



January 3, 2018

Commentary: Update on operations

As Chair of the Southeast Regional Service Commission, the Board responsible for the management and operations of the Eco360 Solid Waste Management Facility, I'm pleased to provide this progress report of our solid waste activities for the region. 2017 has been a very active year. Considerable progress has been made on a number of recent initiatives and thanks to the participation of residents, the 3-stream separation program is a success.

Because of this success, we have been able to improve access to our services by launching the Mobile Eco-Depot program and extending our hours of operation. The intent of the Mobile Eco-Depot program is to visit every region of Westmorland and Albert counties every month and collect items which can be problematic for disposal or recycling. At the depot, residents can bring bulky waste such as fridges, sofas and furniture, household hazardous waste, construction-demolition waste, yard waste, ashes, cooking oil, cardboard, paper, and metal.

The objective of the program is to be more accessible and thus decrease illegal dumping in the region and lessen our carbon footprint by reducing greenhouse gases created during the transportation of waste to our site. For example, at our Mobile Eco-Depot in Port Elgin, over 380 vehicles used the service. Instead of each of these vehicles making the 200-km round-trip to our site, more efficient hauling equipment was used to haul this waste in bulk.

For the first 3 months of operation alone, more than 2,500 vehicles have visited our Mobile Eco-Depots and we have collected over 130 tonnes of material including over 30 tonnes of household hazardous waste, which, great news, will not be landfilled. In total, our Mobile Eco-Depot has already reduced the carbon footprint by 47 tonnes of CO₂e, which is equivalent to the burning of over 50,000 lbs of coal.

Our 3-stream recycling program continues to help increase our diversion and reduce costs to taxpayers. We are now diverting 32% more than we were before the program was launched and revenues have increased by 56%. In addition, our plant capacity has increased by 25% which enables us to accept more recyclables from the commercial sector and apartments. These sectors are being encouraged to participate in the program by offering financial incentives to those who participate while increasing landfill fees for those who do not. Recent curbside audits show that 80% of residents are properly participating in the 3-stream program. A big thank you to all who are doing their part to protect our environment!

We also have excellent news to report on our waste-to-energy generator. We are now creating electricity using the methane gas being produced by the decomposing waste in our landfill. Already, our 1.0 MW Generator has produced over 1.6 Million kilowatt-hours of electricity since

the start of operation in September. This is enough electricity to power 600 average NB households and translates to over \$160,000 in revenue.

The \$3.7 Million project was completed ahead of schedule and under budget, and is expected to generate revenues of over \$800,000 per year while incurring average costs of approximately \$300,000 per year.

The project reduces the region's environmental footprint by converting methane gas to carbon dioxide. This is a huge benefit to the environment because every tonne of methane gas combusted is the equivalent to the reduction of 20 to 25 tonnes of CO2 being released to the atmosphere. As such, it helps NB Power provide green energy to New Brunswickers, reduces the region's carbon footprint, and will help reduce costs to taxpayers. It's a win-win-win!

We continue to receive positive feedback from residents who use our Eco360 app which tells you what goes in what colour bag, provides special and regular collection information, and will give collection reminders on your smartphone, by text message, email, or phone call. To date, over 14,000 residents have downloaded the App and over 260,000 materials have been searched. The App can be downloaded from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

Public education has been ramped up by giving more facility tours, doing more presentations to schools and community groups, and participating at more festivals and trade shows. Over the last year, 1,300 residents have visited our facilities and we have made presentations to over 2,000 people.

I would like to once again thank the residents of Westmorland and Albert counties for your efforts in helping us reduce our impact on the environment. I would also like to thank our staff for their hard work and devotion to implement new initiatives aimed at decreasing the carbon footprint of our operations.

In closing, I would like to invite everyone to come for a guided tour of our operations so you can see what happens with your green, blue and clear bags once they arrive to our facility. If this is of interest, give us a call at 1-506-877-1040 and we will schedule a time for the visit.

Sincerely,

Yvon Lapierre
Chairman of the Board
Southeast Regional Service Commission