

# MISSION *Green*

ISSUE 11 - FALL/WINTER 2014

Photo courtesy of TreeHUGGER.com



## Markham's Waste Heading To New York-Durham Incinerator

Starting this fall, Markham's garbage will be transported to the new York-Durham EFW (Energy From Waste) Incinerator in the Township of Clarington. The incineration facility is owned by Durham and York Regions through a partnership agreement and will be operated under a twenty year contract with Covanta Energy.

Garbage from curbside collection will be fed into a furnace where it is burned at high temperatures. The resulting volumes of ash are then shipped to landfills outside the GTA. The hazardous bottom ash will be sent to a hazardous waste landfill.

Air emissions will be subject to air quality guidelines established by Ontario's Ministry of the Environment, *Guideline A-7 Air Pollution Control, Design and Operation Guidelines for Municipal Waste Thermal Treatment Facilities.*

**In preparation for the switch to incineration, Markham banned electronics and household batteries from the garbage and increased recycling opportunities. In addition, Markham switched to clear garbage bags to help ensure Markham's garbage is toxin free.**

## Markham's Best Of The Best Strategy – A Clear Success

It's been a year since Markham introduced "The Best of the Best – A Roadmap to 80% Diversion". The numbers are in and Markham's new diversion strategy has been a resounding success.

Within 12 weeks of launching the clear bag garbage program, Markham residents surpassed their new 80% curbside diversion target. With the new e-waste ban and clear bag garbage program in place, curbside diversion rose from 72% to 81% with nearly 100% participation.

Visibility of garbage bag contents improved collector safety, enabling the garbage collector to clearly see what he or she was about to pick up and minimize the risk of injury. Markham banned electronics and household batteries from collection, in preparation for waste going to incineration.

Cleaner streets, fewer collector injuries, lower collection costs, higher participation and diversion are just a few of the benefits of the switch to clear garbage bags.

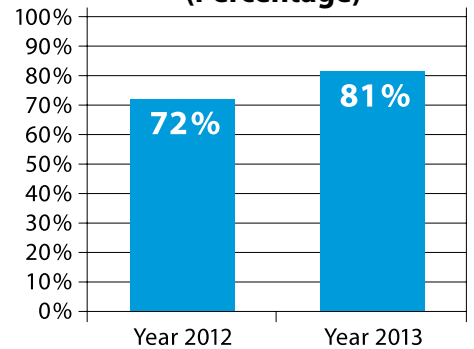
### Clear Bag Tips

- ✓ Use clear (see-through) bags – tinted or white bags will not be collected
- ✓ Grass clippings stay on the grass – Markham has never collected grass clippings at the curb
- ✓ Don't use clear or tinted bags for recyclables – use a blue box only!



**NEW!** Look for your 2015 Waste Collection Schedule inside Markham Life winter issue coming October 30th!

Curbside Diversion Rate (Percentage)



Accepted in Markham for garbage collection



**SAVE \$2.00**

On any ONE (1) Glad® Clear Bag Product (excluding Glad 10ct Clear garbage bags)

TO THE DEALER: The Clorox Company of Canada, Ltd., will reimburse you the face value of this coupon plus normal handling charges, providing that you and the consumer comply with the terms of this offer. Only one coupon per purchase of the specified products and sizes may be used. Void if reproduced, transferred or assigned. If requested, the retailer must show invoices proving sufficient stock purchase within 90 days to cover coupons presented for redemption. Once submitted for redemption, coupons become the property of The Clorox Company of Canada, Ltd. GST, HST and Provincial sales tax credit is included in coupon value where applicable. For redemption send to The Clorox Company of Canada, Ltd., P.O. Box 3000, Saint John, N.B. E2L 4L3. Valid only in Canada.

Offer expires November 30, 2015. Limit one coupon per purchase. COUPON HAS NO CASH VALUE.



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## Don't trash that cell phone!

While the internet may have revolutionized how we live and communicate, it's had a negative impact on our environment. Strange as it might sound, our rush to buy new laptops and phones (61% of the planet's population owns a cell phone) – while tossing the old ones into the trash – has led to a new eco disaster in the making.

Since many electronics contain toxic heavy metals such as cadmium, lead, and mercury, Markham banned the collection of e-waste at the curb starting January 1, 2013.

**Markham has partnered with the Lion's Club to offer residents drop off opportunities on weekends across the city.** Residents can also take e-waste to many retailers and to York Region's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Depot and Community Environmental Centres.

**Donated e-waste is processed at Global Electric Electronic Processing Company (GEEP),** an award winning e-waste recycling facility in Barrie, Ontario. Founded in 1984, GEEP employs over 300 staff and has recycled over 130 million pounds of e-waste. They have won Canada's Best Managed Companies, Deloitte's Technology Green 15 Award and two platinum RCO Awards for Achievement in Waste Reduction.

All electronic items are stripped down to recover plastics, glass and precious metals such as gold and copper. Even the dust gets recycled for any particles of precious metals!

Unwanted electronics need to be handled responsibly – make a commitment to improve the electronic age we live in by recycling, not trashing your electronics.

For more information, visit [markham.ca](http://markham.ca)



Photo courtesy of Global Electric Electronic Processing Company

## Clear the Air

While many governments tally emissions from incinerators, trash that is burned in backyards, fields and dumps is mostly unregulated and unreported.

Researchers pulled together existing data on population, per capita production of trash and official reports on waste disposal to calculate how much garbage is burned around the world each year. The answer: 41% of our global 2 billion-ton annual garbage output goes up in smoke. What a waste.



**Styrofoam does not go in the Blue Box! Recycle at any Markham Recycling Depot!**



ZERO WASTE

## Markham schools go GREEN!

Markham has 18 elementary schools and one high school that are now Zero Waste!



MARKHAM

We Care!



## Climate Change and Flooding: *Markham is taking Action*

Evidence indicates that our climate is becoming more variable, resulting in increased rain and storm events. The changing climate is impacting Markham's existing water, sewer, and storm water systems.

Markham is taking steps to address this issue. In 2013, Markham City Council approved a new dedicated storm water fee which will provide long term, sustainable funding to upgrade the storm system and reduce flood risk.

### What You Can Do to Reduce the Risk of Flood Damage on Your Property:

- ✓ Regularly clean out your eavestroughs.
- ✓ Disconnect and redirect your downspouts to an unpaved area at least 1 metre away from your foundation.
- ✓ Don't let leaves or litter block storm drains.
- ✓ Create a rain-friendly landscape. Replace asphalt and other hard surfaces with gardens and plants.
- ✓ Maintain your basement windows and foundation and ensure water drains away from your foundation.
- ✓ Limit water use inside your home during rainstorms (for example, delay laundry, taking a shower, using the dishwasher).
- ✓ Install a Sump Pump – if you have a low-lying basement, or high water table. Ensure a storm water sump pump drains at least 1 metre from your house foundation.

For further information visit Major City Projects/Stormwater Management at [markham.ca](http://markham.ca).



## Love Your Hydrant

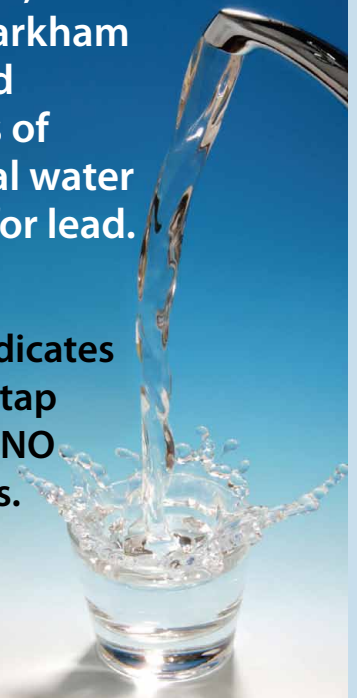
We walk by them everyday without thinking about how important they are to our safety... Markham fire hydrants belong to all of us. Report any damage, vandalism, tampering or water theft to Markham's Waterworks 905-477-5530.



Do a good deed – clear snow away from the hydrant on your street.

Since 2008, the City of Markham has tested hundreds of residential water samples for lead.

Testing indicates Markham tap water has NO lead issues.



# You Can Recycle All Your Old Textiles!

Waste audits indicate that an astounding 7% of all garbage in Markham is textile waste – old socks, stained towels, and faded t-shirts. While we readily drop off and donate re-wearable and reusable items – we toss the really bad stuff into the trash bag.

But in the world of textile recycling **ALL** textiles are acceptable. There is a massive demand for used clothing, reprocessed fibers and cloth wipes. The recycling industry cannot get its hands on enough material to keep up with demand.

Textile recycling has been around for a long time and is very efficient. In fact, almost all textiles dropped off for recycling are successfully reclaimed with about 35% going out as used clothing, 33% as reprocessed fibers (filler in vehicle seats, upholstery, insulation, etc), and 25% converted to cloth wipes.

While stained, ripped and just plain ugly clothes may seem like trash, these fabrics can be reprocessed. Donate them along with your re-wearable clothes.

Additional textiles that you can recycle include: towels, sheets, curtains, old socks and shoes – single socks and shoes are needed worldwide for victims of landmines.



**While destroyed, stained, ripped and just plain ugly clothes and sheets may seem like trash, these fabrics can be reprocessed into rags, insulation, and stuffing, and the remaining natural materials are left for composting. Donate them along with your rewearable clothes.**

For more information visit [Markham.ca](http://Markham.ca)



Photo courtesy of Comfy Cotton.



## Diaper Dilemma?

### Markham Company Offers Environmental Alternative

**Parents, scientists, and environmentalists have debated long and hard about diapers. Are disposable plastic diapers or reusable cloth better for the environment? What about the babies themselves?**

North Americans throw away 18 billion disposable diapers a year, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS). Imagine the amount of petroleum-based plastic and wood pulp that goes into manufacturing those 18 billion diapers, and then think about the superabsorbent polymers and deodorizing chemicals many companies add to the mix. Soft, 100% cotton, reusable diapers may be a better choice. While Markham parents can compost disposable diapers in the green bin, a local company is offering an alternative to disposable diapers and creating local jobs.

At **Comfy Cotton Diaper Services**, the dirty work is taken care of at their Markham facility. All you have to do is bag it! Comfy Cotton Diapers weekly services bring clean, 100% cotton diapers right to your door and the cost includes delivery, pick up, carbon filters and liners for your pail. Diaper covers called Bumies hold the cloth diaper in place so no leaks occur and makes changing easier.

Compared to disposables, cotton diapers are almost half the cost. When the cloth diapers get old or damaged, car dealerships and window cleaners buy the used diapers for wiping rags, continuing the lifespan of the cotton. Washing diapers at Comfy Cotton meets water efficiency standards, winning them an award for water conservation from York Region's Water for Tomorrow program. Additionally, the City of Markham has recognised Comfy Cotton with two Environmental Excellence Awards.

**Today's cloth diapers are not the same diapers Grandma used on you!**



This newsletter is made from 100% post-consumer paper (100% recycled) and processed chlorine free.

### QUESTIONS?

*We'd love to hear from you!*  
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[www.markham.ca](http://www.markham.ca)