



Mandatory Recycling on Construction, Demolition, and Renovation Worksites Background Document for Consultation

Construction, renovation and demolition activities produce about 20 percent of all waste disposed annually in the region. Waste from these activities consists mostly of wood, concrete, roofing and plastic. The recovery and recycling of useable materials is well developed through private sector initiatives. The Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan targets an additional 155,000 tonnes per year of building materials, primarily wood, to reach the 2015 diversion goal of 70 percent.

What impacts will mandatory waste reduction and recycling on construction and demolition sites have on industry practices, local governments, and those considering a construction or renovation project in the future? How would reporting of hazardous materials affect the ability to recycle and market materials? Would such policies encourage the private sector to increase collection and processing capacity and the public sector to offer more collection facilities across the region?

Development of the Recommended Approach

In the past two years, Metro Vancouver has worked with local governments and the building industry to develop an approach to mandatory recycling on construction, demolition, and renovation worksites. There are various ways that municipalities could integrate requirements for recycling and hazardous materials reporting into their building and demolition permitting processes. With the proposed revision to the Solid Waste Regulatory Bylaw, Metro Vancouver recommends a simpler approach that would direct all recyclable materials from construction and demolition sites to licensed facilities and authorized outlets for reuse or recycling. Supporting WorkSafe BC in its enforcement of hazardous materials screening and abatement at the source will improve the marketability of recyclable materials. The recommended regulatory approach seeks to:

- Direct materials to licensed facilities that can be regulated to achieve higher recycling rates
- Prevent illegal dumping and the use of unlicensed waste disposal facilities
- Improve enforcement of material disposal bans
- Improve the economic climate for the growing private recycling infrastructure
- Establish a level playing field for contractors bidding on projects.

Metro Vancouver worked with a stakeholder group comprising permitting and solid waste staff from several member municipalities, the construction and demolition industry, haulers, recyclers, landfill operators, and WorkSafe BC. After reviewing regulatory approaches used in other jurisdictions, such as Chicago, Boulder, Colorado, California, City of North Vancouver, and Port Moody, Metro Vancouver and the stakeholders developed a sample bylaw, specifications, and forms. Metro Vancouver used this as a starting point for the simpler approach that encourages more reuse and recycling of construction and demolition materials to happen at authorized facilities, through the financial mechanisms proposed in the Solid Waste Regulatory Bylaw revision.

The sample municipal bylaw would require permit applicants to:

- Submit a “Waste Disposal and Recycling Services Plan” and Checklist
- Identify hazardous materials present on worksites
- Pay a partially refundable Waste Disposal and Recycling Services Fee, based on project type and size
- Submit proof that waste and recyclable materials were taken to licensed or authorized facilities in order to claim a refund of the Waste Disposal and Recycling Services Fee
- Submit documentation of hazardous materials management upon request.

Additional Consultation

Metro Vancouver staff is in the final stage of preparing the recommended approach for presentation to its Board. You are invited to participate in stakeholder consultations to discuss concerns and possible modifications to the recommended approach. The first session will gather government staff responsible for building permits and solid waste management to discuss challenges and possible alternatives that industry has suggested. The second session will bring together a wider range of stakeholders, including developers, contractors, haulers, regulators, recyclers, and permitting and solid waste staff from municipalities that have begun to encourage recycling on construction, demolition, and renovation worksites.

The discussion will focus on the following key challenges and possible alternatives, as well as other topics that participants will identify:

- Should the requirements apply to all recommended projects?
- Should they be phased in first for activities that have lower diversion rates, such as single-family demolition?
- Will more drop-off sites and recycling facilities become available and reliable?
- How much of the fee should go towards non-refundable administrative costs?
- Is the recommended level of fees adequate to cover administration and stimulate the desired behaviour change?
- How can municipalities reduce the impact on the industry from refundable fees?
- What staffing levels would be required to administer this program?
- How can administrative duties be simplified for municipalities and permit applicants?
- Can Building Officials approve intentions for reuse of building materials as described in the Waste Disposal and Recycling Services Plan?
- How will small projects, such as single-family residential construction, track and provide proof of recycling?
- How can all contractors be encouraged to get applicable permits and comply with all requirements?

Once Metro Vancouver staff takes into consideration the feedback from this final consultation, the recommended approach will be reviewed by Metro Vancouver’s Board. After Board approval of the final recommended approach, Metro Vancouver will work closely with municipalities to support them in implementing or customizing the recommended approach to meet their individual needs. Each municipality may phase in the requirements to allow itself and industry time to adapt.