

### **CIF Project #132 – Blue Box Plastics Recycling Enhancement Initiative RFP Distribution**

#### **Background**

In January 2009, under Project #127, Stewardship Ontario and the CIF issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) called the “Blue Box Plastics Recycling Enhancement Initiative” for the re-processing of Blue Box (BB) packaging material. The project objective was to develop new re-processing capacity in Ontario for BB plastics because, at the time, municipalities were facing increasing pressure to add mixed rigid plastics to their recycling programs.

In order to obtain the highest quality and most viable proposals, the Emerald Group was engaged under this CIF Project (#132) to research, identify and distribute the RFP to potential proponents.

#### **Summary of Results**

Over 550 potential proponents were initially identified by the CIF and the Emerald Group. The list was then narrowed based on material compatibility, business suitability, size, longevity, location, etc. and forty-four contacts were identified as strong potential proponents or groups that could distribute the RFP to their membership. The RFP was delivered directly to 29 potential proponents.

#### **Financials**

The CIF approved funding of \$10,500 (including tax) and the final cost was \$9,360.

#### **Learnings**

A challenge in marketing post-consumer plastics is immiscible blends, where mixing different polymers together into a homogenous blend is not possible and instead results in a phase-separated encapsulation within the material that is not commercially useful.

During the course of investigating potential proponents for the RFP, it was identified that several companies and research organizations were working on commercially viable blends of these immiscible polymers for use in structural applications. Products manufactured from these blended plastic materials had the potential to consume large quantities of post-consumer recyclables in the future.

At the time, it was recommended that further study be done to determine if research and developing technology around products made from immiscible plastics would afford solutions to recycling post-consumer plastics collected by Ontario municipalities.