

IC&I WASTE

by Paul van der Werf

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Enforcing Diversion

IC&I and C&D waste targeted

In Canada it's estimated that about 60 to 70 per cent of wastes are generated by the industrial, commercial and institutional (IC&I) sector (including construction and demolition or "C&D" wastes). Much of these wastes end up in landfill.

In Ontario the IC&I waste diversion are governed by the 3Rs Regulations and specifically Ontario Regulation 102/94 "Waste Audits and Waste Reduction Work Plans" and Ontario Regulation 103/94 "Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Source Separation Programs" (Guidance documents are provided at: <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/en/publications/forms/index.php#AuditandReduction>)

Increasing and reinvigorated attention is being paid to these regulations by Ontario's Ministry of the Environment, which clearly recognizes the role that the IC&I need to play in meeting overall waste diversion goals.

These regulations apply to large firms and facilities — either those that have a large floor area or high sales.

Regulation 102/94

Regulation 102/94 envisages that businesses that meet a threshold size determine the amount, nature and composition of wastes generated. The waste audit itself goes beyond merely sorting through waste and must offer

due consideration to how the wastes get produced and how management makes decisions related to the production of waste. Another parameter that is probably overlooked by most waste generators is an assessment of the extent to which materials and products used consist of recycled or re-used materials or products.

The waste audit should culminate in the preparation of a Waste Reduction Work Plan. This work plan essentially functions as a planning exercise to maintain and where necessary improve waste diversion. The work plan must include plans with a time-line and measurable outcomes to reduce, reuse and recycle (in that

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order) wastes as well as noting those responsible for its implementation.

It's here where the intended ethos of process shines through. It is not merely rip through some bags and make up a nice pie chart. Some real thinking and evaluation needs to be undertaken to figure out how real improvements can be made.

Regulation 103/94

Depending on the sector type, different source-separation programs need to be put in place to collect and recycle various wastes. The different requirements reflect the different types of wastes that different sectors could generate.

A source-separation program must include the provision of facilities for the collection, handling and storage for anticipated quantities of source-separated wastes; measures to make sure that these wastes are collected are removed, and that reasonable efforts be made to ensure that full use is made of the program — that it is a truly serviceable program (as opposed to just lip serviceable).

Enforcement


Since 2006, Ontario's environment ministry has stepped up enforcement. A 2006 province-wide sweep of waste generators (with a focus on construction and demolition sites) revealed some grim statistics. Almost 93 per cent of those inspected were not complying with Reg. 102 and 103. In 2007, the province hired an additional 10 inspectors to undertake additional enforcement of these regulations. A sweep of a further 235 C&D sites was undertaken with only five of these sites (or two per cent) in full compliance. Not exactly flying colors.

Ministry spokesperson John Steele says that these results "speak to a lack of industry awareness. We have a two-prong approach of outreach and inspections to help raise this awareness."

Steele continues, "We're not looking to be punitive; rather, the focus is on getting the industry to understand their compliance requirements, demonstrate their willingness to comply when found to be out of compliance, and to continue to comply moving forward."

"Year 2008 will see further inspections, in

the spring or early summer," says Steele "with a look at other sectors covered by the regulations as well as a return visit to C&D sites." (He made no comment about which sectors will be covered this year.)

The requirements are quite broad and bigger than would initially meet the eye. It will take some time for industry to catch on and fully comply. Time will tell if this renewed interest will truly get the ball rolling to ensure that the IC&I more completely assume their required roles in meeting our collective waste diversion goals. We won't succeed otherwise. 

NOTE: This article is adapted from a presentation delivered by the author at EcoLog's annual Environmental Compliance conference. Visit the event website at www.ecologevents.com/ECC07

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