



# CARTON COUNCIL

## Winter 2022

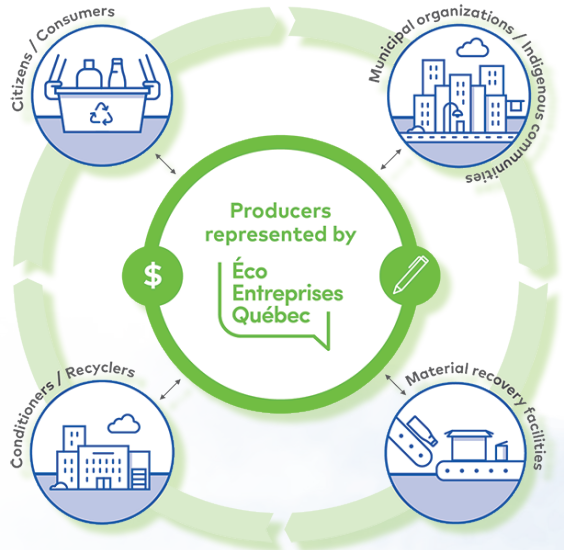
### ÉCO ENTREPRISES QUÉBEC IS PREPARING TO MANAGE CARTONS UNDER THE NEW CURBSIDE RECYCLING SYSTEM. HERE'S HOW.

**On October 24, 2022, RECYQ-QUÉBEC, the government organization that oversees recycling in the province, officially appointed Éco Entreprises Québec (ÉEQ) as the designated management organization (DMO) responsible for administering the modernized curbside recycling system on behalf of producers that market packaging materials, containers and printed matter.**

This appointment initiates the transition from the current system, funded by those producers but implemented by municipalities and material recovery facilities (MRFs), to the extended producer responsibility (EPR) system, whereby producers, through ÉEQ, will be fully responsible for all aspects of recovery and recycling of their materials.

They will therefore be at the centre, along with ÉEQ, of a new recycling structure for Québec, with formal service agreements binding them to the other links in the recycling value chain: municipalities, MRFs, conditioners and recyclers. The new arrangement will come into effect in 2025.

As a type of recyclable container, cartons will be affected by this extensive transformation, and this naturally raises a number of questions. We recently spoke with ÉEQ to get a better sense of the impact that these changes will have on carton recycling and how the organization is preparing to handle these materials.



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Currently, all curbside recycling programs in Québec accept cartons. We began by confirming that all cartons—including refrigerated (gable top) and shelf-stable (aseptic) cartons, whether used for drinks or food, and regardless of format—will continue to be accepted everywhere in Québec under the new system. And this will remain the case even when gable top and shelf-stable beverage cartons (including drink boxes) become part of the province’s expanded deposit-return program, beginning in 2025. When RECYC-QUÉBEC announced its appointment of ÉEQ as the DMO for curbside recycling, it also announced that the Association québécoise de récupération des contenants de boissons (AQRCB, the province’s beverage container recovery association) would be the designated management organization for the deposit-return system.

### **Collaboration between the curbside recycling and deposit-return systems**

Québec’s modernization of recycling in the province also includes an expanded deposit-return system that will cover all 100 mL to 2 L “ready-to-drink” beverage containers. While splitting the recovery of food and drink cartons between the curbside recycling and deposit-return systems is also the norm in several other provinces, Québec will be the only one to require a formal collaborative agreement between the entities in charge of the two systems, with the goal of maximizing recovery and recycling of the materials collected by each. ÉEQ confirms that the two organizations will hold talks in the coming months with the goal of signing an agreement by the end of July 2023.

It is therefore too soon to tell whether post-consumer cartons collected by these two methods will be baled together or separately, and whether marketing efforts targeting recyclers will be jointly or independently undertaken. Since some consumers will inevitably continue to put returnable beverage cartons in their blue bins, the

two organizations must also agree on how to process those containers. Will ÉEQ handle their recycling itself, or will it transfer them to the AQRCB? And how will the costs incurred by these steps be compensated? Given that distinct recovery and recycling objectives have been set for each organization by the authorities, they will also need to set up a mechanism for exchanging data to make sure their respective rates are correctly calculated. These questions and others will be answered in the coming agreement. ÉEQ assures us that the two organizations will work together in exemplary fashion to ensure effective management of cartons, as well as accurate reporting of performance results.

### **Stakeholder consultations for communication to citizens and sorting standards**

Other questions, of course, remain unanswered at this very early stage in the transition, such as what sorting practices ÉEQ will be promoting for cartons. One of the most promising aspects of the overhaul of the recycling system is that ÉEQ will also be responsible for developing and rolling out all promotion and education





initiatives for curbside recycling across the province. The messages to Quebecers on how to recover various materials will therefore be the same wherever they live, which should significantly reduce the confusion that can result when people see conflicting guidelines. With cartons, for example, will people be asked to keep them in their original shape as opposed to flattening them before binning them? Will they be told to screw the cap back on or to leave it off? These are the sorts of questions that will be studied this winter, notably by the various consultation committees that ÉEQ is currently setting up with recycling system stakeholders. Many things will factor into those discussions, including bin capacity, frequency of curbside pickup, and the needs of MRFs as well as those of recyclers.

The consultation committees will also set the requirements for sorting of cartons at the MRFs. Will there be a requirement for all of them to sort cartons into separate bales? We know that doing so maximizes the performance of the quality fibre found in cartons when they are reduced to pulp in paper mills, and also allows for recovery of polyal (a substance composed of the thin layers of polyethylene and aluminum found in cartons), which can then be used in manufacturing of other products. If so, what other materials will be accepted in these bales, and what will the acceptable level of contamination be? Currently, almost half of sorting centres in Québec sort cartons separately, achieving a purity level of around 95%, which is quite high. In considering these questions, which also apply to all other types of materials, ÉEQ plans to align with its counterparts in Ontario (which is also implementing curbside collection fully funded and administered by producers), as the two provinces share many of the same end markets.

### **Recycling that is now mostly local**

Indeed, ÉEQ will henceforth be in charge of finding end markets for recovered materials; this part of the recycling value chain will no longer be the responsibility of the MRFs. Under the new regulations, the majority of recycling must be achieved locally; i.e., by recyclers in northeastern North America, between Ontario and New Jersey. With regard to cartons, ÉEQ can look to the Sustana Fiber mill in Lévis, near Québec City, which uses cartons and other white fibre-based materials to produce superior-quality recycled fibre. This fibre is then sold to manufacturers of printing paper, tissue and packaging, including food-grade packaging. The mill's current recycling capacity is 4,000 to 5,000 tonnes of cartons per year, and it is aiming to increase that to 15,000 over the next few years. If need be, ÉEQ could also sign agreements with other recyclers in northeastern North America and work to promote development of end markets in the region.

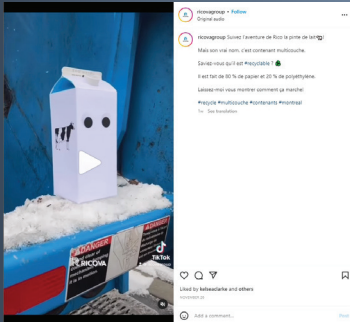
The changes brought about by this overhaul of the curbside recycling system are both profound and promising. Having been active in recycling since its founding in 2005, collecting fees from producers and distributing them to municipalities to fund curbside collection, ÉEQ has a significantly expanded role going forward. Its team, which is itself growing to fulfil these new responsibilities, understandably has its work cut out for it between now and 2025. ÉEQ has developed a comprehensive plan comprising several critical milestones, which it is now working to implement. We are confident in its ability to accomplish the optimization of the recycling system that is now underway. And it can count on our full co-operation to ensure that recovery and recycling of cartons under the new system is met with great success.





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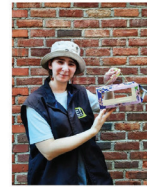
### CCC AWARDS GRANTS TO 15 QUÉBEC MUNICIPALITIES, SORTING FACILITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO PROMOTE RECYCLING AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

The Carton Council of Canada (CCC) held the second edition of its Community Education Award Program in Québec this year. Last year's inaugural event was held in Ontario. This program was established to recognize and support promotion and education (P&E) efforts in Canadian communities while specifically promoting the recovery of food and beverage cartons.

Fifteen municipalities, sorting companies and organizations successfully completed the program and will each receive a \$2,000 grant. This year's recipients are:

- [City of Côte Saint-Luc](#)
- [City of Saint-Lambert](#)
- [EURÉKO!](#)
- [MRC des Laurentides](#)
- [MRC des Sources](#)
- [Municipalité de Venise-en-Québec](#)
- [Récup Estrie](#)
- [Régie intermunicipale de traitement des matières résiduelles de la Gaspésie \(RITMRG\)](#)
- [Régie intermunicipale des déchets de la Rouge](#)
- [Ressource de Réinsertion Le Phare](#)
- [Ricova](#)
- [Société VIA](#)
- [Tricentris, la coop](#)
- [Ville de Gatineau](#)
- [Ville de Sherbrooke](#)

Défi multicoche – axé sur le recyclage et la valorisation des contenants multicoches en s’amusant



Valorisation en mangeoire à oiseau



Valorisation en étui à crayons



Valorisation en pot à semis

For more examples of activities implemented by the grant recipients, see the [online version](#) of the newsletter.

To obtain this grant, each participating organization first had to demonstrate that its website clearly indicates that cartons are recyclable and are accepted in its community recovery program. They also had to have implemented at least two P&E activities during the year that made reference to cartons.



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The activities presented reflect the variety and creativity of the P&E efforts. Winners used articles and advertisements in municipal newsletters, social media posts, blog posts, sorting app ads, conferences and workshops with citizens, employees, businesses and schools, videos, trivia games, information booths, photo essays, green patrols, and craft projects.

Congratulations to the winners and thank you for your contribution to the recovery of cartons and other recyclable materials!

The program is expected to return in 2023. The region of Canada where it will be rolled out is yet to be determined.

For more information on how the program functions and its criteria, visit <https://www.recyclecartons.ca/community-education-award-program-2/>

### **MRF PROFILES: REGIONS OF WATERLOO AND PEEL, CITY OF WINNIPEG**

As a continuation of Carton Council of Canada's visits to various Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) in Ontario and across the country, Managing Director, Isabelle Faucher, recently had the opportunity to visit MRFs servicing the Regions of Waterloo and Peel, and the City of Winnipeg.

#### **Region of Waterloo Nyle Ludolph Material Recycling Centre**

On September 19, 2022, Isabelle met with Paul Skinner, Operations Supervisor at GFL Environmental Inc. and spoke with Paul Rabb, Operations Supervisor at the Region of Waterloo.

Many people don't know that the Waterloo facility is the home of the first blue box system in the world; or that the United Nations recognized [Ontario's blue box initiative with an environmental award of merit in 1989](#). Signs on the observation deck at the facility offer a full history of this important recycling milestone to school groups and other visitors.

Today, the Waterloo MRF handles containers while fibres are sent to Niagara Recycling for processing and baling. In Waterloo, cartons are hand sorted before the eddy current. Polycoat currently comprises 3 percent of the facility's outbound production.



Isabelle Faucher with Paul Skinner in front of carton bales.

#### **GFL Winnipeg Material Recovery Facility**

On September 27, 2022, Isabelle visited the [GFL MRF located in Winnipeg, Manitoba](#), a relatively new facility that began operating in 2019. Here, she met with Steven Heard, Operations Manager at GFL Environmental Inc. GFL owns the recycling facility and the company is currently three years into a 10-year contract with the City of Winnipeg. In 2020, the GFL Winnipeg MRF was awarded the [National Waste & Recycling Association \(NWRA\) Recycling Facility of the Year](#).

Originally, the Winnipeg MRF only accepted material from the city itself but has since started adding material from other municipalities, some from as far as 10 hours away. Seventy-five percent of the material processed at the facility is residential and cartons make up 2 per cent of inbound materials.

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Currently, the Winnipeg facility processes 68,000 tonnes per year (51,000 TPY from Winnipeg) but the facility has capacity for 100,000 TPY. They produce seven commodities and market about 680 tonnes of polycoat annually.

Cartons are ejected optically through a dual-ejection optical sorter (along with mixed rigid plastics). A quality control sorter removes any contaminants. In order to maximize capture rates, there is also a rework system in place. If a carton or any other recyclable does not get captured the first time around, it gets recirculated while a robot works to remove contaminants. Together, these processes help reduce the residue rate and minimize the loss of valuable materials.

GFL handles the marketing of the material generated at the facility on behalf of the City of Winnipeg and pays them revenues based on minimum capture rates.

At the moment, the facility operates one 9-hour shift but the GFL team is working towards adding another shift so can they can begin to accept material from Alberta.

### Region of Peel Material Recovery Facility

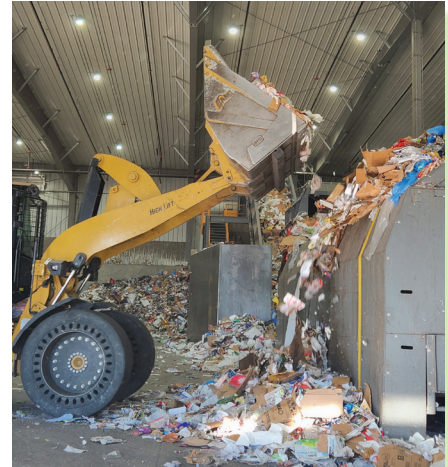
Finally, on Oct. 30th, 2022, Isabelle and Guillermo Pugliese, Global Collections Director for Tetra Pak, visited the [Material Recovery Facility for the Region of Peel](#). There, they met with Erin Pollock, Team Lead, Waste Processing, and Shawn Sinclair, Supervisor, Waste Processing – both from the Region of Peel – as well as David Saint Remy, Operations Manager at GFL Environmental Inc.

The Peel MRF underwent significant upgrades since 2020 focused on modernizing the facility and introducing significant opportunity for additional recovery.

The facility's equipment features 12 optical sorters including 8 for fibre capture, clean up and recovery, 3 for containers including carton capture, as well as 1 for last chance recovery which recirculates missed commodities.

Peel also has a virtual [360 MRF tour](#) available online.

GFL markets all materials for Peel and a revenue-sharing agreement is in place with the Region.



Material from tip floor being loaded onto conveyor



From left to right: David Saint Remy, Guillermo Pugliese, Erin Pollock, Shawn Sinclair



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Students in New Brunswick participate in The Gaia Project's Trash Tracker program, with support from Carton Council of Canada

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### SUPPORTING CARTON AND RECYCLING EDUCATION IN CANADIAN SCHOOLS

In 2022, the Carton Council of Canada continued to support creative educational efforts in Canadian schools. Focused on exceptional content and learning-focused experiences, each program helps increase students' understanding of the importance of waste reduction – and carton recovery -- strategies.

**The Gaia Project's Trash Tracker program:** Trash Tracker is a program designed to inspire elementary and middle school students to create a waste diversion plan for their school. Through sorting one day's worth of waste, students are able to identify issues and find solutions related to improving their school's waste diversion performance. The program has a special focus on effectively capturing milk cartons and drink boxes.

This year, as one of the programs sponsors, CCC supported five Trash Tracker programs delivered in schools in New Brunswick in both Francophone and Anglophone communities.

According to the data analysis collected from 40 participating classrooms across the province, the largest divertible category to make up the waste stream was organic waste (30%), followed by paper and cardboard (each at 15%). Cartons, for their part, made up 12% of the waste stream. We look forward to our continued collaboration with The Gaia Project over the 2022-23 school year so that these numbers can be reduced to a minimum.

**Dairy Farmers of Canada, Manitoba Regional Nutrition Team, Recycle Right with Milk Program:** In 2022, CCC also became a sponsor of the Manitoba-based initiative [Recycle Right with Milk](#).

The purpose is to offer elementary schools in the province a program that supports the healthy habit of drinking milk at lunch while increasing environmental awareness, helping students optimize the recycling of beverage containers.

CCC's sponsorship supported the distribution of 35 Spectrum Slim triple stream units along with 175 plastic lids and pails to be used to collect residual liquids in Manitoba elementary schools.

**EcoSchools Canada:** Over the course of a two-year partnership, Carton Council of Canada and EcoSchools Canada have collaborated to create new, bilingual tools and resources encouraging students across Canada to take an active role in setting up effective recycling systems, as well as properly managing milk cartons and drink boxes at school. CCC and EcoSchools also developed a well-received 2-minute video in French and English entitled [Best Practices for Carton Recycling at School](#).

Over the course of the 2021-22 school year, 136 schools completed the Conduct a Waste Audit action. Based on the self-reported performance of these



The Spectrum Slim triple stream unit helps students properly sort their waste and recycle their beverage containers, including milk cartons, in schools.

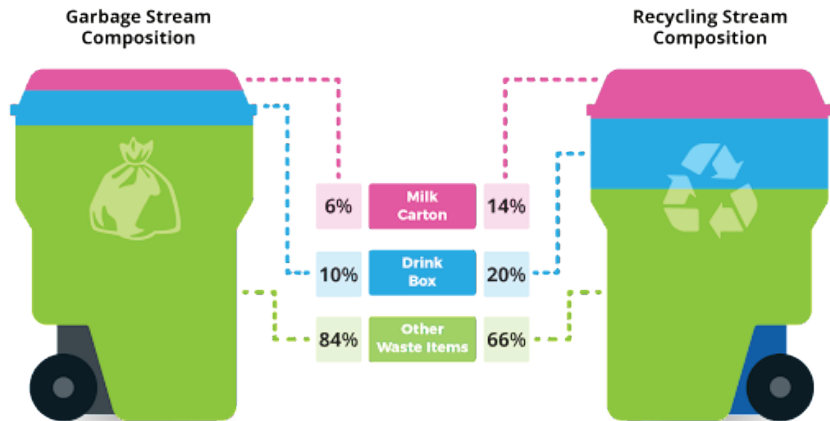
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Results of waste audits conducted by 136 participating Eco Schools in 2021-2022



schools, cartons made up a significant portion (34%) of the recycling stream and constituted 16% of the garbage stream. Similar to the approach in New Brunswick, CCC is in discussions with EcoSchools to determine how best it can extend its support in the coming years towards the goal of eliminating cartons from schools' garbage stream.

### CONTINUUS MATERIALS IS INCREASING PRODUCTION TO MEET DEMAND FOR ROOF BOARDS MADE WITH POST-CONSUMER CARTONS

Earlier this year, we learned that Continuous Materials, one of the end markets for Canadian post-consumer cartons, had been [acquired](#) by North American environmental services giant Waste Management Inc. and private equity firm Tailwater Capital. In a recent conversation with the Carton Council, Jeff Dushack, Continuous's marketing director, confirmed that this transaction has brought in a major influx of new funds to finance the growth of the business for the years ahead.

The company's marquee product is a cover board for flat and low-slope roofs (that's the board that comes between a roof's insulation and its waterproofing layer) called Everboard which is made by hot pressing together food and beverage cartons and other post-consumer fibres and plastics. With the current production practically selling out over the past

three years, plans are being drawn up to build a new plant whose output, Dushack tells us, should represent several times the volume of Continuous's current plant in Des Moines, Iowa. Since any new plant takes at least two years to come online, the company expects to increase capacity at its existing facility in the meantime to meet a portion of the growing demand for the boards. The location of the new plant has yet to be determined.

Canada plays a big role in supplying Continuous Materials with raw materials and will continue to do so under the expansion but at a much larger volume, confirms Dushack.



**Everboard Installation**

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