

October 23, 2020

Ms. Lisa Trevisan
Director, Central Region
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks
Place Nouveau
5775 Yonge Street, 8th Floor
Toronto, ON M2M 4J1

Ms. Heather Malcolmson
Director, Environmental Permissions (Environmental Permissions Branch)
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
135 St. Clair Avenue West, 1st Floor
Toronto, ON M4V 1P5

Dear Ms. Trevisan and Ms. Malcolmson:

**Re: Durham York Energy Centre Facility
Submission of the Regional Municipality of York Waste Diversion Program
Monitoring Plan (Environmental Assessment Condition 10) MOE File No.: EA-08-02**

The attached *York Region 2019 Annual Waste Management Report* is being submitted to satisfy the Durham York Energy Centre Environmental Assessment condition for diversion reporting. It has been submitted to the Energy-from-Waste Advisory Committee and posted on the [York Region website](#).

This year's report has a new name as part of York Region's streamlined approach to reporting. In addition to highlighting diversion programs, our diversion rate and total tonnages of material collected and processed, this report now includes tracking generation rates and progress toward waste reduction goals set out in the Integrated Waste Management Master Plan (SM4RT Living Plan).

Our SM4RT Living Plan outlines strategies to achieve a visionary goal of a world where nothing goes to waste. Designed to move York Region away from the traditional linear model of waste management to a more sustainable circular economy approach, the SM4RT Living Plan combines successful diversion programs with innovative community-driven efforts to prevent waste and maximize diversion.

York Region Council and staff remain committed to sustainable waste management that includes energy-from-waste recovery which lowers greenhouse gas emissions, recovers metals and reduces the volume of waste going to landfill. In 2019, the Region achieved 94% diversion from landfill, again exceeding the 90% goal established in the Regional Official Plan.

As evidenced by the diversion rankings determined by the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority, York Region and its local municipal partners continue to be leaders in sustainable waste management in Ontario. Since 2012, the Region has ranked first in the large urban municipal diversion category. However, ongoing blue box contamination challenges, global end market issues and recent COVID 19 impacts to overall waste generation are posing challenges to our diversion

success. In 2019, York Region continued to collaborate with its local municipal partners to manage blue box contamination through education and curbside enforcement. In late 2019, the Region completed a \$1.4M capital upgrade to reduce contamination within mixed paper bales and as of mid-January 2020, is now able to market all mixed paper bales. Eight additional staff were also hired at

the Materials Recovery Facility in 2019 to remove contaminants and improve overall quality of blue box recyclables.

The issue of litter due to single-use items such as take-out containers and cutlery, plastic bags and coffee cups remains a key concern in York Region. In recent months, this issue has been exacerbated by improper disposal of personal protective equipment (PPE). York Region is optimistic litter will be addressed through the following recent announcements:

- October 7, 2020 - Government of Canada outlines next steps to achieve zero plastic waste by 2030, including a ban on harmful single-use plastic items;
- October 19, 2020 - Province releases proposed blue box regulation, to make producers of products and packaging fully responsible for operating blue box programs and for the waste they create.

The proposed blue box regulation outlines designated materials, eligible sources, defines responsible producers and sets collection, management and reporting requirements. Well defined reporting and performance management requirements are critical to tracking the success of the program and monitoring the program's impact on the issue of litter.

As the Blue Box Program transitions to full producer responsibility, the Region has embraced its role in ensuring the shift is seamless for our residents. Region staff continue to focus on preparing York Regional Council to make informed decisions as the process moves forward. The Region and its local municipalities are scheduled to transition to full producer responsibility in 2025. Region staff are pleased that the Province continues to move this transition process forward despite COVID-19. York Region will remain engaged in consultations and continue to align current and future programs with the shift to full producer responsibility.

We trust that the attached report satisfies Environmental Assessment Condition 10 in the Durham York Energy Centre approval for annual diversion reporting. If you require additional information, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Laura McDowell, P. Eng.
Director, Environmental Promotion and Protection

LM/mz
Attachment

Copy to: C. Dugas, Manager, York Durham District Office, Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks
G. Anello, Director of Waste Management, The Regional Municipality of Durham
C. Raynor, Regional Clerk, The Regional Municipality of York
R. Walton, Regional Clerk, The Regional Municipality of Durham
Energy-From-Waste Advisory Committee

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