



MUNICIPALITY OF MEAFORD  
CIF PROJECT # 644.9  
FINAL REPORT

MARCH 2013

## **Overview**

### **Background**

The population for the Municipality of Meaford is 11,000. The Municipality has approximately 5,520 single family households and approximately 550 multi-residential households for a total of approximately 5,970 households.

Current waste management programs include:

- Bi-weekly residential curbside collection of waste (3 bag limit; full user pay);
- Weekly Blue Box collection for rural and urban residents throughout the Municipality;
- Weekly curbside collection of Source Separated Organics (SSO) throughout the Municipality;
- Drop-off depot at Meaford Transfer Site;
- Leaf and yard waste drop-off at public works yard; and
- Administration of waste management program (bylaw, enforcement, budget, and promotion and education).

### **Project Goals**

The project's goals, aimed at improving diversion and participation at the Transfer Station, included:

1. The installation of proper signage for all waste streams
2. To maximize transfer sit efficiency and minimize contamination rates
3. To improve functionality and aesthetics of the Transfer Station through increased user-friendly and specific signage.

### **Project Initiatives**

In order to achieve the goals set out in the section above, Environmental Services staff utilized the following initiatives:

1. Develop signage to identify the location of the transfer station, hours of operation, and materials accepted.
2. Develop medium sized signs to be placed in front of and/or hung on appropriate waste collection containers highlighting materials to be placed in that container.

## **Implementation**

### **Signage Developed**

Environmental Services staff, in coordination with the Grey County Sign Shop, designed and fabricated standard sized signs for both the entrance to the facility and for each of the waste streams inside the facility. The signs share the same blue and white colouring scheme and include large writing indicating which types of materials can be diverted at the Transfer Station.

### Signs Erected or Placed

1. 1 – 4' X 8' Identification Sign was installed on the front of the Transfer Station, in an area that is easily seen and high enough to not be vandalized. This sign includes the name, location, hours of operation, accepted materials, and emergency contact number for the facility. The new sign replaced a sign that was made of plastic and had been broken and with a large portion missing for the last 5 years. The previous sign did not include diversion streams and focused more on the garbage stream. A picture of the new Transfer Station identification sign is below:

Sign Design:

**4'x8'**

**Meaford**  
the other big apple

**TRANSFER STATION**  
**#146024 GREY ROAD 12**

**The Following Waste Types are Approved at this Facility:**

- Garbage and Bulky Waste
- Recyclables
- Wood and Construction Materials
- Metals

**Hours of Operation:**  
**Friday 12pm - 5pm**  
**Saturday 9am - 3pm**

**NO UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS PERMITTED - NO DUMPING OF UNAPPROVED WASTES PERMITTED**

**In case of EMERGENCY: CALL 519-538-1060**

Certificate of Approval Number A1004-01

The signs that were placed in front of and/or on the collection containers are 65cm X 90cm in size. These signs identify all recycling and garbage streams accepted at the site. The signs are all designed the same and include brackets that are either A-framed or can be hung on containers to maximize functionality and visibility. These signs are constructed of steel and are heavy enough to not be affected by wind or other environmental impacts. To maximize the life-cycle of these signs, the Transfer Station staff collect the signs and place them inside the building during the week when the site is not open. A sample of the signs is provided in this report below:



## Sign Design:

60x75cm steel



## Monitoring and tracking

### Pre-Signage:

In 2011, Environmental Services staff began to investigate the effectiveness and efficiency of the Transfer Station with respect to the diversion opportunities at the site. While staff recognized that the majority of tonnage at this site is related to garbage, as it is the collection depot for large and bulky items not eligible for curbside collection, staff felt that there were further opportunities to divert recyclable items away from the incoming stream, especially with respect to plastics, metals, and wood waste.

Environmental Services staff conducted surveys of persons attending the Transfer Station to identify over 2 Fridays and 1 Saturday in November 2011, February 2012, and May 2012. These surveys were collected during periods of spring and fall cleaning, as well as a general collection period. The surveys sought information about the user's frequency of use of the site, types of materials brought, their awareness of the different recycling streams, and opportunities for signage improvements. Survey results identified that approximately 25% of the users were first-time patrons and were not aware of the diversion opportunities. In addition to this, 90% of the returning users felt that signage improvements were required and believed that more waste could be diverted through increased awareness of the opportunities available.

### Post-Signage:

The large identification sign was installed in February 2012 in order to quickly resolve the issue of the broken sign on the front of the Transfer Station. The remaining signs were installed in July 2012 after the construction of their brackets by Municipal staff. Environmental Services staff allowed Transfer Station staff the opportunity to reorganize the collection containers on-site and effectively group waste streams prior to conducting surveys on the effectiveness of the new identification signs. Surveys were completed at the end of July, and in the months of September and October. While 25% of the users continued to be first time patrons of the site they indicated

that they found the location of the site much easier and found opportunities to divert their waste away from the garbage stream, as they had originally intended to. The majority of the diversion recognized came in waste wood and metals recycling, where these items may have traditionally been disposed of through garbage. 100% of the returning users felt that the improved signage improved both the aesthetics and functionality of the site.

## **Conclusion**

### Project Results

With the signs being implemented within the past 5 months, the quantitative results are difficult to determine at this time. Through the use of a private contractor and no weight measurement system the increased tonnage cannot be identified at this time. However, the qualitative results are evident through the increased efficiency of movement at the site and the increased recognition of diversion away from the waste stream. As a result of the signage and increased public awareness the contamination rate has decreased significantly.

### Recommendations

Alongside continued monitoring of the effectiveness and efficiency of the improved signage at the site, the Municipality plans to increase the promotion and education of the Transfer Station and their uses, through internet, print and social media. Environmental Services staff also plan on implementing similar styled signage at other waste management facilities. Finally, staff will be reviewing the layout of the Transfer Site to develop a system that has vehicles passing by the diversion containers before getting to the waste container.