



May 2, 2017

Commentary: First results of 3-stream program

Thank you, thank you, thank you! Three-streaming works and our transition to the 3-bag program is working. Thank you for your cooperation and patience during this transition. Thank you for your hard work and efforts to improve recycling and composting activities. Thank you to our staff and our solid waste partners who have worked hard to make this transition as easy and successful as possible.

As Chair of the Southeast Regional Service Commission, the taxpayers' owner and operator of the Southeast Eco360 solid waste facility and program, I am pleased to provide this progress report on our recent activities.

We are happy to report that the new 3-stream recycling program, based on adopting best practices elsewhere, now sees the large majority of residents successfully participating. We are diverting more material from the landfill and the quality has improved. For the month of February 2017, the first full month of enforcement of the curbside collection schedule, we recycled 20% more per tonnes of residential material received! For the first 2 months of 2017, the site has recycled 35% more material than in 2016 while recycling revenues have increased by 70%.

Because of the positive results, we are pleased to announce that, starting May 1, 2017, your Eco360 site will be open for residential customers until 8 pm Wednesday to Friday and Saturday until 5 pm.

We're also currently working with municipalities to implement a mobile eco-depot program which will provide better accessibility to residents in non-urban locations throughout the region and help reduce illegal dumping. These mobile eco-depots will be in each region of the service area a couple of days each month and residents will be able to bring items such as bulky waste (fridges, stoves, mattresses), household hazardous waste, yard waste, residential construction-demolition waste, cooking oil, ashes, cardboard, paper and other items at no charge. We hope to implement this program in the coming months.

Several institutions and businesses are already participating in the new 3-stream system and we are working with a number of institutions and businesses interested in starting. Businesses and apartments not sorting and separating their waste are now paying more to landfill their waste than participating residential customers. This difference between landfill and sorted recyclables and organics will increase over time and further reduce the cost for those businesses participating in the 3-stream system.

We will continue to help residents become more aware on how to optimize their sorting activities so together we can divert more and increase the quality of our recyclable and compostable material. Areas for improvement include placing glass and textiles in the clear bag, reducing contaminants such as plastics and glass in the green bag, and placing all plastic bags inside a grocery bag and then in the blue bag.

Another project in the works is the construction of our new 1.0 MW Generator which is proceeding on schedule. This generator will burn the methane produced by the decomposing waste in our landfill and will produce enough electricity for all our needs at the site and, at the same time, heat 300 homes. This is a win-win-win because it will reduce our operating costs, help reduce the impact of our operations on the environment, and help NB Power provide green energy to New Brunswickers.

What does this mean to you as a resident or business owner? It means that while we reduce our collective environmental footprint with solid waste, we are also keeping in check your related tax dollars.

And let me again extend an invitation for everyone to come for a tour of our facilities. If you are interested, please call 1-506-877-1040 and we will schedule a time and date for the visit.

C.F. (Chuck) Steeves, Chair
Southeast Regional Service Commission

