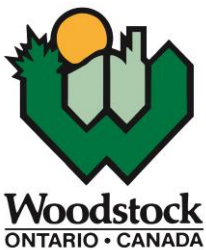


Final Report

CIF 412

City of Woodstock

P&E plan implementation



Final Project Report, July 2 2015

City of Woodstock

CIF Project number 412

Acknowledgement:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the final report of a project implemented by the City of Woodstock to create, rollout and maintain a communication plan for the City's Blue Box program. The project goals were to improve the performance of the Blue Box recycling program and meet Promotion & Education (P&E) Best Practices. City staff set an ambitious objective of increasing the amount of Blue Box material collected by 10%; in terms of annual tonnes weighed at the City transfer station versus a 2013 base year.

The target audience in this campaign work was the City's general populace. The campaign included the relaunch of the City's "for Pete's sake Recycle More" slogan and "Pete" as the caricature face of the Blue Box program.

The following P&E tactics were implemented Fall 2014

- Signage on collection vehicles
- Radio & print advertisements
- Recycling handbooks for MR building superintendents

The following monitoring activities were completed for the base year (2013) and post (Fall 2014 – present)

- Comparison of monthly year over year weigh bill tonnages and project tonnes
- Qualitative feedback from MRF operator

The campaign impacts were

- Comparing the base year vs 2014 demonstrated no change. However, Blue Box tonnage is increasing since the key aspects of the program were rolled out in Fall 2014. Data from 2015 is extremely encouraging and staff are able to project tonnage to increase more than the 10% objective set in the communication plan
- Collection staff are using the truck vehicle wraps as education tools for residents that require streaming & acceptable material clarification

Staff were fortunate to work with CIF and a P&E subject matter expert through preparation for the ORW this June. The key learnings, from this process for staff, was that a significant chunk of the City's populace is not being targeted through the current communication plan. With this knowledge, Staff are adapting the communication plan to include this group in the target audience to yield even greater improvements in the Blue Box program's performance.

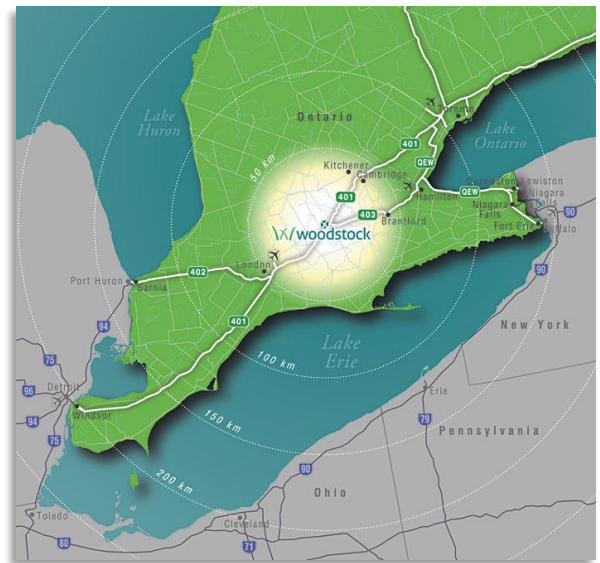
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1 PROJECT INFORMATION

1.1 Municipal Information

The City of Woodstock (City) provides biweekly two stream curbside recycling services to 16,887 (MPAC, 2014) households. The City targets the following materials: fibres, containers including PET, film plastics polycoat, HDPE, polystyrene, aluminum, steel, and glass. Collection of recyclable materials is completed by City staff.



The Works Division of the City of Woodstock is responsible for the operation of the recycling program. During the last few years, many changes within the department have occurred. From our improved recycling program that collects more materials, to the bag tag program we have for garbage, the City is trying to provide incentives to deal with waste properly. During the fall of 2011, the City of Woodstock completed a waste composition audit of 10 representative residential properties which found that 30% of the waste stream was recyclable material.

To increase overall waste diversion in Woodstock, these recyclable materials must be captured by the blue box program. Therefore, this is a major goal of this P&E funding – to make sure residents recycle as much as they can to divert more waste. Our P&E needs to change as we have been stagnant with our advertising for too long and residents are becoming apathetic. Without making changes to the advertising program, residences don't see a need to change. This will be a focus for the City over the next three years. After all, the goal of this project is to improve overall quality and quantity of materials captured at the curb through extra promotion and education work.

1.2 Project Description

The Continuous Improvement Fund (CIF) provided Staff with technical assistance and a grant for the development of a communication plan for promotion and education (P&E) of the Blue Box program and the implementation of P&E tactics. Tactics used by municipal staff were signage on collection vehicles, radio & print ads, and recycling guidebooks provided to Multi-Residential (MR) building superintendents.

Overall, this project was created to improve the performance of the Blue Box program through increased participation, better curbside sorting practices, and increasing the capture of targeted materials.

2 IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 Goals and Objectives

Goal: Increase Diversion of Blue Box materials. Measured by:

1. Annual Tonnage: The City of Woodstock recycled 3,567 tonnes in 2012. For June of 2017, the goal is to increase this to 3,923, a 10% increase.
2. Diversion rate: The City of Woodstock wishes to reduce their dependence on landfill by increasing the blue box diversion rate, which was at 54% in 2012, to 64% by 2014. This would be a 10% increase.
3. Monthly tonnage weights entering transfer station: The City of Woodstock operates their own waste transfer station. Materials coming into the station are automatically recorded by the scales software program. Staff will monitor the amount of material collected and compare it to the previous season in 2013.

2.2 Target audiences

All residents of the City of Woodstock will be targeted for this program, while a focus will be placed on multi-res superintendents with the design and distribution of the handbooks which will improve multi-res recycling. However, there will be more of a focus on the female head of the household as women are often the prime recyclers in the home.

2.3 Messages Used

The City had a successful advertising program in the past using the slogan “For Pete’s Sake Recycle”. There is still some of advertising around, although Pete has retired from the City, the use of this slogan will bring back a positive message of the recycling program. The new slogan will be “For Pete’s Sake! Recycle More”. With the slogan, we will bring back the mascot of “Pete” as part of the recycle more message. The promotion and education program will reinforce the message of recycling more by giving them information about what is recyclable.

Staff also used key messages developed:

1. Internally
Message: “Did you know”
2. Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO)
Message: “Don’t let your holiday’s go to waste”
3. Canadian Plastics Industry Association (CPIA)
Message: “Love affair over?” & “Let’s sort it out”





In all printed ads, *Pete's Recycle More* slogan was pictured prominently to build brand recognition. The ads selected from AMO & CPIA were chosen so that staff could realize time savings in developing messaging, imaging, and general creative while participating in campaigns that had a great reach than working just within the municipal boundaries.

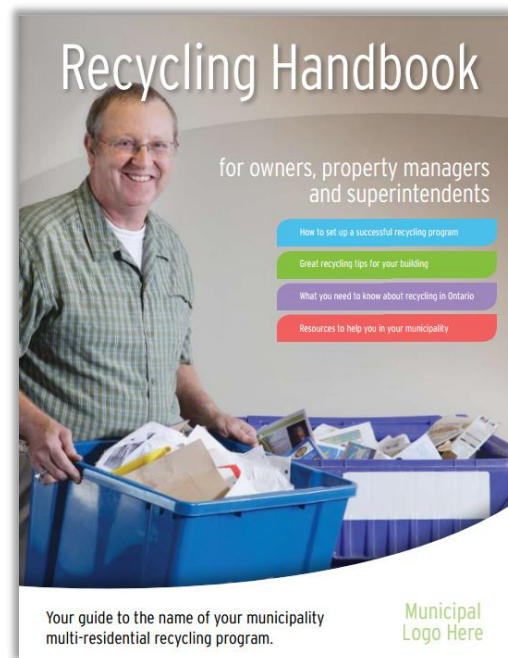
2.4 Tactics Utilized

The City's communication plan was completed Spring 2014 and the main component of the roll out of P&E implementation began Fall 2014.

Radio advertisements: Were played throughout October 2014 on two main stations in our listening area, Heart FM & Country 104. Staff worked with station producers to create 4 - 30 second ads meant to promote participation & awareness of targeted materials with women aged 30-45.

Superintendent's handbook: Is a one-time capital expense to produce and mail out sufficient copies including an inventory of the booklets on hand for continuous promotion and reminders, plus posting it on the City website. The focus of this booklet is for multi residential properties to promote and increase recycling at MR facilities in the City of Woodstock. Staff used the CIF MR Superintendent's guidebook template, [available online](#), and worked with a design person to personalize the template with the City's branding, contacts, and recycling information.

Print advertisements: The City put advertisements in three local outlets, the Oxford review, the Oxford shopping news, both weekly publications and the What's on Woodstock Magazine, a monthly publication. Distribution for each goes to every house in





the city. Historically these local news outlets have been far more effective for staff in reaching residents. The print ads utilized existing recycling messaging created by other Blue Box stakeholders in Ontario and Canada.

Truck signage: Placing the promotional information on the side of the recycling trucks, provides residents in the City of Woodstock a visual reminder of the materials recyclable through the Blue Box program. We will also take the recycling trucks to community events to promote recycling and discuss the recycling program with the public. The trucks have signage on both sides and the rear of the vehicle. The designs for the trucks was completed Spring of 2014 by the Oxford Media Group. The truck vehicle wraps were established on the trucks Summer 2014 by RA Watters Graphics.

Table 1: P&E Implementation tactics, targets, and respective costs

Tactic	Description	Budget	Actual
Truck signage	Vehicle wraps for four municipal collection trucks	\$8,600	\$8,547.84
Super's handbook	Design & distribution of recycling guidebook for building supers	\$5,000	\$1,370.33
Radio advertisements	30 second ads played throughout October 2015	\$9,800	\$4,228.13
Newspaper print ads	Print ads placed in local daily & weekly distributions	\$4,500	\$4,474.15
Total		\$27,900	\$18,620.45

3 RESULTS

3.1 Results

The goals and objectives created by Staff centre around the amount of materials captured through the Blue Box recycling program. As such, Staff selected inbound weights at the Woodstock transfer station as the measure of evaluating the impacts of the communication plan implementation. Figure 1 below, is a monthly consolidation of inbound Blue Box material weights for the years 2013 (Blue; the baseline), 2014 (Red), and the first 5 months of 2015 (Green).

Observationally, the reader will see that inbound tonnes were down in 2014 relative to the 2013 baseline. The campaign / implementation period began fall 2014. From September on, the reader can see tonnages begin to climb up. This trend is especially apparent to Staff with the inbound weights for 2015.

The total incoming tonnes for the monitoring period were 2,860 in the 2013 base year, 2,855 for 2014, and are project to reach 3,390 for 2015 (based on 5 months of data and correlated weighting for the same periods in 2013 & 2014).

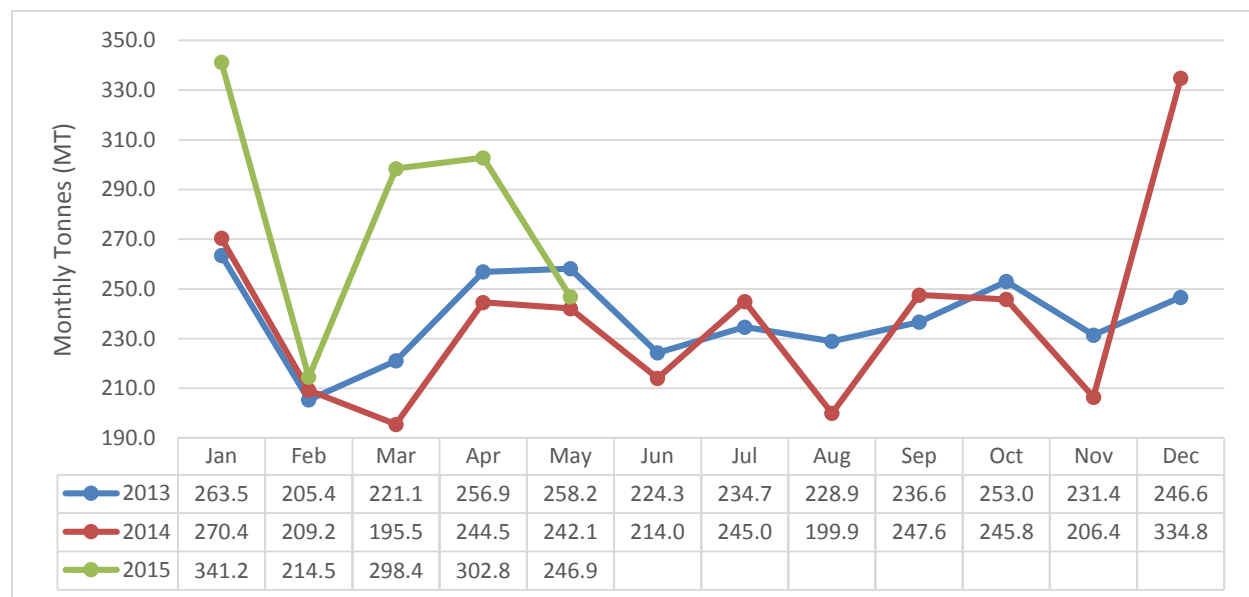


Figure 1: Monthly consolidated in bound Blue Box material weights for 2013, 2014, and the first 5 months of 2015

In addition to inbound weights, staff have monitored the City's website traffic during the Fall radio campaign period. Staff observed a 40% increase in traffic to the main site, but note that the main site would normally witness a spike in traffic during election periods.

3.2 Analysis of project

Staff were fortunate to work with CIF and a P&E subject matter expert in preparation for the June 2015 Ontario Recycler's Workshop (ORW). The P&E subject matter expert provided a critique on the campaigning completed by City Staff and insightful tips on improving the current tactics to have a greater impact on Blue Box program performance. For a full account (audio & visual) of the critique as presented by the P&E subject matter expert at the ORW, please refer to the CIF's ORW [webcast archive](#).

Staff are proud of the work completed to date, the relaunch of the City's "For Pete's sake Recycle" slogan and the Pete-branding represent a major step forward. Incoming weights are increasing, which is demonstrative of residents changing their setout behaviours. Going forward, Staff are looking to hone their P&E evaluation skills by building in extensive monitoring activities for campaigns. Such activities relate to monitoring the waste management webpage, working with County Staff on auditing reports to better understand the material mix at the curb, and measures for new tactics that focus on specific improvements to the program.

A key recommendation from the P&E subject matter expert was to assess the target audience for each campaign. For us in Woodstock, the residents are the target audience and our population is increasingly of younger generations. The P&E subject matter expert informed us that this 'millennial generation':

1. Represent approximately 30% of our recycling population
2. Are statistically poor recyclers (based on study data from other municipal centres)
3. Don't respond to traditional P&E tactics, but instead prefer to be interacted with through social media

With this information in hand, Staff are adjusting our P&E communication plan to reach out to the millennial generation by working with County staff to launch a social media branch of our combined P&E programming.