



-Plastic Manufacturers-

Waste Reduction Fact Sheet

INTRODUCTION

Plastics are revolutionary materials; they are long lasting, relatively low cost and light weight. However, if they are managed incorrectly, the costs can outweigh the benefits. The very properties that make plastic products an indispensable asset are also causing them to be carelessly abused. The Plastics Industry is dedicated to being a part of the solution of contemporary society's environmental crisis. By undertaking this stewardship role your company will not only ensure long-term financial gains but, more importantly, play a key role in the restoration of your region's ecological balance. Instituting a waste

management/reduction plan will help to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of production and increase the bottom line your company.

Benefits include:

- ❖ decreased disposal costs
- ❖ reduced liability
- ❖ improved corporate image
- ❖ improved workplace health and safety
- ❖ greater production efficiency
- ❖ decreased waste product

REDUCE

- ❖ The less waste created by the manufacturing of your product the less waste your business/company will be responsible for; in order to accomplish this eliminate any unnecessary or redundant steps in your manufacturing process.
- ❖ Ensure that your business/company utilizes the latest in plastics technology. This enables you to not only reduce your cost of production, but also minimizes the amount of material used per unit of product, creating less waste.
- ❖ Enforce waste minimization in all aspects of your company.
- ❖ Require all idling trucks to turn off their engines; whether they are disembarking raw materials or picking up shipments of your finished product.
- ❖ Use energy-saving fluorescent lights throughout your office space.
- ❖ Make it company policy to limit the amount of inter-office paper transfers, implement an e-mail system instead.
- ❖ Provide hand dryers wherever sinks are located in your company in order to reduce paper towel waste.
- ❖ Make recycling receptacles visible and accessible in key locations such as main doorways into the building, the cafeteria/lunchroom and any office space.
- ❖ These steps will create an atmosphere of waste minimization throughout your business so that it will become second nature to your employees to do so-which is beneficial in terms of cost and the environment.

REUSE

- ❖ If a company has purchased your product but is unable to sell the anticipated quota, offer to repurchase at a lower cost or to collect these unused products in order to divert unnecessary waste from landfill.
- ❖ Offer incentives (i.e., discounts from cost of next shipment) to the wholesalers which purchase your product who collect used containers from their customers-this allows your to reuse the material from your very own product and encourages long term customers.
- ❖ If your product needs to be transported in a box or other type of package, print suggested ways of reusing

your product on its packaging or collect packaging from your clients for reuse.

- ❖ Modify your product so that it can be a multi-purpose unit, this will increase its commercial appeal and increase its life span, slowing its entry into the waste stream.
- ❖ Invest in research that will develop new purposes for the materials used in your product once they have gone through the recycling system. When a practical

alternative is found the economic worth of your product will increase.

- ❖ Invest in energy recovery research which has the potential to eliminate plastics from entering landfill sites at any point in their life-cycle. In fact plastics contain slightly more energy than fossil fuels (i.e. there is a greater energy content in 1 kilogram of some plastics waste than in 1 kilogram of heating oil).

*In order to achieve the target of at least 60% diversion of waste from disposal by 2008, the Province of Ontario has passed regulations requiring specific waste generators to conduct waste audits, develop waste reduction workplans and source separate recyclable materials. Details of Ontario's 3Rs Regulations and guides on audits and workplans can be found on the Ministry of the Environment's website, www.ene.gov.on.ca/pic.htm. A general guide is available (*A Guide to Waste Audits and Reduction Workplans for Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Sectors*).*

This fact sheet and others in the series have been developed by the Association of Municipal Recycling Coordinators (AMRC), and funded by the Province of Ontario, to assist you in your waste diversion efforts.

RECYCLE

- ❖ If your finished product is manufactured with solely virgin material consider altering your practices to incorporate recycled flakes and/or pellets of the appropriate plastic resin required for your product. If your product already contains recycled materials gradually increase the relative percentage of recycled material present in your product.
- ❖ If possible operate plastic recycling facilities at your place of business, such facilities are presently enabling millions of pounds of post-consumer plastics to be turned into new products.
- ❖ In order to recycle more efficiently contact the Environment and Plastics Institute of Canada (EPIC). This organization can provide you with information such as: the latest advances in plastics, and automated systems that can be used by your company to reduce the labour-intensive and cost-inefficient practice of hand sorting recycled plastics.
- ❖ Educate employees on how to separate recyclable materials into their appropriate containers. This

practice not only saves considerable time when the materials are being shipped to a recycling depot but also raises the value of these materials, the 'purer' the recycled material the higher its selling price.

- ❖ Improve the consumer's opinion of plastic products by promoting anti-litter campaigns through your public relations department. The dominant source of litter in our marine and freshwater environments are plastic products that have been inappropriately disposed of-inform your clients that it their actions and not an inherent quality of plastics that are making these products an environmental hazard.
- ❖ If your product it difficult to recycle try to find ways to modify it so that it is not as difficult to process through the recycling process. Try to create a product that can be more easily baled, shredded or otherwise prepared for recycling purposes.
- ❖ Ensure that your product clearly displays the plastic coding system which is essential in order to allow consumers to properly recycle your product.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Ministry of the Environment
Public Information Centre**
1-800-565-4923
picemail@ene.gov.on.ca
www.ene.gov.on.ca/pic.htm

**Canadian Plastics
Industry Association (CPIA)**
905-678-7748
www.cpia.ca

**Environment and Plastics
Industry Council (EPIC)**
****PART OF CPIA****
(905) 678-7748 x.231
www.plastics.ca/epic/

**Ontario Waste Management
Association (OWMA)**
905-791-9500
mgoulding@owma.org
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**Association of Municipal
Recycling Coordinators (AMRC)**
519-823-1990
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www.amrc.ca

Your Local Municipality

This publication is part of a series of Waste Reduction Fact sheets that are available from your local municipality. Additional Fact Sheets can be obtained on a variety of industrial, commercial and institutional sectors (automotive, commercial printing, etc.), and various business operations (e.g. offices, cafeterias and lunch rooms, etc.). Please contact your local municipality for more information.