluminum pie plates** in the Orange Bag?



As you know, any recycling collected from the curb must be separated before it is sent to the manufacturer and made into new products to complete the recycling loop. Everything collected curbside in the Orange Bag is sent through a sort line at the Recycling Depot for our Process Workers to remove any contaminants or garbage and separate the materials into two streams - **Cans** go to Encorp and **Cartons** go to Product Care. From there they are either melted down (cans) or their different layers taken apart (cartons) and used to create new products.

The Orange Bag is also evolving. With the new changes to the recycling program through Multi Materials BC (MMBC), **aerosol cans and containers with metal ends** (eg. chips & frozen juice) can now go into the Orange Bag for recycling. Aerosol cans must be from household items like hairspray or whipped cream and **MUST** be empty. Aerosol paint containers are covered under a different program and must be taken to the Maple Ridge Recycling Depot directly.

Check out our website at www.rmrecycling.org to learn more about the (hopefully-not-so-) Mysterious Orange Bag!!

Cans & Cartons

Clean food & drink cans, aluminum foil & pans, metal lids, drink boxes, and milk cartons



NEW!

Aerosol Cans
(**MUST BE EMPTY**),
Aseptic (Tetra-pak style)
Soup Cartons,
Spiral-wound Containers
(eg. frozen juice, chips)



No paint containers



Ash Milton worked for RMRS during the summer and is now back studying Global Resource Systems at UBC

Ash Milton Ponders Space Garbage...

Do you know what happens when a satellite dies? It's a question not many consider. After all, they can't just be brought back down from space. The most likely fate for a decommissioned satellite is to either be moved further away from the planet to "disposable orbit" or else to be left in a low earth orbit. Over time, this has resulted in about 19,000 debris items larger than 2 inches being monitored by space agencies, as well as over 300,000 items smaller than a centimeter. These move at speeds high enough to allow something as small as a fleck of paint to leave a crater on the Space Shuttle Challenger's front window.

Aside from the danger of collision, there is the issue of clouds of debris obstructing future missions. It's one of the unanswered (and outside of industry specialists, unasked) questions of this century: how do we recycle satellites effectively?

There are other questions confronting the recycling industry as well. Both RMRS and the wider industry are still wondering how to effectively recycle multi-layer, multi-material bags like those used for chips and pet foods. Because the mixed materials are tightly pressed together, it's extremely difficult to process. Figuring out what to do with regular plastic bags is also on a lot of people's minds. RMRS is lucky to be one of the few organizations which takes them, but large amounts still end up in people's garbage. The US Environmental Protection Agency estimates only 13% of plastic bags used worldwide get recycled. Some researchers are trying to close the loop between plastics and the petroleum used to make them.

Research at the University of Illinois has been able to recover almost 80% of the fuel used to make the bags through distillation. It would be a great boon for modern society if we were able to develop this process to the point where bags could be recycled easily back into fuel, both providing incentives for recycling and reducing the need for extraction.

"The US Environmental Protection Agency estimates only 13% of plastic bags used worldwide get recycled."

As we go forward, the amount of people who have grown up recycling is increasing. That's a fantastic thing, but it also means that many people have heard about "the three R's" and the other fundamentals innumerable times. I'd like for this article to get people thinking. As we can see, there's tons of work that needs to be done in the recycling industry in order to make the process cheaper and inclusive of a wider range of materials. That means opportunities for businesses, jobs, entrepreneurs, and innovation. The idea of a green economy gets touted a lot by those interested in sustainability, and it too is a vital idea going forward. But it's those who get inspired to think about these problems and who do the drudge work of experimenting, failing, tweaking, and constructing, who will build that economy. If something new you learned from this article catches your interest, go further. Read, research, think, and build. You will be playing a vital role in the path to a more sustainable future. And who knows? Maybe you'll be the one who solves the crisis of the Great Space Garbage Cloud.

Excerpt from RMRS President Carol Botting's Waste Reduction Week Presentation to Maple Ridge Mayor & Council

"Education has always been a huge focus of ours – we have always believed that teaching our youth benefits not just this generation, but the next. Outreach efforts and teachings over the past 40 years have resulted in today's youth having a strong foundation in environmentalism and strong awareness of many of our world's environmental issues.

Children of today are very familiar with the 3Rs as recycling has become mainstream. It is taught at school, practiced at home, and embedded in popular TV shows & culture.



Maple Ridge Mayor & Council receive Litterless Lunchkits from Eric Langton Elementary students to help with their 2013 Waste Reduction Challenge

Perhaps the areas we need to focus on next are the first two Rs, REDUCE and REUSE.

Every year in October, we do something special for Waste Reduction Week.

In 2011, we met 4-year old Recycler of the Year Mason and in 2012 we celebrated the top 40 under 40 up & coming environmental leaders. Last year, Mayor & Council were challenged by Eric Langton Elementary students to use a litterless lunch for two weeks. Are you still using your litterless lunchkits?

This year, we have expanded on this and created a special Waste Reduction Challenge badge for local Guide & Scout Groups.

The Ridge Meadows Recycling Waste Reduction Challenge is for all Guides & Scouts in Maple Ridge. There are different requirements for each age grouping, but they all include visits by our Environmental Educator, Dan Mikolay, and cover recycling in your home, litterless lunches, composting, energy & water conservation – everything you need to know to start reducing your waste."

Congratulations to all badge recipients! Photos coming soon!

For more info on the WRW Challenge, visit rmrecycling.org



RMRS workshop with Beaver Pack in 1987



The Waste Reduction Challenge Badge can be earned by Guide and Scout groups

Holiday Reminder - TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

There will be NO Blue Box Pickup & the Recycling Depot will be CLOSED on **Tuesday, November 11** for the Remembrance Day Statutory Holiday.



History of Waste Reduction Week in Canada

From wrwcanada.com:

Recycling and Waste Reduction Weeks started in the mid-1980s, when a number of recycling councils and environmental organizations began holding provincial events. In 2001, these organizations came together, pooled their resources and expanded their efforts into a national event called Waste Reduction Week in Canada (WRW).

Since 2001, Waste Reduction Week in Canada has been organized by a coalition of non-government, not-for-profit environment groups and governments from each of the 13 participating provincial and territorial jurisdictions across Canada.

Waste Reduction Week engages and empowers Canadians to reduce, reuse and recycle waste. WRW is currently held in the third week of October each year.

WRW's "take action" message calls on all Canadians to adopt more environmentally conscious choices. The Waste Reduction Week educational resources provide information and ideas to reduce waste in all facets of daily living. Reducing waste is one solution to the many environmental challenges we face: climate change, water pollution and preservation of natural resources.

Waste Reduction Week
in Canada



October 20-26, 2014



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."



Ridge Meadows Recycling Society

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