

# Renewed Recycling and Waste Diversion Plans

## Background

The Manitoba government reviewed the renewed stewardship organizations' program plans for recycling or safe disposal of designated products, including tires, household hazardous waste, electronic equipment, batteries, agricultural packaging, and used oil, filters and containers. Stewardship organizations manage end-of-life products and diversion of waste from landfills according to the Waste Reduction and Prevention Act stewardship regulations. Manitoba Environment and Climate Change requires stewardship organizations to renew their plans every five years and submit them for ministerial approval. The 2018-2023 program plans expired on June 30, 2023.

The stewardship organizations consulted the public and stakeholders on their program plans prior to submitting them to Manitoba Environment and Climate Change. Four stewards held a joint public webinar, other stewards distributed their plans and asked for feedback, while others collected public feedback through their websites and social media accounts. In addition to engagement completed by the stewardship organizations, the Manitoba government, through EngageMB, requested feedback from the public ahead of the June 30, 2023 expiration of stewardship program plans. Manitoba Environment and Climate Change used the EngageMB feedback to inform decisions about the renewal of the 10 stewardship program plans, and the future of recycling in Manitoba.

## Engagement Overview

The objective of public engagement was to help the success of the stewardship organizations by identifying opportunities to improve the renewed stewardship plans. Manitoba Environment and Climate Change invited members of the public, municipalities, service providers, non-government organizations, industry, federal government, and Indigenous organizations to participate in the engagement. There were 445 visits to the engagement website. Fifteen respondents, including individuals, municipalities, the federal government, and environmental organizations, provided written feedback from March 23 to April 28, 2023. The responses showed an overall positive outlook on the stewardship programs and their continued operation in the province.

## What We Heard

Manitoba Environment and Climate Change summarized the feedback collected throughout the engagement period, by theme, as follows:

## **Education and Engagement**

Feedback suggested a need for more public engagement and education through targeted approaches for Indigenous, northern, rural, remote and semi-remote, as well as urban communities. Respondents recommended that engagement materials should be easy to understand and accessible electronically and through print, which would also make them available for communities with limited access to the Internet. Respondents also highlighted a need for promotional materials on the handling and storage of designated products for communities and households when there is infrequent collection of designated products.

## **Funding**

Respondents expressed the importance of equitable financial support for municipal collection sites in the stewardship program plans to offset labor and handling costs. This support is required to cover areas such as efficient transportation and waste removal, staff training, public education and engagement, as well as continued program and facility improvements.

## **Transparency and Accountability**

Respondents suggested that stewardship organizations improve their transparency and accountability by conducting independent financial audits and publishing them publicly. Another recommendation was to increase the diversity of stewardship organizations' boards (e.g., include more Indigenous members) to ensure representation of stakeholder needs, address concerns and find more creative solutions. Respondents mentioned that having public access to information on different categories of waste generated and diversion results would build faith in the success of the waste diversion programs.

## **Performance and Data Tracking of the Success of the Programs**

Respondents asked for ways to track the performance and progress of stewardship organizations' waste diversion success. One suggestion was that stewardship organizations identify and define community-specific targets and systems to measure waste uptake and diversion. Another respondent suggested classifying communities under different categories (e.g., urban, rural, remote, Indigenous and First Nations) to promote equitable access to waste diversion services.

## **Partnerships Between Stewardship Organizations, Communities and Third Party Operators**

Respondents highlighted the importance of partnerships among stewardship organizations when sharing the cost of transporting designated products and establishing a coordinated approach to waste diversion. Getting a third party contractor's help to monitor what happens to items that can be recycled could help improve diversion rates. Establishing an umbrella organization of all stewardship organizations operating in Manitoba could focus attention on waste diversion activities instead of administrative tasks.

## **Expansion of Programs**

Respondents suggested improving accessibility to the stewardship programs by providing opportunities for consumers to dispose of their waste conveniently. This would include expanding the list of items that can be recycled with new waste categories such as white goods, large and small household items, and more categories of electronics. It would also include expanding waste diversion services to more First Nations, northern, remote, and semi-remote communities, and holding longer collection events.

## **Next Steps**

This public engagement was an important step in enhancing the stewardship program plans to meet the needs of the impacted communities and stakeholders. Manitoba Environment and Climate Change used the information collected through EngageMB to provide recommendations to the stewardship organizations.

## **Active Offer Statement**

This information is available in an alternate format on request, by contacting [stewardship-plans@gov.mb.ca](mailto:stewardship-plans@gov.mb.ca).

## **Questions?**

Please contact [stewardship-plans@gov.mb.ca](mailto:stewardship-plans@gov.mb.ca).