

December 22, 2010

Mr. George Rocoski  
Director, Intergovernmental Affairs Branch  
Ontario Ministry of the Environment  
135 St. Clair Avenue West, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M4V 1P5

Dear Mr. Rocoski:

In response to your recent enquiry, this letter provides an update on the Regional Municipality of York's waste management program and our solid waste shipments to Michigan. York Region has not had any garbage shipments to Michigan landfills since August 2008.

Our Regional Council has endorsed a 4Rs waste management hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recycle and recovery and is committed to reducing York Region's reliance on landfill disposal. We have established a diverse portfolio of Ontario-based waste management options that currently include the Dongara refuse-derived-fuel facility in Vaughan, Ontario and several Ontario-based landfills. The Region also uses selected energy-from-waste facilities in the north-east United States to meet our diversion from landfill targets.

In November 2010, the Province approved the Durham York Residual Waste Environmental Assessment that will see construction of an energy-from-waste facility in Durham in 2014. York Region will co-own this facility that will process a portion of our waste and further reduce our reliance on landfill.

York Region's efforts to use innovative waste management processing technologies is contributing to the development of a growing Ontario-based industry that is laying the foundation for sustainable markets in the future. In combination with ongoing municipal efforts, continued provincial leadership is required on key issues affecting municipal solid waste management. To ensure continued reliance on Ontario-based waste management solutions and achieve the Province's diversion goals, action is recommended on the following priorities:

- Development of an Ontario-wide organics strategy including lessons learned, establishment of best practices and recognition of branded organics including diapers
- Release of new Provincial composting guidelines that are achievable, cost effective and recognize composting of diverse organic feedstocks (i.e. diapers, pet waste and sanitary products)
- Recognition of the 4<sup>th</sup> R as diversion and designation of refuse derived fuel pellets as a "product"
- Moving forward with Extended Producer Responsibility and visible eco-fees

- Completing a strategic review of the blue box system by stewards and municipalities and developing joint industry/municipal action plans
- Sustainable waste management funding for waste diversion capital programs, including provision for development charge funding of solid waste infrastructure

York Region continues to demonstrate leadership in waste management and looks forward to continued collaboration with the Province to drive waste reduction policies and programs, and ensure establishment of a diverse range of Ontario-based waste management solutions.

If you have any questions or require any further details, please contact Laura McDowell, Director of Environmental Promotion and Protection at (905) 830-4444 Ext. 5077.

Sincerely,



Erin Mahoney, M. Eng.  
Commissioner Environmental Services

EM/hf

c: Bruce Macgregor, York Region, CAO  
Laura McDowell, York Region, Director

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