



Collector's Corner

Gyula Radi (Julius)

Markham residents do a great job of preparing their materials for collection, but there is always more that can be done to help our collectors.

Meet Julius!

Gyula Radi (Julius) has been a recycling/green bin collector for Miller Waste Systems for the past two and a half years. He works between nine and twelve hours a day and collects about 600 green bins and 800 blue boxes every day. We asked Julius to tell us about his job:

What I like most:

- Being outdoors all year round and day to day interaction with people on my route.

Tips to make my day:

- Have blue boxes at the curb by 7:00 a.m.
- Do not put plastic bags, styrofoam, wood, wire hangers, or small appliances in the blue box.
- Follow the collection schedule that the *Town of Markham* sends you.

Strangest item I have ever seen out for collection:

- Two truck air brake chambers
- Full body, replica, medieval armour

Pet Peeve:

- When the collector leaves something behind in your bins – that means he can't take them. Please don't put them back for the next week. Call Markham to find the proper way to dispose of those items.

What's up with styrofoam?

The Region of York determines what materials can be accepted in Markham's blue box and is responsible for processing and marketing Markham's blue box recyclables – including plastic. The Region cannot properly process styrofoam at this time, but it can be recycled at Markham's recycling depots.

Neater Streets

Have you noticed the streets in Markham look a little different than usual on collection day? Our collection contractor, Miller Waste, now places the green bin inside the blue box after collection. This keeps our streets neater by preventing empty blue boxes from flying away on windy days.



The Markham Freecycle™ Network is open to all who want to "recycle" that special something rather than throw it away. Whether it's a chair, a fax machine, piano or an old door, feel free to post it. Or maybe you're looking to acquire something yourself! Nonprofit groups are also welcome to participate too!

One constraint: everything posted must be free. This network is brought to you by The Freecycle™ Network, a nonprofit organization and a movement of people interested in keeping good stuff out of landfills. Check out www.freecycle.org for other cities and information on the movement!



Recycle on the Go!

Now you can recycle everything you do at home when you're out enjoying Markham's summer festival season. Watch for these new recycling bins at events near you.

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The Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certifies that using this 100% post consumer paper (Rolland Enviro 100 Smooth Text) helps preserve our world's forest resources. This newsletter contains 100% post consumer recycled paper, is Ecologo certified, processed chlorine free, was manufactured using biogas energy and printed using 100% vegetable based inks.

Questions?

We'd love to hear from you!
905-415-7535
wastemgt@markham.ca



www.markham.ca

MISSION Green

A Guide to Environmental Leadership in Markham

ISSUE 8 • SPRING/SUMMER 2008



Markham Honoured with Ontario's Highest Recycling Award

CONGRATULATIONS! Your recycling efforts have earned the Town of Markham Ontario's highest waste management award – the coveted **Recycling Council of Ontario Sustainable Municipality Platinum Award**. This award recognizes that Markham's Mission Green has achieved 70% waste diversion.

Submissions were judged by a panel of experts from the public and private sectors using criteria such as current diversion rate, the establishment of measurable and achievable targets, broad community involvement, and the development of by-laws and policies to support the plan.

Markham residents should be proud of the leadership they have shown by participating in Mission Green. This award demonstrates your commitment to diversion efforts and to the environment.

Licence Required!

Markham now requires all lawn and tree care providers be licensed by the Town. Not sure if yours is? Check the Markham website at www.markham.ca or call 905-477-5530 and ask for a list of the licensed companies.



Laura Szeptycki is leading a team of trained Pesticide By-law Enforcement Officers.

Watch For Signs

Lawn care providers are required by the Ministry of the Environment to post these signs even if the product is permitted by the Markham Pesticide By-law. Check the back of the sign to see what has been applied. If the information is missing you can report it to the Ministry of the Environment by calling 1-800-376-4547.



The Town now requires lawn care providers to also post a Markham sign beside the provincial sign indicating the products applied comply with the Pesticide By-law. A yellow sign indicates that a property has been treated with permitted low impact products. The red sign warns that a pesticide application has been permitted to treat an infestation. Questions? Call the Town at 905-477-5530.



Red Dot Campaign

Canada Post will issue red stickers that can be placed on the inside of your super mailbox to indicate a **No to Junk Mail**.

The intention of the Red Dot Campaign is to urge advertisers to re-allocate their advertising investments into socially responsible initiatives. To opt out of receiving junk mail visit www.reddotcampaign.ca.

If you choose to stop receiving junk mail you will not receive your recycling collection schedule and other Town issued information. Recycling collection schedules are available online or can be picked up at any Markham Recycling Depot.



By choosing 80lb Rolland Enviro100 Smooth Text paper over virgin paper for the printing of this newsletter we have achieved the following:

Number of trees saved: 49	Emissions reduced by: 6,856 lbs	Water Saved: 29,466 gallons	Solid waste reduced by: 3,122 lbs
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Chinch bugs



Grub

Treat Grub and Chinch Bug Infestations

The Town's By-law permits pesticides to control chinch bug and grub infestation in 2008 if you or your lawn care provider submits an application to the Town. If you suspect an infestation follow these steps:

1. Monitor Your Lawn

- For grubs, look for dead patches in your lawn. Because grubs feed on grass roots, the grass will pull back easily. Damage occurs mainly in the fall and to a lesser degree in the spring.
- Chinch bugs attack the grass blade and create sunken patches of dead grass. Damage is usually noticeable in August.

2. Test for grubs (especially early August)

- With a knife, carefully cut three sides of a square (approximately 1 sq ft) at the outer edge of the brown patch, peel back the grass to look for grubs.

Test for chinch bugs (mid to late July)

- Cut off both ends of a large can 20 - 25 cm (8 - 9 inches) in diameter (i.e. coffee can).
- Push the can halfway down into the lawn at the edge of the damaged area.
- Fill the can with water and wait a few minutes to see if chinch bugs float to the top.
- Count the number of chinch bugs.

3. Determine if you have an infestation

- Grub Infestation:
 - on a well-watered lawn — 15 grubs per 30 cm² (approx. 1 sq ft)
 - on a poorly watered lawn — 5-10 grubs per 30 cm² (approx. 1 sq ft)
- Chinch bug infestation — 20 chinch bugs per can

4. If you have an infestation:

- Fill out the Town's infestation application form (available on the Town's website or the licensing counter at the Civic Centre)
- Submit the form to the licensing counter or fax to 905-305-5980 two business days before applying pesticides

The best defence against chinch bugs and grubs is a healthy lawn. Visit our website at www.markham.ca for information about dealing with pests using natural methods.

Drop Off Old Pesticides

Kick the pesticide habit and go natural. Deliver your old pesticide products to Markham's Household Hazardous Waste Depot for safe disposal.

Pesticide By-Law



The Pesticide By-law applies to everyone. So remember this when you are purchasing your lawn and garden products at retail stores and garden centres and when choosing a lawn care operator. Here are some things to know:

GO NATURAL

- Grow a healthy, natural lawn – it will be more resistant to pests and weeds
- Get used to a few dandelions, weeds and insects. Most insects are beneficial. Some weeds are attractive. All are important to our environment.
- Control weeds and insects naturally by digging out weeds and their roots by hand. Try pouring boiling water on weeds that are growing between patio stones.

THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES

Stores still sell products that are NOT permitted under the by-law. Here is the list of permitted low impact products/ingredients:

- A soap
- A mineral oil, also called "dormant or horticultural oil"
- Silicon dioxide, also called "diatomaceous earth"
- Biological pesticides, including Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) and nematodes
- Borax, also called "boric acid" or "boracic acid"
- Ferric phosphate
- Acetic acid
- Pyrethrum or pyrethrins
- Fatty acids
- Sulphur
- Corn gluten meal.

Always look at the front product label beside the word "Guarantee" to check if that product/ingredient is permitted. If you are using professional lawn and tree care services ask to see the list of the products/ingredients they will be using. Go to the Markham Pesticide By-law website at www.markham.ca for more information about permitted products and their uses.



Top 5 Tips for a Healthy Lawn

1. Mow high: 7.5cm (3")
2. Water wisely: 2.5cm (1") per week
3. Fertilize in late fall
4. Overseed: Select a good quality grass seed mix
5. Aerate in spring or fall

Business Recycling – Why Not?

Waste generated by businesses and schools is considered to be 'private enterprise waste' and is regulated by the Province of Ontario, not municipalities. In 1994, the Province passed a law that requires businesses, apartment buildings and schools to recycle. In response to the growing complaints about the lack of recycling in the business sector, the Ministry of the Environment recently carried out a province-wide inspection blitz of 260 businesses. The results were not encouraging. In some sectors, the inspectors couldn't find a single company in compliance. Almost 93% of the inspected businesses were found to be out of compliance with the recycling regulation. In fact, most businesses were not even aware that they had to recycle.

Traditionally, municipalities have taken a 'hands-off' approach to business recycling and have let market forces rule. The low cost of disposal in Michigan and New York has meant that many businesses do not want to pay 'extra' to recycle and have ignored the recycling regulation.

Many smaller businesses want to recycle but unfortunately, the municipal recycling infrastructure – collection vehicles, recycling and composting facilities – cannot handle the extra recyclables from thousands of business generators.

The reality is that as long as there is cheap disposal, business have little financial incentive to recycle.



Hundreds of trucks haul business waste to Michigan every day.

Who is Regulated by Ontario's Recycling Law?

SECTOR	MUST RECYCLE
Educational Institutions	> 350 students enrolled
Large Construction & Demolition Projects	One or more buildings with a floor area > 2,000 m ²
Restaurants	> \$3 million in gross sales for all restaurants operated by the owner in Ontario in the 2 preceding years
Hotels/Motels	> 75 units
Apartment Buildings	> 6 units
Retail Shopping Centres & Office Buildings	A floor area > 10,000 m ²

"We're reminded a hundred times a day to buy things, but we're not reminded to take care of them, repair them, reuse them or give them away!"
– Michael F. Jacobson

Ida Wong, Customer Service Representative



In 2007, Markham's Customer Service staff answered 225,951 calls. Of these, 4,519 were collection inquiries. Here are possible answers to your number one question:

Why were my materials not collected?

- Have your materials set out by 7:00 a.m. on your collection day. There is no scheduled collection time.
- Make sure your garbage, blue box and green bins do not weigh more than 40 lbs each. Place your overflow organics in a clear plastic bag and place the bag beside your green bin.
- Green bins are left behind when the organic material is not contained in bags or we find non-organic material such as plastic containers in the green bin. Ensure your organics are in tightly sealed bags.
- Appliances and scrap metal items are collected by appointment only. Please do not set appliances and scrap metal at the curb until the day before your scheduled collection. Please call 905.415.7535 to book and pay for your collection appointment.

We get calls, you get answers

Zero Waste Hints

- ✓ When choosing a product, check if the packaging is recyclable, compostable or reusable.
- ✓ Reduce waste as much as you can by not buying products in packages that can only go into the garbage.
- ✓ When you're able to reduce, do it! For example, instead of using a paper towel when cleaning up a mess, try a J-cloth or other reusable towel.



- ✓ Buy less disposable-type products. We know disposables are convenient. But with the environment, convenience is often deadly.
- ✓ Instead of using daily wipes to clean your face – 365 daily wipes times 30 million Canadians – try some soap, water and a towel instead!
- ✓ Complain about bad packaging – go ahead and contact the company.

"Today, we are confronted with worsening global trends related to environmental problems like global warming, loss of biodiversity, land degradation, air and water pollution. Some companies have risen to the challenge. Such efforts need to be acknowledged and applauded. Despite many good examples of how industries are reducing waste and emissions, becoming more energy efficient, and helping poor communities to meet their basic needs, we have found that the majority of companies are still doing business as usual." – Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme