

Two Markham Families Take

The Zero Waste Challenge

Two Markham families have volunteered to take the *Zero Waste Challenge*. The challenge asked families to try to produce zero waste (or darn near) for a month. Participants are encouraged to use all of Markham's waste reduction programs, such as the Blue Box, Green Bin, backyard composting, Household Hazardous Waste & Electronics Recycling Depot, Recycling Depots and Charity Donation Centres.

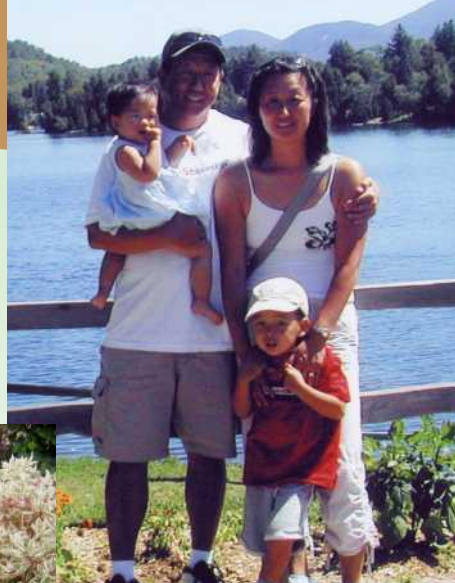
The *Zero Waste Challenge* took place in September and October, and included audits of the family's household garbage to determine successes and improvements.

The results will be published in the next edition of this newsletter.

The Millar Family ▶

Brian, Ashley (with Oliver the cat), Heather & Shannon.

"We are very eager to achieve zero waste."



The Chun Family ▲

James, Kaedyn, Helen & Hunter.

"Our family strives toward Zero Waste so our kids can enjoy a greener tomorrow."

No Such Thing as a Free Bag

Each year Canadians use 10 to 15 billion plastic shopping bags, the environmental impact of which is staggering. Plastic bags are a serious threat to our environment and natural resources (plastic bags are made from oil) – not only do they spoil our parks and waterways – but they can also take up to 1000 years to break down.

We urge Markham residents to bring your own re-useable bags next time you go shopping and proudly say "no bag please!"

TIP – Try keeping a stash of reusable bags in the trunk of your car – that way they are handy when they are needed.

Recycle Junk Mail at Super Mail Boxes in Markham!

This fall, Markham will embark on an exciting new pilot project that will reduce the amount of litter found around super mail boxes in Markham neighbourhoods.

The pilot project includes the installation of 35 recycling units placed beside selected super mail boxes for the collection of recyclables. Miller Waste will be collecting the recyclables from the bins each week. Residents are encouraged to send their feedback to wastemgt@markham.ca or call 905-415-7535.



"Zero Waste" has become a world-wide movement. Organizations with this mandate are active in the USA, New Zealand, Australia, Scandinavia and now Canada.

Local Zero Waste Governments:

- Del Norte County, California
- Australian Capital Territory (Canberra)
- Santa Cruz County, California
- City of Seattle, Washington
- Over 40 Municipal Councils in New Zealand
- Town of Carrboro, North Carolina
- City of Toronto, Ontario
- Halifax, Nova Scotia
- 7 Municipalities in British Columbia



The Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) has certified that this paper (80 lb Rolland Enviro100 Smooth Text) has been made using sustainable forestry practices.

This newsletter is made from 100% post consumer recycled paper, processed chlorine free, Environmental Choice certified and is printed with 100% vegetable-based inks.

Questions? We'd love to hear from you!

Phone: 905-415-7535
E-mail: wastemgt@markham.ca
Website: www.markham.ca



MISSION Green

A Guide to Waste Reduction and Recycling in Markham

ISSUE 5 • OCTOBER 2006

REDUCTION
SPECIAL EDITION

ZERO WASTE ...or darn near A New Target for Markham?

Fact: Canadians produce more garbage per person than any other country in the world.

Fact: We will need to dig deeper, travel further, and spend more just to get at the resources needed to fuel our cars and heat our homes.

We know that our wasteful consumption habits are not sustainable because there is a limit to the earth's natural resources and the amount of waste and pollution the earth can absorb or contain.

As we become increasingly concerned about our dwindling resources, support is growing for a new target: Zero Waste.

'Zero Waste' is a new way of thinking about 'waste'. It is part of a worldwide movement that recognizes the need for change in managing our resources – from green purchasing decisions; to changes in manufacturing and processing, from redesigning products to recycling them.

Yes, it's ambitious, and it won't be easy. But imagine a world where there is no need for landfills or incinerators. Where used oil is re-refined for reuse instead of incinerated. That's very appealing. It means looking at how things are made, what we do with them when we're finished, and whether we need them in the first place.

Markham residents are the best recyclers in North America. Markham has set an aggressive 70% diversion target and we are almost there. While we recycle an amazing 68% of our waste, there is still more to do.

If we are serious about reduction, reuse, and recycling, we have to take a hard look at the way we live and the disposable, single use things we buy – from razors to diapers. The convenience we enjoy as consumers quickly becomes an inconvenience for us as taxpayers. We are picking up the tab for collecting, and disposing of our one-time-used materials.

This Mission Green Newsletter is dedicated to actions beyond blue box and green bin recycling. It is about embracing change and finding better ways to do things in order to meet the challenges confronting us as a community.

"Believe it or not reducing really does work. But it's going to take some serious effort to have people turn their backs on decades of conditioning that said a disposable culture is the height of civilization. It's going to be tough to have people stop thinking about burning our garbage or burying our trash in abandoned mine shafts. Maybe it's time for another leap ahead. Maybe it's time again for a bold move to tackle our trash."

– Roger LeBlanc, News Editor, Guelph Mercury

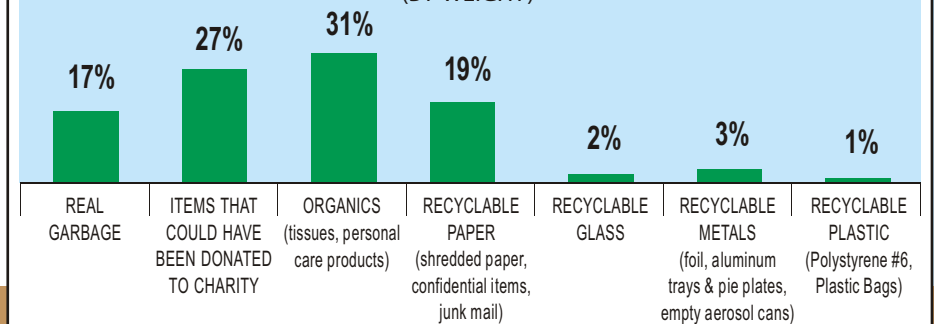
What's in Our Garbage Bags?

What can we do about this?

The good news is – a stinky hands-on, deep-down, muck raking waste audit revealed Markham is doing a great job at reducing the amount of garbage that ends up in Michigan landfills. The bad news is – we can still do better:

- 27% of what we threw out could have been donated to charity for re-use.
- Tissues and personal care products were found in garbage bags instead of the Green Bin. **Tip: Put an organics collection container in your bathrooms.**
- Most of the paper found in the trash was mail and confidential files. Note: Shredded paper can be placed beside your Green Bin in a clear plastic bag for composting.
- Recyclable plastics such as polystyrene and plastic bags were found in the garbage. These recyclables can be taken to any of Markham's four Community Recycling Depots.
- If we recycled everything we possible can, we could potentially divert 95% of our waste!

WHAT'S IN OUR GARBAGE BAGS? (BY WEIGHT)





Markham's Goodwill Community Donation Centres

Thornhill Recycling Depot (southeast corner of Bayview Avenue and Green Lane) Open 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. – 7 days a week, 364 days a year.

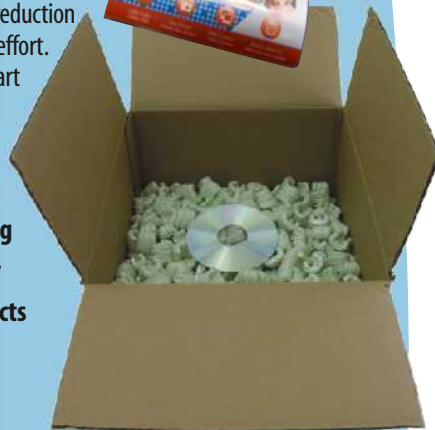
Yonge Market Place (Pharmacy Food & Drug) at 7171 Yonge Street Open 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. – 7 days a week, 364 days a year.

GOODWILL ACCEPTS:

- ✓ Clothing, shoes, boots, belts & purses
- ✓ Hats, gloves & scarves
- ✓ Books, records, CDs, DVDs, videotapes
- ✓ Games, toys & sporting equipment
- ✓ Housewares: Dishes, glassware, kitchen utensils & lamps
- ✓ Hand tools & small power tools
- ✓ Linens, curtains, blankets, area rugs & towels
- ✓ Computers (Pentium 3's and up, with all parts intact)
- ✓ TVs, stereos, radios, VCRs & DVD players

*Please note that goods cannot be purchased at these locations.

Goodwill diverts millions of pounds of goods from landfill each year and creates jobs in our community.



Packaging Peeves

While a certain amount of packaging is needed to contain and protect the products we buy, many items are overpackaged. Great waste reduction is possible in this area with very little effort. Non recyclable packaging is a major part of our municipal solid waste.

What can we do?

- ▶ When shopping, try to choose the product with little or no packaging
- ▶ Complain to the store or company
- ▶ Avoid individually wrapped products
- ▶ Buy in bulk when practical

Food for Thought...

Global Warming... Climate Change...

Fact or Fiction? Agree or Disagree?

But... on which side should we err?

10 EASY STEPS TO A ZERO WASTE HOME (...or darn near)

- 1 Make it a Family Event**
Make sure everyone in your household knows how and what to recycle and compost. Keep a list of acceptable recyclables and organics handy for everyone's reference.
- 2 Use your Green Bin to the Max**
Use your Green Bin for all your organic material. Don't forget to include personal waste from bathrooms such as tissues, sanitary products, diapers and pet waste.
- 3 Use Clear Bags**
Use clear garbage bags for organic overflow that won't fit in your Green Bin. Place the organics-filled clear bag beside your Green Bin for compost collection.
- 4 Use Charity Collections**
There are many charities that will accept your unwanted items. Check the yellow pages for a local charity donation centre or drop off your gently used items to Markham's Goodwill donation centres in Thornhill. Goodwill accepts used clothing and household items. There are Salvation Army clothing donation bins located at all Markham Fire Stations.
- 5 Use Markham's Recycling, Electronics and Household Hazardous Waste Depots**
Markham operates four recycling depots that accept all blue box materials, scrap metal items, tires, polystyrene, plastic bags, oversized cardboard and used clothing. Electronics and any hazardous materials can be brought the Household Hazardous Waste depot for recycling.
- 6 Compost in Your Backyard**
Yard waste such as leaves, grass clippings and food scraps like coffee grinds and tea bags decompose into outstanding topsoil in a backyard composter.
- 7 Grasscycle**
Mow without a bag and leave your grass clippings on the lawn to provide mulch and nutrients, save water, and time.
- 8 Reduce Household Waste**
Try to cut your trash in half. Find a home for unneeded items. Buy in bulk and use reusable containers to store leftovers. Use a refillable coffee mug or water bottle. Avoid over-packaged products. Bring a litter-less lunch to work or school.
- 9 Join the Paperless Society**
Use e-mail. Send electronic greetings for special events. Use cloth napkins and towels instead of paper to save natural resources, reduce waste, and save money!
- 10 Wrap Gifts in Reusable Towels or Use Gift Bags**
Try avoiding the gift wrap trap – especially during the holiday season. Some great ideas for wrapping alternatives are using a bandana or a scarf, old posters or maps, old sheet music, or a home sewn cloth bag. Or simply use a gift bag. Gift bags can be used over and over.
Garbage – it's yours to reduce!

Tip – SHREDDED PAPER CAN BE PLACED IN YOUR GREEN BIN FOR COMPOSTING!

"Reuseful" A Virtual Trading Post

Reuseful is a free online trading post of previously enjoyed items that still remain 'useful'. The website gives opportunities to find gently used items rather than buying new. The site also gives residents a place to donate usable items instead of sending them to landfill. It's a win-win!

Check out *Reuseful* at <http://www.myyorkregion.com/reuseful/index.php>

Habitat For Humanity ReStore

Habitat for Humanity *ReStores* are building supply stores that accept and resell quality new and used building materials. They generate funds to support Habitat's building programs, while reducing the amount of used materials that go to landfills! It's an environmentally friendly store that makes sense!

Habitat for Humanity accepts building material donations at their *ReStore* location in Newmarket. Markham residents can donate the following reusable materials:

- Used Working Appliances
- Doors
- Lumber
- Electrical Fixtures
- Hardware
- Tiles
- Paving Stones
- Kitchen/Bathroom Cabinets
- Flooring Materials
- Plumbing Fixtures
- Windows
- Quality Renovation Materials
- Countertops
- Roofing

Last year Habitat *ReStores* received seven tonnes of reusable building materials that would have otherwise ended up in landfill.

York Region *ReStore*

575 Penrose Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 5L5

For more information call 905-868-8723 or visit www.habitat.ca



Holiday Waste Collection REMINDER!

There will be **NO** garbage, Blue Box or Green Bin collection on **CHRISTMAS DAY, Monday, December 25th** and **NEW YEAR'S DAY, Monday, January 1st**. Collection services will move ahead by one day for all areas for two weeks.

Please note that we will be collecting materials on BOXING DAY.

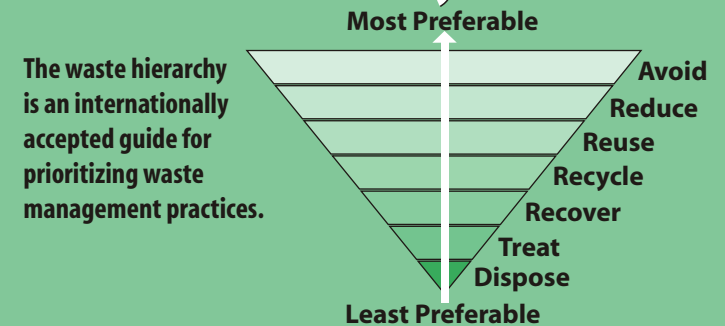


If your regular collection day is: *Your materials will be collected on:*

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| MONDAY (AREAS 3 & 4) | – | TUESDAY, December 26, 2006 BOXING DAY |
| | – | TUESDAY, January 2, 2007 |
| TUESDAY (AREAS 5 & 6) | – | WEDNESDAY, December 27, 2006 |
| | – | WEDNESDAY, January 3, 2007 |
| WEDNESDAY (AREAS 7 & 8) | – | THURSDAY, December 28, 2006 |
| | – | THURSDAY, January 4, 2007 |
| THURSDAY (AREAS 9 & 10) | – | FRIDAY, December 29, 2006 |
| | – | FRIDAY, January 5, 2007 |
| FRIDAY (AREAS 1 & 2) | – | SATURDAY, December 30, 2006 |
| | – | SATURDAY, January 6, 2007 |

Christmas trees will be collected the week of **January 8-12, 2007**. Please follow your 2007 Waste Collection Schedule. *The Waste Management Department wishes you and your family a safe and happy holiday season.*

The Waste Hierarchy



It's a Hard Day's Work for Our Waste Collectors

A waste collector was splashed with acid when his garbage truck crushed a bag of garbage that contained a jar of acid. The dangerous liquid burned the collector's skin. Please be careful what you put out for collection. Dangerous materials such as batteries, cleaning products, needles, broken glass and pool chemicals should never be placed in your garbage bags. They are hazardous to the environment and our collectors. Hazardous materials that are poisonous, explosive, corrosive, or flammable should be taken to the Household Hazardous Waste Depot in Markham. Broken glass should be wrapped in newspaper and placed in a closed cardboard box labelled "broken glass". Remember there is a person who must handle your garbage once you no longer need to!