



NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION
OF MUNICIPALITIES

Nova Scotia Can't Runner-Up to New Brunswick On Implementing EPR

By Juanita Spencer, CEO of NSFM

Nova Scotia has a lot to lose if New Brunswick is the first province in Atlantic Canada to establish an EPR program.

If they're first, we'll be harmonizing our recycling standards with theirs, and we'll all be trucking our materials to Aulac, not Amherst.

Nova Scotia is ready now to step up to introduce Atlantic Canada's first EPR program.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a key issue for the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities and the 50 municipalities we represent in this province.

The resolution passed by our members last year distinguishes it as a top priority we're pushing the Province to pass.

Each year, Nova Scotia municipalities pay a combined \$25 million to abide by Solid Waste-Resource Management Regulations implemented by the province in 1995.

Those regulations hold municipalities solely accountable for proper separation of blue bag materials.

In June we forwarded a proposal for EPR to Gordon Wilson, the Nova Scotia Minister of Environment.

An EPR program shifts the responsibility – and the costs – on product producers.

Eighty per cent of Canadian consumers live in areas where producers fund Packaging and Printed Paper (PPP) programs by incorporating those costs into their national product pricing.

So, Nova Scotians are already paying the national product prices that support these programs in other provinces.

In September, our EPR proposal was backed up by an independent, third-party Efficiency Study on Nova Scotia's solid waste management system that was ordered by the provincial government and delivered to Minister Wilson.

“Because producers can plan a provincial or even cross-provincial system, and not just a municipal system, they will be able to capitalize on efficiencies that municipalities cannot, including economies of scale, strategic investment in high-efficiency MRFs, and large-scale system design,” outlines the AECOM Canada Efficiency Study.

“In planning a system for Nova Scotia, producers may also consider pre-planning for an Atlantic Canadian, cross-provincial system to capitalize on future, greater economies of scale. If this is the case, then it might be prudent for Nova Scotia to be an early EPR system adopter to ensure it has the ability to provide early and ongoing influence on system design and the greater potential for local investment.”

The study argues that the nine materials recovery facilities (MRFs) we currently have in NS to process recyclable materials amount to municipal overinvestment, and that reform is required.

AECOM says that an EPR solution would focus on efficiency and use a single MRF for all Atlantic Canada.

Logistically, it makes sense for an EPR model to locate that single Super-MRF near the NB-NS border so it's central to both provinces and facilitates quick service for Prince Edward Island.

If New Brunswick is first out of the gate with EPR, then Aulac, N.B., would be the logical choice.

But locating the facility across the border near Amherst, just 10 kms away, would achieve the same efficiencies *and* benefit Nova Scotians.

Moving beyond infrastructure, all four provincial governments in Atlantic Canada have passed mirroring legislation to reduce red tape and harmonize regulations within and between the provinces.

Advisors tell us that Nova Scotia has developed significantly higher levels of quality in our recycling streams than New Brunswick, and the lower levels of contamination in our materials makes them more marketable.

With the expertise, the geography and the legislation already in place for Nova Scotia's EPR bid, now we just need the political will.

Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities has represented the collective voice of municipalities in the province since 1906.

Members include all 50 of Nova Scotia's municipalities, and the 379 mayors, wardens and councillors that govern them.

For more information, contact:

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