



Council Communiqué – June 2007 – Garbage and Recycling

The Quebec government has set a target for 2008: we should recycle 60% of everything that is recyclable. This applies to the areas covered by the town's garbage and recycling contracts, i.e. the residential sector and the commercial area but not the industrial sector. More detailed guidelines have been laid down by the Montreal Metropolitan Community, in its *Plan Métropolitain de gestion des matières résiduelles* (PMGMR).

An analysis by the City of Montreal shows that the Beaconsfield/Baie d'Urfé Borough recycled 42% of the potential amount recyclable in 2004 (better than the 34% achieved on the island as a whole, but still a far cry from the 60% PMGMR target). While we don't yet have an exact number, my best estimate of our performance in 2006 would be 42-44%. This may be a slight improvement over 2004, but we still have a long way to go.

The bottom line is that if we are to meet the PMGMR target, we need to recycle an additional 150-200 tonnes each year. This is going to take a concerted effort from all of us. Most people do put out one or more blue boxes each week, but there is still a disappointing amount of recyclable material put out for the garbage pick-up. Last Wednesday on a brief check through my area I counted 13 cardboard boxes of varying sizes out for the garbage. These were in plain sight, from a sample of no more than 50 houses. If this is indicative of the town as a whole, every week, we could improve our performance significantly just by flattening those cardboard boxes and putting them out on Fridays instead. It only takes a minute! A full list of recyclable materials accepted by our contractor is available at the Town Hall and on the Town's website (www.baie-durfe.qc.ca, under "Municipal Services").

The most stunning numbers in the City of Montreal report are the total quantities of waste produced (including garbage, recycling, hazardous waste, compost, etc). In 2004, the Beaconsfield/Baie d'Urfé Borough had the highest number on the island: total production was 2,177 kilograms per household, compared to an average for the whole island of 1,046 kilos per household. In other words our borough produced more than twice the average waste per household. On a per capita basis, our borough again leads the table, with production of 769 kilos per person. Of this amount, 601 kilos went in the landfill, while 109 kilos were recycled and 56 kilos were composted (again per person).



Your tax dollars at work - or just going in the garbage?

The average local property tax bill in 2007 is \$516. The cost of garbage collection for the year works out to around \$149 per household, or 29% of your total taxes. The cost of the blue box pick-up for the year is under \$17 per household, no matter how many blue boxes you use. Because we pay by the ton for garbage pick-up and by the house for recycling pick-up, reducing garbage would save us money, quite apart from the environmental benefits. If we recycle 200 tonnes more next year, instead of putting it in the garbage, the saving will be approximately \$15 per household. And of course if we compost more, and consume less, we can save even more ...

Public Exchange Meeting on increasing Recycling

We would like to have your ideas on how to increase recycling and reduce garbage. Other towns have done studies on using large wheeled bins instead of blue boxes for individual homes (the type of bin used by our schools, and the Maxwell Residence, among others). We would like your opinion: would it be easier to recycle if you had a wheeled bin? Would it help if you did not have to separate paper and cardboard from other materials? What else can the Town do to help you recycle?

A discussion meeting will be held at 7:30 pm on Friday June 8 at Town Hall. Please come and share your ideas with us. I can also be reached by e-mail at jryan@baie-durfe.qc.ca, or by phone at (514) 457-0302.

Remember – reduce, reuse, and recycle! Please remember also that garbage should not be put out before 8 pm on Tuesday night – this is especially important in the summer months.

Janet Ryan

Environment Councillor