

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

RecycleBC Depot Program



Q. What is RecycleBC?

A. RecycleBC (RBC) is a non-profit organization responsible for residential printed paper and packaging recycling throughout British Columbia. It is funded by retailers, grocers, manufacturers and other businesses and operates under the guidelines of stewardship plan approved by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy.

Q. Why are RDCK depots changing to the RecycleBC program?

A. Recycling markets have changed and mixed recycling programs are no longer cost effective to operate or able to guarantee that the majority of materials collected are recycled into new products due to contamination. Joining the RBC program ensures that collected materials are kept out of landfills and consistency with other depot recycling programs in the province and curbside collection in RDCK municipalities.

Q. What materials will be accepted through the RBC program?

A. Residential printed paper and packaging will be accepted under the new program. This means that new packaging materials such as plastic bags, Styrofoam, Tetra Paks and various other hard plastic and metal packaging will be accepted. Some plastic items such as Ziploc bags are not considered packaging because they do not contain a product when sold, these items will not be accepted. For a full list of acceptable recycling please see the RBC depot brochure.

Q. Who will operate the new depots? RBC or the RDCK?

A. The RDCK will provide staff to monitor all recycling depots and assist users. RBC will coordinate collection of materials from core depots and hauling that material back to facilities for processing into new products.

Q. What are core depots and satellite depots?

A. RBC designates recycling depots as core or satellite locations. Core depots will have their recycling collected by haulers fully paid for by RBC. Satellite depots must have their recycling brought to a core depot by an independent hauler, paid for by the RDCK. All depots must have staff supervision when open, paid by RDCK.

Q. Will depots still be open 24/7?

A. No. Depots will now require staff supervision when open and access to recycling containers will be restricted when closed.

Q. Why are depots getting new staff?

A. RBC has strict limits on allowable contamination in recycling. Staff are required by RBC at depots to meet these limits and to assist depot users. Eliminating contamination ensures that material collected at depots is recycled into new products and that more categories of material can be accepted. Exceeding these contamination limits may result in monetary fines to the RDCK.

Q. Who pays for recycling now?

A. RBC receives funding from the producers of printed paper and packaging to collect and recycle their product. These funds pay for the transportation and processing of collected materials. A portion of this money is returned to depot operators like the RDCK based on the amount of material collected. This will offset some of the cost of depot operation, the rest will be funded through taxation as the previous depot was also funded.

Q. Can businesses still recycle at RDCK depots?

A. The RBC recycling program is only mandated to collect residential recycling. Businesses will not be allowed to deposit their recycling in RBC bins. The RDCK will provide separate bins for commercial users to deposit cardboard at depots with significant business traffic.

Q. Will this change how I recycle?

A. Yes. In order to meet the contamination limits set by RBC users will need to sort their recycling into new categories. Generally most recycling will fall into the fibres (paper and cardboard), containers (hard plastic and metal), and glass categories. Plastic bags and Styrofoam must be kept separate from other recycling to be collected and recycled properly. Users are encouraged to sort their recycling at home and bring it to depots in separate containers to keep depot visits short. Recycling must be emptied out of blue bags to be accepted.

Q. Where does recycling go after it is deposited at the depot?

A. Material is collected by RBC's designated service provider and transported to a nearby receiving facility for consolidation and compaction to allow for more efficient transport. From there it is delivered to facilities in the Lower Mainland for processing and recycling. Several categories of recycling including plastics are made into new products entirely within British Columbia.