

Resolution 6A

SUPPORTING EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PRODUCTS (PASSED)

- ⇒ Town of Bridgewater
- ⇒ Municipality of the District of Shelburne

WHEREAS the Region Six Solid Waste Management Group urges their membership to engage in dialogue with manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and citizens regarding Shared Responsibility for Waste Reduction with measurable goals and objectives; and

WHEREAS provincial policies currently hold local governments responsible for achieving waste diversion goals and enforcing product disposal bans, both of which are costly mandates; and

WHEREAS the costs to manage problematic products are currently borne by taxpayers and rate payers and these costs are increasing substantially and will continue to do so unless policy changes are made; and

WHEREAS approximately 417 kg/capita of discarded materials and products, including packaging, are currently managed in communities each year; and

WHEREAS province-wide data shows that all municipalities responsibly manage Municipal Hazardous and Special Wastes at no cost to the producer; and

WHEREAS there are environment and human health impacts associated with improper management of mercury lamps, sharps, pharmaceuticals and other products and economic impacts when waste becomes litter, including ocean litter; and

WHEREAS costs paid by municipalities to manage products are, in effect, subsidies to the producers of hazardous products designed for disposal; and

WHEREAS local governments have no input into the design or marketing of products, make no profit from the products, and do not have the resources to adequately address the rising volume of discarded products; and

WHEREAS Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy approach that encourages shared responsibility where all entities involved in the product chain have some responsibility to reduce the life-cycle impacts of a product and its packaging, but primary responsibility lies with the producer or brand owner, who makes design and marketing decisions; and

WHEREAS under EPR, producers are responsible for designing, financing and managing effective end-of-life systems for their products and associated packaging; and

WHEREAS EPR incorporates the cost of disposal and recovery of discarded products into the true cost of a product to allow for a more free-market approach with the private sector playing a bigger role in product waste management, bringing innovation and competition to reduce the recycling costs and the financial burden on local taxpayers; and

WHEREAS the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment have set packaging as a top priority in the development and implementation of EPR and product stewardship programs and endorsed the use of an EPR Product Evaluation Tool (the Matrix) to evaluate waste stream products and materials in support of EPR legislation; and

WHEREAS municipal governments are eager to develop a partnership with manufacturers to “close the loop” on product waste and turn waste materials into economically viable feedstock rather than long term liabilities as landfill waste;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UNSM support the work of encouraging EPR legislation which gives producers the incentive to design products to make them less toxic and easier to reuse recycle; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the UNSM urge the Province of Nova Scotia to support and implement Extended Producer Responsibility legislation; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the UNSM encourage all manufacturers, through the Canadian Manufacturer’s Association, to share in the responsibility for eliminating waste through minimizing excess packaging, designing products for durability, reusability and the ability to be recycled; using recycled materials in the manufacture of new products; and providing financial support for collection, processing, recycling, or disposal of used materials; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, through the Municipal Sustainability Office, encourage its members to develop EPR policies such as purchasing recycled content products, leasing products rather than purchasing them and requiring producers to offer less toxic alternatives and to take financial responsibility for collecting and recycling or disposing their products at the end of their useful life.

Forwarded to:
Minister of the Department of Environment
&
Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters
&
Resource Recovery Fund Board, Nova Scotia

RESPONSE:

Thank you for your letter dated November 16, 2010 regarding environmental resolutions passed at UNSM's annual conference in October 2010. Nova Scotia Environment has carefully reviewed and considered each resolution and can offer the following response [to 6A]:

Nova Scotia Environment endorsed the COME Canada-wide Action Plan for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in 2009. By doing so, the province has expressed its support for the principles and goals of EPR. Solid Waste Resource Management Branch staff are developing the draft Renewed Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy which includes actions on Extended Producer Responsibility. The province welcomes the support from the UNSM and looks forward to future municipal input as the policies supporting EPR are developed.

*The Honourable Sterling Belliveau
Minister*

January 3, 2011