

August 19, 2014

Depots see increase in recycling – residents reminded of sorting procedures

Three months after the successful launch of expanded recycling opportunities at Campbell River depots, City of Campbell River staff are reminding residents about where to return polystyrene plastics (such as Styrofoam™), and soft plastics, including bags and overwrap, so they can be recycled.

On May 19, Campbell River's expanded residential recycling program included changes that allow for polystyrene plastic (such as Styrofoam™) and soft plastics (such as plastic bags and film wrap) to be accepted at the Campbell River Waste Management Centre on Argonaut Road and the privately-run depot at 1580 Willow St. (Island Return-It Centre).

While the blue box program also expanded in mid-May, polystyrene such as Styrofoam™, and soft plastics are not accepted through curbside pick-up.

"The expanded recycling program has been a big success because residents have really made it a priority to make use of these new recycling opportunities," said Ron Neufeld, Deputy City Manager for the City of Campbell River. *"If we make sure Styrofoam™ and soft plastics are properly separated we can make an even bigger reduction in the amount of waste going to the landfill and continue to extend the life of that facility."*

Through Multi-Material BC (MMBC), a non-profit organization managing the packaging and printed paper product stewardship for the Province of British Columbia, polystyrene foam is now collected at depots across the province. Where equipment is available, it is decontaminated before having the air removed through a squeezing process that leaves it densified. The densification process squishes the foam into irregular shapes that are then shipped out on pallets. If a densifier isn't available, the foam is stored and shipped in megabags. Processors will use the material to manufacture products such as picture frames, construction trim, moulding, park benches and fence posts.

Both the Styrofoam™/soft plastics depot collection and increased blue box collection have seen a rise in the amount that is being recycled since the expanded program was launched this spring.

"There's been a lot of interest about this expanded service and it's great to see the number of people who are taking the opportunity to learn more about recycling and where to send their recyclable materials so they can be reused," said Amber Zirnhelt, the City's manager of long range planning and sustainability.

Full details of acceptable items can be found at the City's website (www.campbellriver.ca) under City Services, Garbage, Recycling and Yard Waste. For the most up-to-date list of depot locations and which recyclable materials they will accept, visit www.cswm.ca/depots. For more information on MMBC visit: www.multimaterialbc.ca

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