

MISSION Green

ISSUE 3 • NOVEMBER 2005



THE GREEN BIN IT'S WORKING!

Thanks to your efforts, Markham now has one of the highest recycling rates in Canada!

What a difference a year makes! Last year, Markham residents sent two thirds of their garbage for disposal in Michigan landfills. That's about 53,000 tonnes a year! Over 30% of that garbage was food!

This July, Markham introduced a new initiative called "Mission Green", which was designed to change the way we think about and manage our household garbage. We have added more materials to the blue box and gave every home a green bin for household organics. Now, the little bit of non recyclable material that's left – called residue – is only collected every other week.

It's been just a few months since the launch of Mission Green and you and your neighbours have drastically reduced the amount of garbage Markham trucks across the border to Michigan. We are now recycling over 66% of our garbage – the highest recycling rate in the GTA and one of the highest in Canada!

By using your green bin you are diverting material away from landfill and making useful compost. Through your efforts, organics recycling has jumped from 7% to 35%. Now that's an improvement!

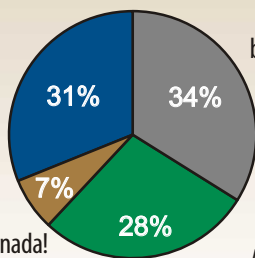
Markham's blue boxes are overflowing too! By recycling ALL your plastic containers, empty aerosol and paint cans, and aluminum plates and trays, blue box recycling has increased from 23% to 31%.

In addition, our recycling depots are busier than ever. So far this year there have been over 43,000 visits by residents who want to recycle beyond what is collected at the curb, such as plastic bags and styrofoam.

But our work is not done. In 2006, an expanded recycling program will be implemented in all Markham apartment buildings and Town facilities.

As a Markham resident you can hold your head high with the knowledge that you are taking responsibility for your waste. Your enthusiasm and commitment to the environment is evident every week – Markham streets are lined with green bins and blue boxes. *Congratulations!*

3-Stream Waste Composition



- BLUE BOX
- YARD WASTE
- GREEN BIN
- GARBAGE



Miller Waste employees sort Markham's recyclables.

Michigan Inspects Our Garbage Trucks



There was a time when we put our garbage at the curb and did not give a moment's thought to how it got collected or where it went. How times have changed!

Garbage disposal in southern Ontario is now an international cross-border issue. Since the closing of the Keele Valley landfill, waste from York Region, Toronto, Peel and Durham is being shipped to super

sized landfill sites in Michigan. Over 300 Ontario garbage trucks cross the border each and every day.

If you lived in Markham in the mid-1980s, you may recall the public outcry when the Provincial Government published a list of potential landfill sites to replace Keele Valley, which included locations in Markham. Public pressure ended that search.

A couple of years ago, a proposal to build a landfill in Kirkland Lake, called Adam's Mine, was also cancelled.

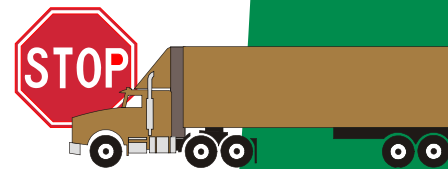
But, Michigan residents don't want our garbage either. In 2004, Michigan banned "recyclable materials" from being landfilled. Banned items include blue box recyclables, tires, leaf and yard material, medical waste, and low-level radioactive waste (i.e. smoke detectors).

Now inspectors stop and search Ontario garbage trucks. If recyclables are found mixed in with the garbage, the truck will be ordered back to Ontario.

Recently, new United States legislation "The International Solid Waste Importation and Management Act of 2005" was introduced to Congress and if passed, will significantly restrict the flow of garbage across the border.

Markham residents are prepared. In July, we recycled 66% of our waste and were the first urban municipality in the GTA to exceed Ontario's target of 60% waste diversion.

Markham residents take a bow! We are best in class!



Yard Material Label Inside!

YARD MATERIAL
www.markham.ca
905-415-7535





Congratulations Markham Fire & Emergency Services!

In 2006 *Mission Green* will be expanded to all Markham municipal facilities. Markham's Fire & Emergency Services Department is one of the first external departments to go 3-stream! Our Fire personnel have accepted the challenge to recycle 70% of their waste! Congratulations!

Photo above: Fire Fighter Phil Harrison (L) and Designate Captain Bruce Burley (R) scrape their fruit and veggie scraps into the green bin for composting.

Don't let organics go down the drain!

You've asked us: *Why should I use my green bin when I can put organic material down my garbage disposer?*

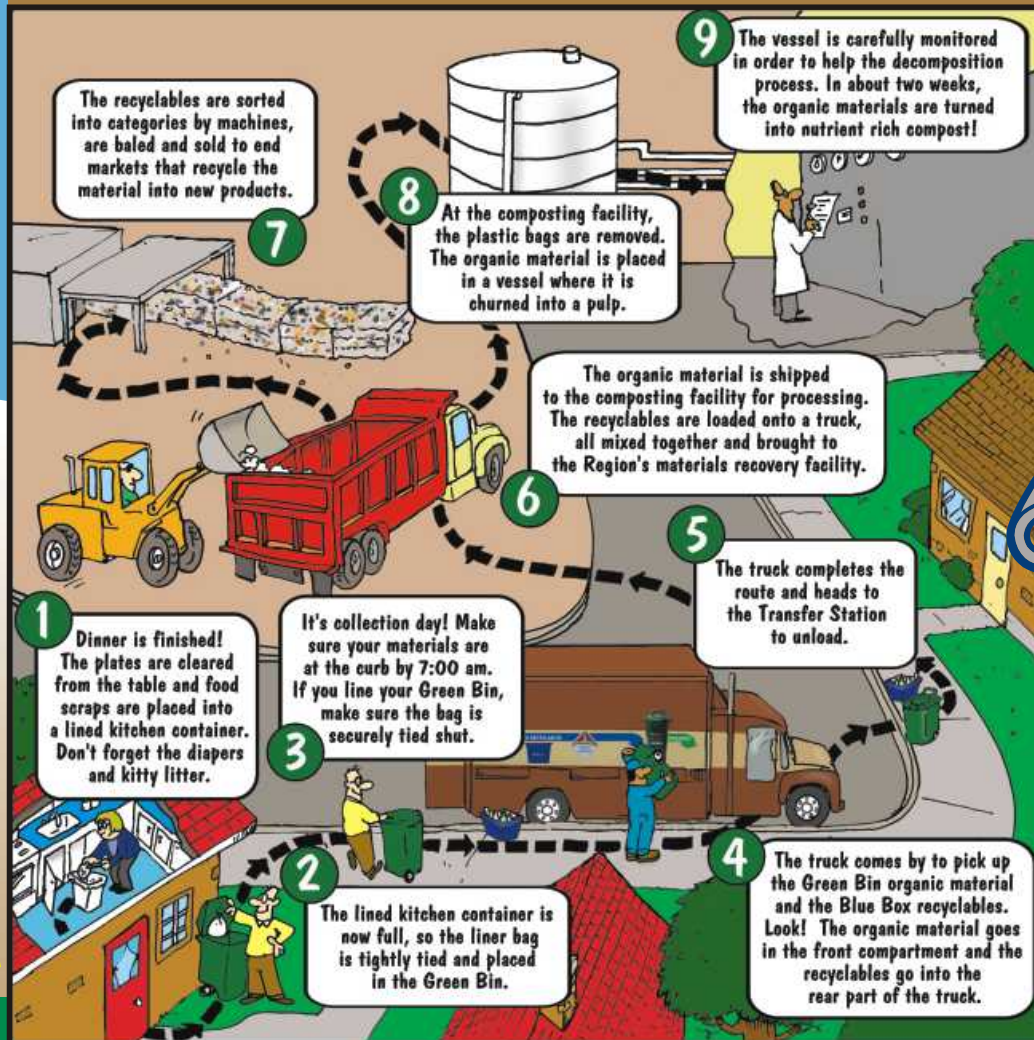
Here are a few things to consider about "garberators":

- Although garbage disposers are for sale in local stores, they are prohibited for use in Markham and many other municipalities. The Town of Markham's Sewer Bylaw # 436-86 prohibits the use of garbage disposers.
- Contrary to popular belief, the shredded organic material flowing down the drain does not end up in the lake as food for fish. The material must first pass through a sewage treatment plant where the organic material is removed from the water supply and either landfilled or incinerated – a waste of valuable resources! It is more beneficial to compost organic material using a backyard composter or green bin.
- Disposing of organics through the water system is very expensive. It is more cost effective and better for the environment to compost food.



WATER IS A PRECIOUS RESOURCE!

Life as a Green Bin



Yard Material Labels

Included with this newsletter is a yard material label. Place this label on the side of your reusable yard material container so that it is visible to the collection crew.

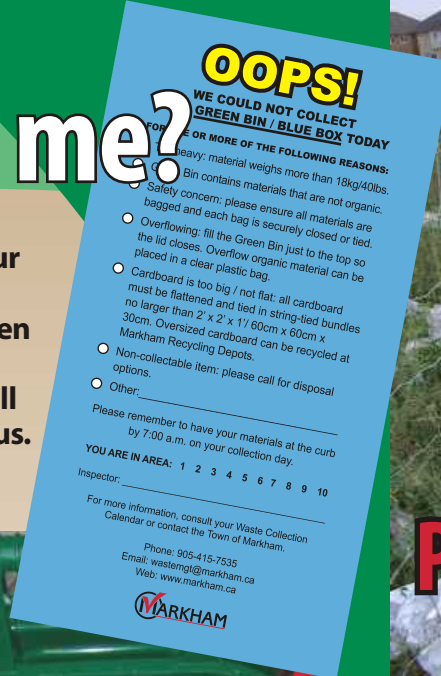
It is not mandatory to label your containers. Additional labels are available at the Markham Civic Centre and at all Community Recycling Depots.

YARD MATERIAL
www.markham.ca
905-415-7535



Have you seen me?

If you find one of these OOPS notices on your front door, your materials were not properly prepared for collection. The reason your green bin or blue box was not collected will be marked and any additional explanations will be written on the bottom. Still unsure? Call us. We are here to help. 905-415-7535.



Don't throw junk mail on the ground by the super mailbox – take your mail home.

LITTER PERSONALITIES



Congratulations! If your Green Bin looks like this, you are thinking about the collector who has to empty over 800 of these a day! (Organics are contained in tied bags).

If your Green Bin looks like this, odds are you have an Oops tag! (Plastic liner bag is not tied closed). This is a safety issue to protect the collector.

THE ATM LITTER SPITTER!
 Just as fast as the ATM bank machine spits out your cash, you casually drop the little white receipt slip to the ground – careful not to let any of the \$20's get away. Litter from bank machines is a growing problem – please take a second to recycle that slip!

THE POOP STAR
 You keep a grocery bag next to your dog leash so you can pick up what your dog leaves behind. Then you place the contents in your green bin. Congratulations! You're a real "Canadian poop star."

THE CLEVER TOSSER
 You toss your trash out the window at exit ramps and along quiet country roads. You don't want that empty coffee cup cluttering up your shiny new car. Later that night you are overheard complaining about litter and how high your taxes are. Be clever – don't toss it!

THE QUIET SUPERHERO
 You know that your garbage is your responsibility. On collection day, you take a few extra minutes to secure your blue box recyclables so the wind doesn't carry them away. In case you haven't been properly acknowledged and thanked – THANK YOU!

GREEN BIN TIP!



Styrofoam meat trays are not accepted in the blue box or green bin. To eliminate odour, rinse your meat trays and plastic wrapping before disposal.

Styrofoam meat trays can be recycled at any of Markham's four Community Recycling Depots.

Not All Bags Are Created Equal!

When shopping for paper leaf and yard material bags remember, not all bags are created equal. Look for bags that have a double liner – they hold up better in wet weather than the single lined bags. Bags made of "kraft" paper are designed to hold wet material. Be sure to check your bags before checking out, as the single lined bags may not be the bargain you're looking for!



Important Notice: Shredded paper put at the curb for recycling cannot be recycled at York's new recycling facility at present. Please bring your shredded paper to Markham's Community Recycling Depots and we will make sure it gets recycled.

MISSION Green

DON'T MISS THE TRUCK!
Have waste material curbside by 7:00 a.m.

Mission Green is working! Thanks to your efforts the Town has much less waste to pick-up and our trucks may arrive at your home earlier than in the past. Make sure you don't miss collection of your organics, recyclables, garbage, and leaf and yard material. Place material at the curb by 7:00 a.m. on your collection day (By-law 32-95).

HOLIDAY COLLECTION REMINDER!



On **BOXING DAY—MONDAY, DECEMBER 26th**, there will be no collection services for garbage, blue box or green bin.

Please remember that the holiday collection schedule will be in effect for the week of December 27th to 31st, 2005 only. This means collection services will take place one day later for the remainder of that week.

Regular collection resumes the week of January 2nd to 6th, 2006.

Please follow your Collection Schedule or visit our website at www.markham.ca

Christmas Trees will be collected the week of January 9th to 13th, 2006.

2006 Collection Schedule

Coming Soon!

Keep an eye out for your

2006 COLLECTION SCHEDULE!

IT WILL BE DELIVERED TO YOUR HOME IN JANUARY!



Your schedule provides all your collection dates for garbage, recycling, green bin, leaf & yard material, "no tag days", and waste management special events.

Environmental groups are urging book buyers in the United States to order the Canadian version of Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, which hit book stores in July. The Canadian publisher, Raincoast Books, is printing on 100% post-consumer recycled paper which will save nearly 30,000 trees! The US publisher is using regular paper despite protest by environmental groups.



CANS, PLASTIC AND PAPER ARE WORTH MONEY!

With the skyrocketing cost of oil, plastic prices have soared creating a huge demand for recycled plastic and other recyclable materials. So remember to recycle everything you can. Putting recyclables in the garbage is like throwing money down the drain. No one pays us for our garbage, but they do pay us for our blue box materials!

All plastic containers, bottles and jars #1-7 are now recyclable!

For more information or questions please contact:

Call: 905-415-7535 Fax: 905-479-7766

E-mail: wastemgt@markham.ca

Website: www.markham.ca



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