

Nova Scotia's EPR Program for Packaging, Printed-Paper, and Packaging Like Products

Staff Update: November 2025



EAST HANTS

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Regulation Changes

- August 1, 2023 Nova Scotia Department of Environment & Climate Change announced the approval of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging, Paper Products and Packing-Like Products (PPP).
- The new Regulations come into effect December 1, 2025.
- Divert NS was appointed by the Province as the EPR Oversight for the new recycling system.
- Circular Materials is a national not-for-profit organization that was selected by Industry to work on their behalf as the Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO).
- The intentions of the new program include: increased recycling rates and shift the management (costs/operation) of the end-of-life packaging from residents/municipalities to those that created the products.



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Recycling Program Options (Curbside Services)

- **Opt-In**
 - Municipality becomes contractor to Industry
 - Curbside collection services continue as previously provided (collection day/contractor)
 - Customer service continues through the Municipality (Solid Waste Hotline & email, newsletters, Waste Wizard)
 - Any issues or concerns are managed through the Municipal Solid Waste Division
- **Opt-Out**
 - Municipality discontinues services as of November 30th
 - Customer services related to recycling would be redirected to Industry
 - Potential for change in collection contractor, service date
 - The Municipality would have no connection to this service to our communities.

3 Municipalities in NS opted out

The Municipality of East Hants Opted In



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Curbside Recycling – Paper (Fibre) Bag

What to Know:

- All the material previously in the ‘paper’ bag can still go in!
- Focus on flattening packaging like boxboard (ex. cereal/cracker boxes) & cardboard bundled beside blue bags.
- Books will no longer be accepted in the curbside recycling program, and therefore alternative options will be recommended such as donations, gifting, and paper shred events (with covers removed).

New:

- **Residents will have unlimited bags** of properly prepared recyclables! (currently a limit of 8 units is accepted)
- Paper laminated are IN!
 - Paper plates, flour bags, paper gift bags, muffin or sandwich bags.
- **Communication Change:** Our focus will be on materials going to the paper recycling stream vs. organics. For example: Pizza boxes have always been accepted in either stream – the communication will be to recycling (dropping organics option)



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Recyclable material list

Fibre



Material & examples	What to know
	<p>Cardboard boxes Pizza boxes, direct mail boxes, moving boxes, shoe boxes.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Place flattened and bundled cardboard 60 x 60 cm next to blue bags at the curb.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empty.</p>
	<p>Boxboard Cereal boxes, tissue boxes, egg cartons, rolls from toilet paper and paper towel.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flatten.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empty.</p>
	<p>Paper Any colour, including flour bags, prescription bags, paper produce bags.</p> <p>Notepads, white or coloured loose paper, file folders, other printed materials.</p> <p>Community newspapers, flyers, brochures and magazines.</p> <p>Greeting cards and envelopes, gift boxes.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Place shredded paper in a tied clear plastic bag.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Separate from plastic bags used to cover items, remove elastic bands.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remove rope handle from bags.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do not include soft or hard covered books/novels.</p>

Recyclable material list

Paper/fibre



Material & examples	What to know
	<p>Paper laminate packaging Plates, flour bags, paper and gift bags, muffin or sandwich bags.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empty.</p>



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Curbside Recycling – Containers Bag

What to Know:

- All the material previously accepted continues, with the exception of foam packaging (Styrofoam) – though if in the bags will not be rejected.
- Focus containers being empty (not perfectly clean), tops stay on those containers if similar (ex. shampoo bottle), lids made of a different material still come off (ex. glass jar of jam)

New:

- **Residents will have unlimited bags** of properly prepared recyclables! (currently a limit of 8 units is accepted)
- Paper laminate packaging (containers) are IN!
 - Beverage cups (ex. Tim Hortons/McDonalds)
 - Spiral cans (ex. Pillsbury turnover cans)
 - Toothpaste tubes
 - Deodorant
 - Hand cream tubes
 - Plant pots

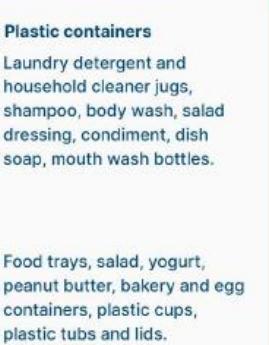
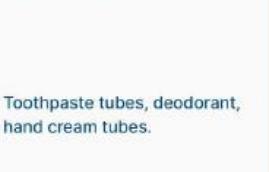
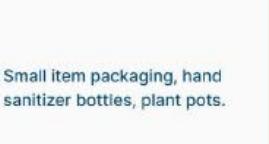


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Recyclable material list

Containers



Material & examples	What to know
 <p>Plastic containers Laundry detergent and household cleaner jugs, shampoo, body wash, salad dressing, condiment, dish soap, mouth wash bottles.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empty. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lids and caps on.
 <p>Food trays, salad, yogurt, peanut butter, bakery and egg containers, plastic cups, plastic tubs and lids.</p>	
 <p>Toothpaste tubes, deodorant, hand cream tubes.</p>	
 <p>Small item packaging, hand sanitizer bottles, plant pots.</p>	

Recyclable material list

Containers



Material & examples	What to know
 <p>Plastic film Plastic that can be stretched. Bags used for dry cleaning, bread, newspapers and flyers. Sandwich bags, freezer bags, shrink wrap.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empty.
 <p>Paper laminate packaging Spiral cans, cookie dough package, ice cream containers, and hot and cold beverage cups.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rinse and dry. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remove lids.
 <p>Cartons Dairy and dairy substitute cartons, molasses and sugar cartons, laundry and cleaning cartons, soup and sauce cartons, coffee cartons.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rinse and dry. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lids and caps on.



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Recyclable material list

Containers



Material & examples	What to know
	<p>Metal Food cans, metal lids, candle, cookie, coffee and tea tins.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rinse and dry.</p>
	<p>Aluminum (foils and trays) Aluminum foil, pie plates, frozen food trays.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empty.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ball up aluminum foil.</p>
	<p>Glass containers Clear and coloured glass. Food containers, jars and bottles. Cosmetic containers, spice bottles, oil and vinegar bottles.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empty.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lids and caps off.</p>



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Drop-Off / Depot Only - Recyclables

Under the Regulations a list of product types was outlined, it is up to Industry (Circular Materials) to create a plan and activate it to meet the requirements. Divert NS (EPR Oversight) is responsible to ensure all requirements are met by Circular Materials.

The following items will not be included in the curbside programs, and must be dropped off at a participating location:

1. Foam packaging (Styrofoam).
2. Flexible plastics. This includes: coffee and deli pouches, chip bags, bubble wrap, candy/snack wrappers, cereal liner bags and gift bags.
3. Aerosol containers. *Non-hazardous* This includes: food sprays (ex. whip), hairspray, air fresheners, shaving cream, deodorant. Must be empty and lids/caps on.

No confirmation of drop-off locations within East Hants, we have requested consideration at the WMC. We have been told material found in blue bags will not be considered contamination (at least in the beginning of the program).



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Recycle these at participating drop-off locations:



Empty

Foam packaging

Takeout containers, foam packaging, beverage cups, meat trays.



Empty

Flexible plastics

Coffee pouches, chip bags, candy and snack wrappers, cereal liner bags.



Empty

Aerosol containers

Hairspray, shaving cream, deodorant.



Learn more: circularmaterials.ca/NSdepots



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Curbside Collection Service Levels

Multi-Residential (apartments) & Campgrounds

- These locations are all eligible for service coverage under Circular Materials – **they** need to register directly. Staff have reached out since Spring 2025 to advise.
- Those locations currently receiving curbside recycling service by East Hants have been accounted for in our contract with Circular Materials. However, when that contract runs out they will need to transition to Circular Materials.
- **Any new location built/open after December 1st 2025 will not be offered** curbside recycling services by East Hants but directed to register with Circular Materials. (garbage & organics will be available)
- Any location **currently not using the East Hants service** option, and **has not registered** with Circular Materials would continue to manage their material like they are. Whenever staff identify one we will encourage them to register.



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Curbside Collection Service Levels

Small Non-Residential Generators (= small businesses, community halls, etc.)

Unique to Nova Scotia is the significant supports to our small businesses and community halls with curbside services. EPR programs across Canada do not allow for any material from these locations to be included (collected or processed) with the residential materials. The compromise made between CM and Municipalities is:

- No cost recovery/payment for these stops or material (Municipalities will continue to pay for those locations; rate of \$65/instance = \$2.50/collection)
- Maximum limits = 6 units (bags/bundles)
- This is a reduction of 10 units for East Hants locations, however this unit was determined through a survey of level of service currently provided across NS. The average was approved by Divert NS. East Hants was a higher service level, whereas others provided less.



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Curbside Collection Service Levels

Small Non-Residential Generators (continued)

- Those locations currently receiving curbside recycling service by East Hants have been accounted for in our contract with Circular Materials. However, when the expected transition of services being offered directly by CM those businesses will likely lose that service.
- **Any new business built/open after December 1st 2025 will not be offered** curbside recycling services by East Hants, garbage & organics will still be available.

Schools

- East Hants currently provides all school collection services under our existing curbside collection program. We will continue to services school until that contract expires. At the time of expiry CCRCE will transition to the Circular Materials system directly.

Documentation - Curbside Collection

All Opt-In communities had to submit documentation of collection services. This included:

- Multi-residential File – civic addresses and number of units per building
- Small ICI File – civic addresses and business name/type
- Campgrounds – civic addresses and business name

Circular Materials will audit communities to ensure material is only accepted at, and within limits assigned, based on documentation at the start of the contract.

No additional Small ICI will be eligible for services and residential growth can be updated quarterly.



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Impacts of Transition to Services

Residential

- **Increase** in products eligible for recycling program (Books – No longer eligible (must donate or regular garbage)
- **Increase** of collection limits (8 to unlimited) Some materials require drop-off to a designated location (ex. candy wrappers)

will not result in stickered bags as this is not a banned material type.

Small Non-Residential Generators

- **Increase** in products eligible for recycling program
- **Decrease** in collection limits (16 to 6 units)
- Only those on the system at the time of launch will be eligible, any new will not be provided the services



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Impacts of Transition to Services

Small Non-Residential Generators

In creating the list (as required under agreement with Circular Materials) staff have audited our services to ensure:

- Only locations that are paying commercial taxes are on the list
- Those locations that are found on the list that do not pay commercial tax but seek business limits curbside are being provided options: (a) do they want to adjust tax bill to commercial vs. residential or (b) do they want to remain residential?
 - Remaining residential = Only those limits collected curbside, additional material would be accepted at the WMC at no cost (if regular household generation determined; anything commercial in nature would be charged tipping fees)
 - Move to commercial = Business limits for all materials accepted curbside, any loads at the WMC would be charged tipping fees.
- Scale software and curbside collection binder will be updated to reflect these notes



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Transitional Communication

There are 7 solid waste regions with in Nova Scotia, with staff supporting those regions (for East Hants = Andrea). Transitional communication has been developed by Circular Materials, given this is their program. Regions have agreed to align with the CM messaging and timelines, with some local notes within.

The following slides share the graphics and messages (**to be finalized**) for the month of November.



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Transitional Communication

Posted on November 6, 2025



Municipality of East Hants

Yesterday at 9:01 AM ·

...

New provincial rules will shift recycling responsibility from municipalities to the companies that make and sell packaging and paper.

We are pleased to share that the Municipality of East Hants has partnered with Circular Materials, so you'll continue to receive the same curbside collection service you rely on — plus the ability to recycle even more materials.

Transition starts December 1, 2025.

Stay tuned as we get closer — we'll share updates on what materials you'll be able to add to your recycling bags and how this benefits our community and environment.

An enhanced recycling system is coming to **Nova Scotia**.



Learn more:
circularmaterials.ca/NS



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DRAFT

Transitional Communication

Posting Date TBC

Nova Scotia is moving to an *enhanced recycling system*, and we're excited to share that **East Hants has partnered with Circular Materials** — a not-for-profit organization leading the new, province-wide program.

What's changing?

- You'll follow the *same recycling rules* no matter where you live in Nova Scotia.
- You can now recycle *more materials than ever before* — things like coffee cups, deodorant and toothpaste tubes, frozen juice cans, and even ice cream tubs! (Just make sure they're **empty** before recycling — no need for a perfect clean.)
- Your local curbside service stays the same!** We'll still handle collection, missed pickup reports, and your recycling questions.

Have questions? Use our **Waste Wizard app** to check what goes where  easthants.ca/wastewizard

Learn more about the new provincial system here:
circularmaterials.ca/NS #ReadyRecycleRepeat #EastHantsRecycles



Learn more about Nova Scotia's enhanced recycling system:
circularmaterials.ca/NS



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DRAFT

Transitional Communication

November 24

Starting December 1, an enhanced recycling program is coming to Nova Scotia. East Hants will provide convenient, consistent, and effective recycling services that will support the improvement of recycling rates.

This transition is administered by Circular Materials – a national not-for-profit organization committed to building an efficient and effective recycling system in Nova Scotia.

Learn more:

circularmaterials.ca/NS.

#ReadyRecycleRepeat #EastHantsRecycles



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DRAFT

Transitional Communication

December 1

Starting today, an enhanced recycling program has been implemented in Nova Scotia. East Hants will provide convenient, consistent, and effective recycling services that will support the improvement of recycling rates.

This transition is administered by Circular Materials – a national not-for-profit organization committed to building an efficient and effective recycling system in Nova Scotia.

Learn more:

circularmaterials.ca/NS.

#ReadyRecycleRepeat #EastHantsRecycles

An enhanced recycling system.



Learn more:
circularmaterials.ca/NS



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Solid Waste – Post December 1

The Municipality will continue to provide curbside services, on behalf of Circular Materials. Additionally, Circular Materials will contract East Hants for transfer station holding and transport services to the recycling facility.

As a contractor there will be monthly reporting required to Circular Materials including, but not limited to:

- Curbside collection reports
- Sample audits of recycling
- Specific education reporting



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Solid Waste – Post December 1

Bylaw IO400 was last reviewed and approved in 2012. Since that time there have been several changes to provincial regulations (including EPR for PPP), our communities and therefore operations. Staff will bring forward changes for consideration are based on the following guiding principles:

- Clear language
- Defined responsibility for all parties
- Clear enforceable provisions (allowing for registration of bylaw; issuing of summary offense tickets)
- Removal of sections that no longer apply, or those that are policy-based



Solid Waste – Post December 1

Staff are also preparing a *Solid Waste Management Policy* (Council Policy). The intent of this document is:

- Provide Council, Municipal staff, and the public with the framework by which solid waste is managed in East Hants
- Move sections that are policy-based content found under Bylaw 10-400
- Areas where clarity and documentation are needed will be addressed under the policy

An example of a movement from Bylaw to Policy would be:

Section 7.2 – Container specifications

We would remove the exact bag dimensions, weights, and colours from the bylaw and move to policy. These are technical standards that would be better served in a policy. We would ‘sticker’ or reject a bag that didn’t meet the standard but we wouldn’t issue a summary offense ticket.

However, should the material remain curbside outside of allowances and create a mess, then we could issue a summary offense ticket in that circumstance.



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Municipal Pros/Cons

The following table breaks down the Pros, Cons, and Unknowns of the system (as presented to Regional Chairs November 4, 2025). Not all are applicable to East Hants.

PROS	CONS	UNKNOWNs
Significant cost savings	Closures of MRFs in rural areas. Loss of jobs	Landfill bans & enforcement
Nova Scotians not paying “twice” into the EPR program	New need for transfer abilities at facilities	Where commercial recycling will go
Increased diversion	Commercial recycling tipping fees may increase	Potential sorting differences between home & work
Harmonized sorting guide for recycling	Depot-only collection for certain items, little incentive to public	
No tipping fees for residential recycling	Increased transportation: recycling from depots & to one provincial MRF	
Unlimited recycling amounts curbside	Books may only be recyclable commercially	
Free recycling for schools, campgrounds, apartments	Municipalities working for private sector – role reversal	
More revenue for Depot operators		



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