

LGSC Discussion Paper

EPR Principles for Local Government during the Transition to EPR

BACKGROUND

- Local governments are responsible for providing services for the management of “municipal solid waste” (MSW)
- Accordingly, local governments have established departments, budgets and infrastructure for MSW collection, disposal and recycling
- Most MSW (estimated 75 – 90%) consists of manufactured products and packaging¹
- The Ministry is pursuing a policy of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) under which responsibility for waste management of products and packaging is shifted from *general taxpayers* to *producers and users* and end-of-life products are managed under environmentally sound and effective waste management systems that are *financed and operated* by producers and users, rather than by general taxpayers (emphasis added)²
- EPR programs currently exist for beverage containers (except milk) and a variety of household hazardous products
- The ministry is evaluating the effectiveness of existing EPR programs, incorporating additional product categories to the Recycling Regulation, and developing a prioritized list of product to be included in future EPR programs
- The Ministry’s goal is to encompass *all products and packaging* under EPR, leaving local governments with the responsibility to manage only materials such as garden or food waste for composting, organic based waste, and demolition, land clearing and construction refuse³
- During the transition to full EPR, local governments have encountered problems due to the failure of existing EPR programs to cover full costs and / or to provide an adequate level of service in local communities to protect the environment.

DURING THE TRANSITION

Local governments, through the LGSC, hereby adopt the following principles to guide our interactions with EPR programs and set out our expectations of producers and the provincial government:

¹ reflected in GVRD Solid Waste Composition Study, January 14, 2005, as well as annual reports by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

² British Columbia Industry Product Stewardship Business Plan 2002/2003 - 2004/2005. September 30, 2002

³ Letter from Minister Penner to RDKB Chair Hardie, Reference, received 15 December, 2005

1. Any current involvement by local government in an existing or possible EPR program is viewed as *transitional*, with the expectation that it will be phased out as producer-managed services are introduced in the local community.
2. To that end, all Stewardship Plans must include mechanisms and a timeline for reaching the goal of managing 100% of the designated product and/or packaging discards, with no portion managed through municipal infrastructure.
3. Stewardship plans will include a section detailing educational efforts to inform the public about the transition from taxpayer funded waste management to full EPR.
4. Stewardship plans will include mechanisms whereby the Provincial government will recover the full cost of developing, reviewing and consulting on every existing and future schedule in the Recycling Regulation.
5. During the transitional period, local governments will receive full compensation for any involvement in providing, promoting or in any other way supporting any EPR program in their communities.
6. EPR programs must provide all contractors in local communities, whether public or private sector, with all the necessary financial compensation, support and infrastructure to operate economically and to meet program objectives.
7. As soon as possible after a product category is covered by an EPR program, local governments will ban those products from municipally funded disposal facilities, garbage collection and/or recycling programs.
8. EPR programs must provide collection points for the return of products that are equivalent to the distribution system in scope and accessibility (it must be as easy to return an old product as to purchase a new one).
9. Local governments will exercise zoning and business licensing authorities to encourage the development of private-sector, producer-managed infrastructure for end-of-life products rather than developing new public infrastructure to manage those products.
10. Local governments will report through the LGSC any problems arising in their communities because of the failure of an EPR Program to meet expectations and/or performance requirements set out in a Stewardship Plan.
11. Local governments expect the Provincial government to enforce the provisions of Stewardship Plans in a timely fashion, so that public costs and environmental impacts will be eliminated.