

# OTTER LAKE NEWS

Where Has The Waste Gone? | Getting the Most from Compost

## Visit the Website

The Community Monitoring Committee's website is [www.otterlakecmc.ca](http://www.otterlakecmc.ca). The site has a lot of information on the Otter Lake landfill, including photos, a video, and past newsletters. There is even a quiz you can take to see what kind of recycler you are.

## Follow Us On Facebook

We are on Facebook, just search for The Halifax Waste-Resource Society.

While there, please also follow Otter Lake Community Monitoring.

## We are on Twitter Too

You can get your Otter Lake Landfill news in bite-size form by following us at @OtterLakeCMC



## Landfill Waste Cut to a Third

The amount of waste being disposed at the Otter Lake Landfill is just 50,000 tonnes per year, down from 140,000 tonnes just 2 years ago.

There are 3 main reasons for the dramatic reduction in waste being buried at the landfill. The first two are a result of HRM changing its by-law to allow waste to leave HRM to be disposed in other municipalities. The third reason is due to better recycling and composting by HRM residents.

The biggest factor is that the waste from businesses and institutions delivered to Otter Lake is now transferred directly to other Nova Scotia landfills, primarily in Chester and West Hants, where waste is not processed through a front-end or stabilization facility, making disposal rates much cheaper.

The second reason is that some of the business and institutional waste is not coming to Otter Lake at all, and is being hauled directly to other landfills.



### Congratulations to Councillors

Congratulations to District 12 Councillor Richard Zurawski and District 11 Councillor Stephen Adams on their election to Council. As local area Councillors, they will be sitting on the Community Monitoring Committee. We look forward to seeing them at our next meeting.

The third factor is increased waste reduction by residents, which has improved substantially since the Clear Bag Program was introduced on August 1, 2015.

## Otter Lake Operations Review

As part of its 2016 Strategic Plan, the Community Monitoring Committee and Mirror Nova Scotia is conducting a review of the Otter Lake Landfill operations.



Considering that waste buried at the landfill has dropped from 140,000 tonnes to 50,000 tonnes per year, the first step is to see what is in the waste. The first step is to determine what is in the waste, so the Community Monitoring Committee is conducting a waste composition study, which will look at the make up of waste coming to the facility from both the residential and the commercial sectors.

The waste characterization study is expected to provide a clearer picture of the waste being processed at Otter Lake and how that has changed over the last year.

Results of that study will be presented in a future newsletter.

## Cell 7 Construction On Schedule

Mirror, the operator of the Otter Lake Landfill, has received approval for construction of the next disposal cell and the



## About Us

The Halifax Waste-Resource Society is a registered Society comprising residents of HRM.

In 1999, HRM and Halifax Waste-Resource Society entered into an agreement which established the Community Monitoring Committee, which is tasked with overseeing the landfill operations.

project is well under way. The photo below shows the white protective liner installed in the new cell. Previous cells are to the left.

There have been 6 previous cells at the Otter Lake Landfill since it opened in 1999, and cell 6 is almost full. Cell 7 will be ready to receive waste before cell 6 is filled and closed up. The landfill was originally designed for 9 cells, and will be closed once the 9 cells are full.

## Getting the Most from Compost

HRM wants your advice on its next composting system.

The two composting plants that process organic green cart material are nearing the end of their useful lives. HRM is planning now for an organics program for the future.



Council recently directed Solid Waste Resource staff to consult with the public on a new composting processing system, before tender documents were prepared.

Solid Waste staff is planning to hold some public meetings to gain input. They are also encouraging residents to fill out a survey on their web portal, at <http://shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/compost-matters>. There are various informative reports and videos on the site, and a list of answers to frequently asked questions.

HRM is gathering advice on the importance of protecting residents from impacts from compost processing, cost, environmental protection, and whether compost should be made available to residents for their use.

We encourage residents to take the time to provide HRM with your input. Composting is an important part of the waste management system, and there is an opportunity to help shape how it will work in the following decades.

## HWRS Directors

The Halifax Waste-Resource Society has 9 volunteer Directors, elected by members of the Society. They also sit on the Community Monitoring Committee.

Currently, the Directors are:

John Cascadden, Chair  
 Scott Guthrie, Vice-Chair  
 Bob Angus  
 Lindsay Gates  
 Andrew Giles  
 Frank Johnston  
 Peter Lund  
 Murray Power  
 Tom Robertson

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## Contact us:

Facebook: "Halifax Waste-Resource Society"

Phone: (902) 482-4575

Email: [info@otterlakecmc.ca](mailto:info@otterlakecmc.ca)

# Recycling News

## Extended Producer Responsibility

For more than 20 years there has been discussion across the globe about putting more responsibility on producers to bear the costs of recycling and disposal of products.



The theory of Extended Producer

Responsibility (EPR) is simple. If producers of products bore the cost of disposal or recycling of their products, they would design them, and the packaging they come in, in such a way as to minimize cost. Therefore there would be less packaging and products would be designed to be more readily recycled.

An illustrative example is the milk container. Many of us recall a time when the milkman delivered milk to our homes and collected the empty containers, which were cleaned and refilled by the milk producer. That cost was borne by the producer, and reflected in the price paid by the consumer.

Later, a clever packaging designer came up with the milk carton, which no longer would be refilled but could just be thrown in the garbage. That meant that empty milk containers did not have to be collected, washed and refilled by the milk producer at its cost. Instead, the milk carton would just be thrown in the garbage, and hauled away and buried with the municipal taxpayer paying the cost.

In Nova Scotia, the Atlantic Dairy Council voluntarily provides funding for the recycling (but not disposal) of milk containers directly to HRM and the other solid waste regions. This is an example of Extended Producer Responsibility, and it saves taxpayers money.

Nova Scotia has other examples of EPR. Electronics are taken to select Enviro-Depots to be recycled at the cost of the producers. But there is room for progress. Currently, Nova Scotia is ranked 6th in the country for EPR (source: EPR Canada).