

BLUE BOX P&E PLAN



Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee

September 13th, 2010

Introduction

Planning and executing consistent and professional Promotional and Educational (P&E) activities is an important element, as well as a best practice, of any blue box program. With ongoing communications a community becomes more comfortable with recycling, the benefits it offers to the community and the impact it can have on the global environment. Furthermore, residents that are aware of their community's program are more likely to participate in the program, increasing diversion rates and helping the municipality meet program targets and objectives.

This document outlines the strategic and tactical direction for P&E activities for the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee, including participation by its local municipalities, and attempts to explain the rationale for activities which may have the greatest impact. The plan is broken down into the following sections:

P&E Strategy - General Guiding Principles

- **Program Guiding Principles** – This section highlights key marketing principles that will be incorporated in every aspect of the program;
- **Goals** – Defines the overall objectives of the program;
- **Key Messages** – Outlines the main points the program will work to communicate;
- **Target Audiences** – Summarizes the main audiences you desire to influence and educate; and
- **Resources** – Provides guidance as to the amount of staff time needed to successfully implement the program.

P&E Program Implementation

- **Tactics** – Defines the tools recommended for the program; and
- **Tracking** – Provides information on how to monitor the success of the program.

Promotion and Education (P&E) Program General Guiding Principles

There are a number of recurring best practices in promotion and education that should be followed when determining and executing the P&E activities. In developing any promotional and educational material by either the Hawkesbury Joint Recycling Committee, or by its three (3) participating municipalities, the guiding principles that should always be considered are as follows:

- **Consistency** – From design to messaging to the tools used, consistency creates a recognizable campaign with greater impact making audiences aware of the campaign and more likely to change their behaviours.
- **Follow a schedule** – Plan out P&E activities to meet the fluctuations of the year and the community, and then stick to this schedule. Recurring, regular activity will have a much greater impact than one big activity only one time.
- **Tracking** – There are ways to see if P&E activities are working. Tracking should be part of any program. This can include tonnage reports, website tracking, incoming call tracking and more.
- **Take advantage of valuable opportunities** – Not all promotion or education must be instigated by the municipality. As opportunities arise such as community events or school presentations, participation in these functions should be considered by promoting recycling.
- **Allow for feedback loop** – Community members are more likely to buy into, and participate if they feel their voices are heard.
- **Use methods that apply to the audience** – No single P&E tactic is perfect for all communities. In fact, very rarely is one tactic perfect for an entire community. Consideration of various tactics should be weighed to meet the needs of all audiences.
- **Keep it simple** – Too many messages and too much information can be overwhelming. Keep it short.
- **Make it about the audience** – People are more receptive to information about them. Make sure the primary message is a personal one, to make it more meaningful.
- **Demonstrate the outcome** – It is motivating to know the effort is making a difference. Ensure people are aware they are doing a good job.
- **Be green** – Be sure the whole community is recycling, including the local municipality.
- **Seek partnerships** – P&E can be time consuming and expensive. Look for ways to offset those costs by taking advantage of partnership opportunities.

P&E Program Goals

Each community across Ontario is working to promote participation in their Blue Box recycling program. The general **goals** of the Promotion and Education Programs are:

- **Increase awareness on why you should recycle** – As part of the education portion of the program, residents should be made aware of the reasons for recycling and the benefits to the individual, community and the earth.
- **Increase education on what is recyclable and how** – Only specific items are recyclable and ensuring a clean collection makes the recycling process better, more efficient and easier to manage. Communicating with the community regarding what is and is not recyclable will help to increase tonnage in collection and create a better program overall.
- **Increase participation and therefore tonnage** – Once residents understand why they should recycle, and what is recyclable the goal becomes to increase the amount that is recycled in the community. This is diverting waste from landfill and increasing percentages which can be tied to funding.

Key Messages

Key messages enable a consistent and comprehensive direction for what a program is trying to communicate. The Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee and, in addition, the three (3) local municipalities being the Town of Hawkesbury, Township of East Hawkesbury including the Township of Champlain, in promoting recycling, shall use the following guide and suggestions in any and all promotional and educational items:

- **Recycling is smart and easy** – Sorting your household’s garbage can be a quick and simple process that is part of your daily routine. By integrating recycling into your home, you can make the process easy, while doing your part to help the environment.
 - Recycling is the fastest way to positively impact the environment.
 - Recycling only takes a moment ... just drop it in the blue box.
 - Your local government has developed a program to make recycling as simple as possible for you. Contact them to find out how you can integrate recycling into everyday activities to make it as simple as possible.
- **Recycling is good for you** – Not only does recycling help the environment, it can have a positive impact on you and your family.
 - A cleaner environment means you and your family have a safe and healthy area in which to live and work.
 - Recycling reduces the amount of waste in landfill, reducing the risks of water and air contamination.
 - By recycling at home, you help ensure your children, and future generations, will enjoy the clean and healthy world you have enjoyed. Children learn by example and when you recycle they will recycle too.
- **Recycling is good for your community** – Cleaner air and water, less waste in odorous landfill, improved funding from government groups and greener living for the whole planet, these are some benefits of recycling.
 - All communities need to carefully manage the waste they produce. Recycling helps to keep waste out of landfills that otherwise will grow and reduce the amount of community space available for residential development, parks or commercial uses.
 - When one person makes a change, it can encourage other members to follow. Your actions, and commitment to recycling, have a snowball effect.
 - Your community is not only the municipality you live in. It is your province, your country and the entire earth. The changes and effort you make today can improve the lives of all members of our global community. Think globally, act locally.

The Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee, including the three (3) participating Municipalities, should adopt a consistent and “Key” phrase in all advertisements that could become a unique message, for example,

“RECYCLING – A local solution to a global problem!”

Target Audiences

A target audience list reflects those primary audiences P&E activities work to reach. Typically they reflect the largest population groups in the community, and are therefore more highly catered to in communications so that P&E activities have the greatest impact possible.

The target audiences for Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee, including any promotional and educational material prepared and distributed by the three (3) local participating municipalities, should be to the following:

- **Families**

The communities within the territory of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee have a high representation of families. As such, focus must not only be on adults but also the children in the community. Integration of easy to use materials, use of icons and images for communication will ensure this group can easily participate in the recycling program.

- **Retirees**

When dealing with retirees, there is often the time to recycle but the barrier is often lack of program understanding or a resistance to change. Keep materials visual, simple and accessible, and ensure a phone number is available for questions or comments.

- **Students**

Students are extremely receptive to such programs and have a considerable influence and impact on improving participation in the household. Many school boards or individual elementary schools have introduced, at certain grade levels, the importance of recycling and how it contributes to the environment. Continued support in school programs is imperative in order to establish a “life-long” practice of recycling.

Resources (*Budget and Staffing*)

Resources for smaller municipalities are often stretched to the limit with competing interest and P&E activities are often reduced or eliminated. The intention of this plan, with the assistance of the three (3) participating municipalities, is to develop a campaign that uses, as much as possible, internal staffing resources in order to operate within a limited budget and still address the final objectives and goals of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee.

Budget

To properly reach a community with P&E activities, and to implement the recommended tactics from this plan, budgets must be allocated. Best practice indicates that for most communities a budget of \$1 per household is a level required to meet the needs of a well executed P&E plan. However for smaller communities, this rule would leave a budget that is far too low to complete even the smallest P&E activities. In these cases a minimum threshold budget is recommended.

While the minimum recommended budget for a recycling program is \$1 per household, this formula would represent an annual sum of approximately \$11,000 and is not realistic for the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee. However, with the use of internal municipal resources and contributions "In-Kind", a proper educational and promotional campaign may be instituted that will meet the recommended level of investment.

Staffing Resources

Having municipal staff that are tasked with the management of a P&E program allows for centralized responsibility for the execution of this plan. For smaller communities, it may not be feasible to have a single person in this role. It is therefore recommended that the role be spread over more than one staffer, with one project prime overseeing all activities and this would be the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee.

Although it has been recommended that a full-time equivalent individual be assigned for educational and promotional activities for the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee, financial resources are not available. As such, staffing resources must be completed with the assistance of the three (3) local municipalities without creating an undue burden on their limited human resources. Therefore, it will be proposed and recommended that existing and future promotional and educational activities be coordinated with existing activities of the local municipalities and, when convenient, through partnerships with other organizations that share the interest of waste diversion.

Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Objectives

The Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee currently operates the recycling program for three (3) local municipalities, being

- The Corporation of the Town of Hawkesbury;
- The Corporation of the Township of East Hawkesbury; and
- The Corporation of the Township of Champlain.

The acronym **“SMART”** (*Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely*) is a great way to focus program activities and planning. As such, this approach will be used to develop a Communication Plan for the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee including its participating municipalities.

For the remainder of the year, being until December 31st, 2010, a process of data collection will be undertaken in order to establish a basis to measure the results of all promotional and educational programs to be initiated in subsequent years.

The specific Blue Box recycling program objectives for Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee for the following three years, being from January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2013, will be as follows:

Increase Diversion Rate

The current Diversion Rate, as per the 2009 DataCall of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee, is fourteen (14) percent.

The goal of the Promotional and Education Program is to annually increase the Diversion Rate by one (1) percent over the next three (3) years and have a Diversion Rate of 17% by the end of the year 2013.

The success of increasing the Diversion Rate would be identified in the completion of the annual DataCall for the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee on behalf of the three (3) participating municipalities.

Multi-Residential Promotion

A “**targeted group**” of the Promotional and Educational Program will be tenants of multi-residential properties.

There are approximately 800 residential units in multi-residential properties having seven (7) or more units and this represents approximately eight (8) percent of the total number of households within the territory of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee. A significant portion of the multi-residential properties having seven (7) or more units are located within the Town of Hawkesbury.

As such, we need to target and direct an educational and promotional campaign to the tenants of these multi-residential properties in order to maximize participation levels. Local municipalities often send promotional and educational material to property owners with the municipal tax invoices, water bills, etc., and as such, tenants are not always made aware as to the extent of recyclable material that may be included in the blue box.

Part of this program will be to determine, initially, the current level or participation rate of these multi-residential properties. Once completed, the next step will be to provide promotional and educational material to these residents over a period of several months. After completion of this promotional campaign, the final step will be to re-assess the participation rate in comparison to the base data.

A reasonable percentage or a sample group of multi-residential properties would be selected in order to establish the current participation rate. Once this has been completed, all identified multi-residential properties will be provided promotional and education material during a pre-determined period of time and subsequently analyzed. If the promotional and educational program has been successful in the “target group”, then this promotional campaign should be extended to the remaining multi-residential properties in order to increase participation and volume of recyclable material collected.

However, this program can only be successful depending on two (2) factors, being

- a) The cooperation of property owners of these multi-residential properties; and
- b) The availability of blue boxes or “roll-out” containers at these multi-residential properties.

Staff resources of the participating municipalities will be required to obtain the necessary information to initiate this survey and program.

The following chart has been developed to assign task and timelines with respect to the educational and promotional campaign for multi-residential properties:

Task	Description	Person Responsible	Timeline
Identify multi-residential properties	Identify ten (10) multi-residential properties (target group) in the Town of Hawkesbury and indicate the number of residential units for each property	Staff resource of the Town of Hawkesbury	October 8, 2010
Identify multi-residential properties	Identify five (5) multi-residential properties (target group) in the Township of Champlain and indicate the number of residential units for each property	Staff resource of the Township of Champlain	October 8, 2010
Participation Level	Identify if multi-residential property has blue boxes and/or roll-out containers and indicate weekly the number of blue boxes and/or roll-out containers that are at the street curb	Yvon Sauve, Recycling Manager, Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee	Recording of number of blue boxes/roll-out containers during a three (3) week collection period being in mid-October 2010
Participation Level	Determine participation level of each multi-residential property and average target group	Robert Lefebvre, Recycling Coordinator	By end of November 2010
Owner Participation	Request by letter permission from the owner of the multi-residential properties to install recycling posters and installation of rack card holder for distribution of pamphlets	If permission is granted, provide poster and/or rack card holder for pamphlets to property owners for posting and distribution	First week of November 2010

NOTE: There are no multi-residential properties with seven (7) or more units in the Township of East Hawkesbury. However, there is one (1) senior citizen residence in the community of Chute-à-Blondeau in the Township of East Hawkesbury. They will be provided with promotional and educational material with the permission of the property owner.

Tactics

Although tactics in the promotion of the recycling program should be on a continual and progressive level, the use of incremental tactics is limited to the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee including its participating municipalities due to budget restrictions.

As such, the following limited tactics will be utilized during the three (3) year Promotional and Educational Strategy and will be the following:

Media relations

Description

Ongoing communications and building a relationship with the local media is a critical element to keeping your community informed. Foster good working relationships then use them to spread the word on your blue box program.

The Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee will continue to provide the minutes of this Committee to the three (3) participating municipalities for distribution to the local media. The minutes of the Committee will continue to identify tonnage of recyclable material collected in comparison to the previous years' tonnage to determine the effectiveness of this program.

Press Release

News Releases must be sent for any significant change, event, accomplishment or other news about your blue box program. These simple updates are often a single page of information on an item of interest to the community, and therefore a news story for the media.

In the event that the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee sees the opportunity of issuing a "Press Release" for a particular event the same shall be authorized by the Committee and issued by the Recycling Coordinator on behalf of the Committee.

Tactics (continuation)

Municipal Participation

Participation by the local municipalities of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Program shall be extensive and critical to the success of the educational and promotional recycling campaign. As such, availability of promotional and educational material shall be made available at all municipal departments including municipal public buildings for access to the general public. Such public buildings shall include, but not limited, to the following:

- Municipal arenas;
- Libraries;
- Daycare centres; and
- All appropriate municipal department buildings (for instance, administration offices, fire department, building department, recreation department, municipal reception halls, etc., including any municipal landfill sites, if applicable.)

Webpage

Offering information online is not only a quick and simple way to share information, it is an environmentally-conscious choice which fits with the messaging around recycling. Hosted as a subpage on the municipality's website, this page will be referenced in all P&E activities bringing higher profile to the site, and potentially reducing the number of callers phoning to ask questions. This leaves more time for your team to complete other activities.

Every participating municipality of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee must have at least one page communicating the details of their Blue Box program in the community. A single, quick resource, the minimum required information must include:

- Collection schedule (for curb side);
- Acceptable recycling containers (blue boxes, bags, etc.);
- Applicable recyclables that are collectable; and
- Where to get more information.

Webpage (continuation)

In addition, the local municipalities of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee should include the following additional information or additional pages on recycling onto their municipal website:

- Downloadable versions of your P&E materials
- Community recycling statistics
- Recycling tips and tricks to make it easier
- Examples of what things are recycled into
- Tips to increase recycling in your home
- Links to other recycling resources.

It is also suggested that any information listed above be shared with the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee including the other participating municipalities.

Newspaper Inserts and advertising

Local newspapers receive a high level of readership and should be taken advantage of. It is of particular importance for promoting recycling to tenants of residential properties. Inserting special information into the newspaper will bring a high profile to information being distributed as newspapers often have a level of trust from readers.

The Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee shall insert and coordinate appropriate advertisements in the local area newspaper with the assistance of the “In-Kind” contribution by the Canadian Newspaper Association and the Ontario Community Newspaper Association (CNA-OCNA). Local newspapers are often well read, as they feature the information that is of specific interest to local residents.

Newspapers should be used for:

- Promoting recycling in the community
- Changes to the recycling program
- Updates on program progress
- Special events or days
- Ongoing recycling awareness

The Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee are serviced by four (4) local newspapers. In addition to the “In-Kind” advertisements provided through the CNA/OCNA, the Committee shall provide for annual advertisements since it is believed that this is the most effective educational and promotional format.

School Programs

Schools are often including information on the natural world and the effect human's have on their environment. This information, as well as tips on how to "*live green*", is an important part of modern education and children are comfortable with these concepts, often more than their parents or grandparents. The knowledge of students is often taken home and can affect the household's choices and participation in programs such as a Blue Box Recycling Program.

There are currently nine (9) elementary schools within the jurisdiction of the three (3) participating municipalities of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee with seven (7) of these elementary schools having grade-level six (6) or less. The Membership of the Committee is made up of a representative of each of the participating municipalities and, as such, it shall be the responsibility of these representatives to communicate with the School Principal of their respective territory in providing all educational and promotional material that may assist any school project(s) having a level six (6) grade or less within these seven (7) elementary schools.

Flyers in Other Municipal Mailings

Flyers work to remind residents about a recycling program on a continual basis. Formatted to be able to be delivered in a variety of ways, these pieces work as an attention getter, providing either:

- a) Information about the program and/or a change to the program.
- b) Motivational item which offers updates on the program's effectiveness and/or interesting facts about recycling in your community or across Ontario.

Consider distributing these items through:

- Tax bills
- Water bills
- Other community mailings
- Mailings from partner organizations such as community groups

The local municipalities of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee shall determine, with the assistance of the representative of the Committee, as to the practicability of including such material with their regular "mail-outs" to the residents of their respective municipality.

Stickers

A simple, multi-purpose piece, stickers can be used as a fun part of the P&E program. Because of limited budgets, the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee shall consider the production of stickers that would be made available to a certain elementary grade levels for distribution to students. This item is especially attractive to early elementary grade levels and has a significant impact and influence on recycling practices at the home.

SUMMARY OF TACTICS

As such, the proposed tactics of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee for the three (3) year Communication Plan will use all of the following tactics on an annual basis:

Year One – 2011

Media Relations
Webpage
Newspaper Inserts and advertising
School Programs

Year Two – 2012

Media Relations
Webpage
Newspaper Inserts and advertising
School Programs

Year Three – 2013

Media Relations
Webpage
Newspaper Inserts and advertising
School Programs

Tactics Roll-Out Schedule and Tracking of Activities

The table below is an opportunity to plan out the execution of the P&E program tactics. By scheduling these activities pro-actively it provides a quick reference to keep the program rolling and it also helps when more than one person is responsible for the Blue Box P&E program.

Activity	Year One (2011)				Year Two (2012)				Year Three (2013)			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Newspaper Inserts and advertising		April		Oct	Mar		Sept			April		Oct
School Programs and stickers			Sept				Sept				Sept	
Media Relations	Media Relations will be completed by the municipalities through the distribution of the minutes of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee to the local press.											
Webpage	The municipalities will maintain, on a regular basis, all pertinent educational and promotional material that may be made available by the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee in addition to a dedicated webpage on recycling. Each municipality, on a semi-annual basis, being for the period ending June and December of each year, will request their webmaster to calculate the number of "hits" on the webpage and provide this information to the Recycling Coordinator to be submitted to the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee.											
Flyers in Other Municipal Mailings	Subject to the mailing out schedule of the participating municipalities. An Annual Report as to mail-outs on recycling will be provided by the participating municipalities to the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee by January 31 st of each year for activities in the preceding calendar year.											
Community Events and other municipal activities or partnerships	Each municipality will provide, when possible and convenient, educational and promotional material on recycling at local community events or at any municipal activity. In addition, each municipality may partner with any local organizations that may assist in promoting recycling. An Annual Report as to participation by each local municipality will be provided to the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee by January 31 st of each year for activities in the preceding calendar year.											

NOTE: The effectiveness of these activities will be tracked and compared based upon the monthly tonnage report of recyclable material that is collected. An internal analysis will be completed by the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee and this analysis will be summarized in the minutes of the Committee.

Budget Work Sheet

In order to determine the level of activity it is necessary to establish an annual budget allocation for the next three (3) years. The annual budget allocation, including the monetary value of contributions "In-Kind" by the CNA/OCNA including that of the three (3) participating municipalities, would be as follows:

DESCRIPTION	ANNUAL AMOUNT
1 - One-third (1/3) of the Continuous Improvement Grant of \$5,000	\$ 1,670
2 - Annual budgetary contribution of the Committee	\$ 5,000
SUB-TOTAL (Actual cash expenditures)	\$ 6,670
3 - Contribution "In-Kind" by the CNA/OCNA for advertising	\$ 3,000
4 - Contribution "In-Kind" by the three (3) participating municipalities (<i>for staff resources, maintenance of webpage, copying of promotional material for distribution and circulation in mail-outs, events, etc.</i>) (ESTIMATE ONLY)	\$ 6,000
TOTAL ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL AND PROMOTIONAL CONTRIBUTION	\$15,670

The following worksheet has been used to plan out the annual budget for the P&E tactics. In addition, since the annual activities will be similar for the years 2011 to 2013 inclusively, the detailed breakdown of expenditures would be as follows:

DESCRIPTION OF ANNUAL EXPENDITURES (EXCLUDES CONTRIBUTIONS "IN-KIND")	ANNUAL AMOUNT
Newspaper Inserts and advertising	\$ 4,500
School Programs (stickers, etc.)	\$ 2,170
TOTAL CASH EXPENDITURE BUDGET (Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee)	\$ 6,670
<i>Media Relations, Webpage maintenance, copies for municipal public buildings, municipal departments, community events, staff resources, etc.</i>	<i>"In-Kind" contribution</i>
<i>Canadian Newspapers Association/Ontario Community Newspaper Association (CNA/OCNA)</i>	<i>"In-Kind" contribution</i>

SUMMARY OF PROMOTIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY HAWKESBURY AND AREA JOINT RECYCLING COMMITTEE

The Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee is represented by three (3) local area municipalities, being the Town of Hawkesbury, the Township of East Hawkesbury including the Township of Champlain and administers on their behalf the blue box recycling program including other waste diversion activities (*i.e., the household hazardous waste day activities*). This large territorial area is comprised of a mixture of urban and rural areas having a population of approximately 22,000 residents with a total of 10,428 residential units.

As explained, the educational and promotional strategy can best be achieved by extensive use of the local newspapers since a majority of these publications are distributed, free-of-charge, to all properties within the three (3) municipalities. In addition, by ensuring that tenants of residential units are informed of the local recycling programs and by promoting recycling within school programs, increases in recycling activity within the homes can be improved. As such, the efforts and expenditures of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee will be directed towards these tactics.

An important part of enhancing the educational and promotional campaign will be the involvement and cooperation of the three (3) local municipalities. Their cooperation will be essential in meeting the objectives of the Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee. Their involvement will occur on numerous levels, for instance, by

- Ensuring that educational and promotional material is available at all public buildings and municipal departments;
- That any regular mail-outs include such educational/promotional material;
- That their municipal webpage is maintained and updated on a regular basis; and
- That any municipal or public events held within their municipality will have available, to the general public, such educational and promotional material.

The Hawkesbury and Area Joint Recycling Committee will produce, by March 31st of each year, a summary of the activities completed by each participating municipality including those initiated and completed by the Committee. This Report will also be submitted to each of the participating municipalities including the media in order to demonstrate the involvement of all parties to the promotional and educational strategy and to determine the effectiveness of this Communication Plan.