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# Rethink Waste

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## The Surrey School District is Rethinking Waste

In 2014/15 we will be rolling out a program to recycle more, sending less of our waste to the landfill. The purpose of this guide is share information about the changes that are coming so that we can plan for a successful implementation and operation of a recycling program at each site.

### Why are we making this change?

We are changing the way we handle our waste for two main reasons: because we must and because we should.

#### **Why we must change: Metro Vancouver Mandate**

Metro Vancouver has banned the following items from being disposed of in the garbage:

- Corrugated cardboard
- Recyclable Paper
- Containers made of glass, metal or Banned Recycled Plastic (1, 2, 4 & 5)
- Beverage containers (all except milk cartons)
- Organic Materials (as of January 1, 2015)

Failure to properly sort our waste could cause us to incur significant fines: loads that arrive at the disposal sites containing banned materials are assessed at 50% tipping fee surcharge. The financial and reputational costs to SD36 of an improperly implemented program could be significant so it is important that the program effectively diverts banned materials from our garbage.

#### **Why we should change: Our environment**

Every year, in Metro Vancouver, we throw away nearly 1.5 million tonnes of garbage.



Much of what we put into our garbage can easily be recycled.

A third of the garbage in our landfills is organic material that could have been composted and used to enhance the environment. On the other hand, food scraps rotting in the landfill, without access to oxygen, generate methane. Methane is a greenhouse gas 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Greenhouse gasses cause global warming. 67% of all the methane generated within the Metro Vancouver region comes from landfills.<sup>1</sup>

About 13% of waste in the landfill is paper. Everything from newspapers to flattened cardboard boxes to paper towels. Schools often generate about 30kg (wet weight) of paper towel per day to dry hands and wipe spills. We should conserve paper and paper products where we can, but what we do consume should be recycled.

We also throw away a lot of plastic which does not go away, ever. At best it breaks down into tiny fragments. Plastics are manufactured using fossil fuels, like petroleum or natural gas. Throwing plastic away wastes the fossil fuels that went into manufacturing it. Recycling plastic allows some of this energy to be reclaimed.

<sup>1</sup> Garbage data and statistics provided by Metro Vancouver:  
<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/solidwaste/Residents/SixtoFix/Pages/default.aspx>

## What are we trying to achieve?

The program has two main goals:

1. Diversion of banned materials from district garbage into effective recycling programs
2. Avoidance of fines and penalties associated with contaminated garbage loads being delivered to landfill

## How was the program developed?

The Recycling Program Design was developed by the district Recycling Working Group in consultation with executive team, district managers, SPVPA, STA, CUPE, student representatives, other school districts, and outside agencies including Metro Vancouver, the City of Surrey and the district's waste hauler.

The program will be structured and operated across all district locations based on a consistent program design while also being flexible enough to adapt to the unique culture of each site. Utilization of consistent processes, signage and equipment placement at all sites will ensure that staff and students moving between district locations will understand their roles and responsibilities within the program without additional training.

## How will the new program work?

### **Overview**

The recycling program will require the support of all students, teachers, management, staff, parents and visitors at each site to succeed. Sites will be required to assign recycling program management responsibilities to a selected Site Leader to monitor compliance levels and resolve site level operating issues.

The amount of solid waste generated in the district is not changing. Program implementation is the process of learning to do existing work (sorting and moving our waste) in a different way. Sites with existing recycling programs are asked to adapt their programs to operate in alignment with these guidelines.

### **Materials to Be Recycled**

Waste materials will be separated into containers marked with colour-coded signage for collection and disposal:

1. **Organics (GREEN)** – all food scraps and soiled papers accepted. No cups, packaging or plastics.
2. **Containers (BLUE)** – plastic with codes 1, 2, 4, 5, metal containers, unbroken glass and juice boxes, tetra packs, cans & bottles
3. **Paper & Cardboard (YELLOW)** – unsoiled paper and cardboard.
4. All other materials are considered **Garbage (BLACK)** and will be disposed of in district garbage containers.

The process for managing garbage (landfill waste consisting of items that cannot be recycled) is not changing; however, the amount of garbage generated will decrease as a result of the Rethink Waste program.

### **Waste Stations**

Receptacles for the different types of waste will be grouped into 'waste stations' for ease of sorting. A 'waste station' will consist of a garbage can, a blue box (containers) and a green 'shifter' (organics). Waste stations should be maintained in a consistent order to increase the ease of sorting.

### **Managing our Waste**

- It is the responsibility of all staff, students and visitors within a facility to sort their waste into the appropriate receptacles.

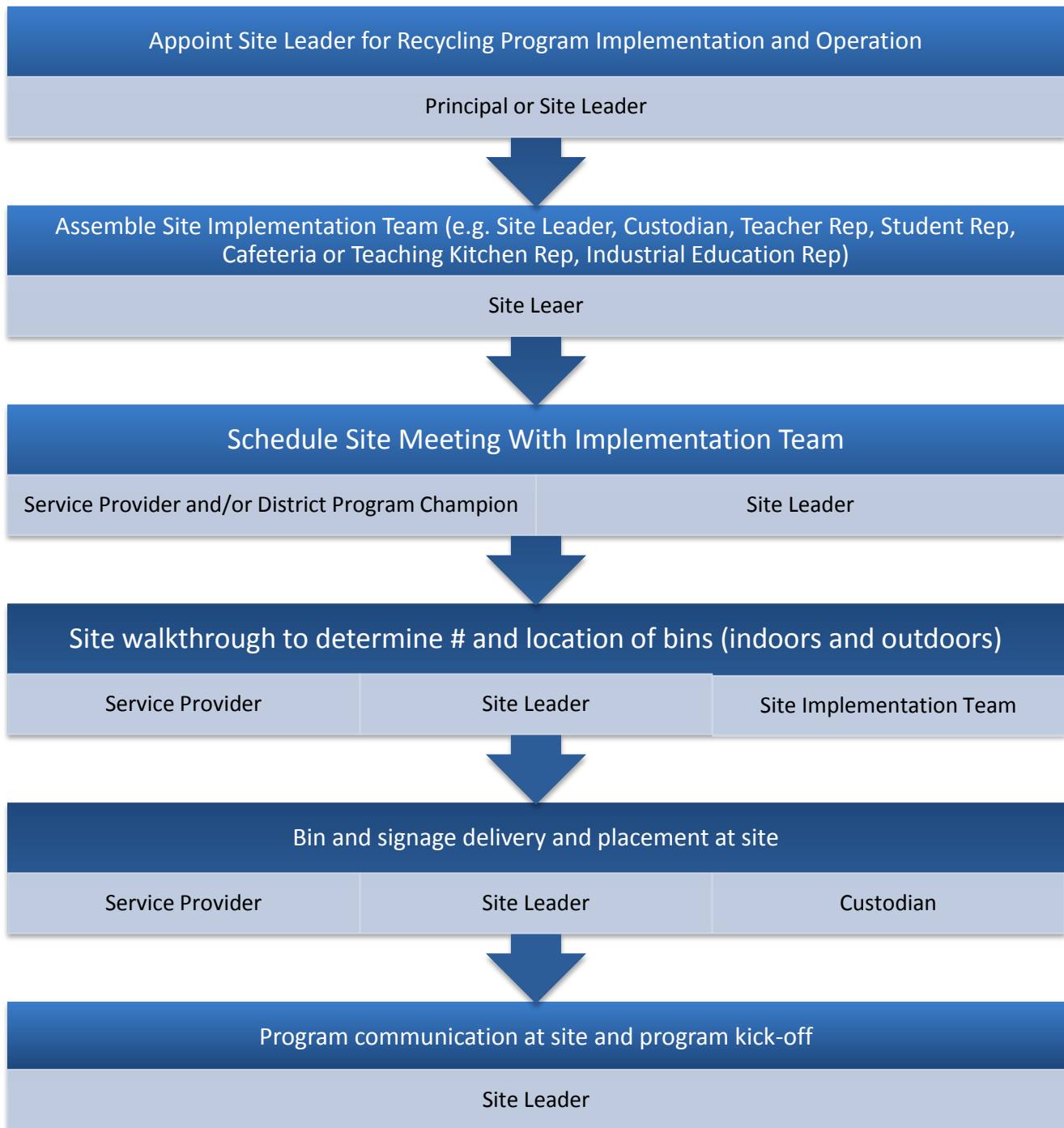
## SD36 RECYCLING PROGRAM - IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- Given that all sites have a paper recycling process that is well established, the process for recycling paper will not change with the rollout of the Rethink Waste program
- Within the waste stations, blue boxes and green 'shifters' will be lined with a clear plastic bag. Green 'shifters' for organics were initially lined with a special compostable liner; however these can now be lined with a clear plastic bag. A specific type and size of clear plastic liner is being provided. An initial supply of clear bags will be provided after the site meeting has taken place. Following that, the clear plastic bags liners will be ordered by the caretaker on an as-needed basis from Service Operations.
- Containers collected in the blue boxes will be placed, in clear plastic bags, into the existing recycling dumpster that is currently being used for paper.
- Organics collected in the shifter will be removed from inside the school on a daily basis and will be placed inside new locked green carts that will be placed outside near the existing dumpsters. All supplies will be provided after the initial site meeting has taken place.
- Refundable items (beverage containers) can be placed in blue boxes. Schools may wish to manage their own collection program for refundables in order to receive funds from the deposit returns. District signage can be provided for refundables; however collection bins and management of any separate program for beverage containers would remain the responsibility of the individual school/site.
- Materials will be emptied from the waste stations by the caretaker/custodian.
- In some cases the school may determine that it is preferable to have containers for organics and/or container recycling within classrooms. Classroom containers will be the responsibility of the teacher/class. Classroom containers will need to be emptied daily into the centralized waste station receptacles and wiped or washed daily in order to avoid pests.
- Signage will be provided to sites based on the number of waste stations. Decals made of repositionable vinyl are to be attached directly to waste receptacles.



**How will the program be implemented?**

The program will be rolled out site-by-site. In most cases the program will be initiated through a planning meeting and site walkthrough. At the planning meeting, key stakeholders will review the program and determine how to manage any special considerations for the particular site. On the same date, the service provider (Northwest Waste) and representatives from the site (the Site Leader and any other interested parties) will participate in a site walk-through to determine the number and location of waste stations and totes required for the site. The implementation process is shown in greater detail below:



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### How will the program operate?

The complexity and size of our organization combined with the potential financial and reputational penalties for contaminated waste loads means that we need to ensure program clarity. The collaboration of many people is required to ensure that the program is successful and that we're able to meet our waste diversion goals.

Action	Service Provider (NorthWest Waste)	Energy & Sustainability Manager	Service Operations Assistant Manager(s)	Custodian	Principal, Site Manager or Designate	Teachers, Students, Green Teams
Transport recycled materials from classrooms to central collection locations within school or site						X
Clean classroom recycling collection containers (if utilized)						X
Move materials from central waste stations to outside totes/bins				X		
Place totes at designated weekly pickup location				X		
Ensure waste stations are maintained (bins grouped and kept clean)				X		
Monitor and report waste bin levels prior to pick-up				X		
Adjust frequency of pick-up and/or size of bins to changing waste levels as diversion increases	X		X			
Weekly pickup of recycled materials	X					
Measure and track waste diversion levels (garbage weights)	X					
Track and share waste diversion achievements		X				
Provide ongoing student and staff awareness					X	X
Provide ongoing assistance to sites as required	X	X				

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### RECYCLING PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

The complexity and size of our organization combined with the potential financial and reputational penalties for contaminated waste loads means that we require clear lines of responsibility and accountability for this program.

Accountability	Responsibility
District Recycling Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recycling program design</li> <li>- Problem resolution of issues escalated by the District Program Champion</li> </ul>
District Program Champion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Determine implementation schedule</li> <li>- Coordinate Rethink Waste program implementation at all district sites</li> <li>- Problem resolution of issues escalated by Principals or Site Managers</li> </ul>
District Facilities Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training of Service Operations Staff</li> <li>- Coordination of blue boxes, clear plastic bags, biodegradable green can liners</li> <li>- Financial responsibility for any fines and penalties as a result of contaminated garbage loads that are not attributable to specific sites</li> </ul>
Principal or Site Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Site Rethink Waste program management</li> <li>- Problem resolution of issues escalated by site based staff and students</li> <li>- Financial responsibility for fines and penalties assessed as a result of contaminated garbage loads originating from their site</li> </ul>

### Who can we contact if we have questions?

For questions about the Rethink Waste program, please contact Tracy Blagdon, Manager of Energy Management & Sustainability at [Blagdon\\_t@surreyschools.ca](mailto:Blagdon_t@surreyschools.ca) or 604-595-6303

For questions about sorting of specific items, contact NorthWest Waste at 604-539-1900

For questions about supplies or pick-up of waste, contact Surrey Schools Service Operations at 604-572-0500