



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

## Local Recycling Program Changes to Increase Cost-Effectiveness

**Laurentian Valley, ON (July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016)** – At their June 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Ottawa Valley Waste Management Board approved, by resolution, the removal of Polystyrene (commonly referred to as Styrofoam™) and Film Plastic (i.e. grocery bags) from container recycling. Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, for Municipalities serviced by the Ottawa Valley Waste Recovery Centre, this material must be placed in regular garbage, not recycling bins.

Ottawa Valley Waste Management Board Chairman, Laurentian Valley Mayor Steve Bennett, explained the importance of ensuring the Centre is utilizing tax payer's dollars in the most effective way. **"In reality, this material doesn't save significant landfill space. It has limited end markets, causes significant maintenance issues at the Centre and the revenue received from the sale of Styrofoam™ and Film Plastic is far less than the cost to manage it. We could be investing that money and staff time into other waste diversion projects that would save much more landfill space."**

At their May meeting, the Board heard from Centre staff about the problems caused by processing material such as Styrofoam™ and Film Plastics. Mike Birett, Managing Director of the Continuous Improvement Fund, a Provincial organization mandated to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Ontario's Blue Box Program, was invited to speak to the Board at their June 29<sup>th</sup> meeting and provide detailed information on the issues.

**"It's costly to divert problematic, low value materials such as Polystyrene and Film Plastic from the landfill. Those few programs that manage these materials tend to have higher operating costs and receive less Waste Diversion Ontario funding as a result."** Mr. Birett explained to the Board.

Waste Recovery Centre Communication Staff are in the process of developing messaging on this change which will be distributed via local media over the next three months, prior to the October 1<sup>st</sup> date.

**"We will be working hard to clearly convey the message on why the difficult decision to no longer recycle Styrofoam™ and Film Plastic was made."** Explains Sue McCrae, Ottawa Valley Waste Recovery Centre General Manager. **"There were many factors that were considered by the Board. Even the fact that accepting plastic bags for recycling means you also get many non-recyclable plastic bags including sandwich bags, potting soil bags and plastic wrap. These have to be hand sorted by staff so other recyclables are not missed on our conveyor sorting line."**

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