

Environment and Conservation
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Campus Composting Initiative a First for Newfoundland and Labrador

The Multi Materials Stewardship Board (MMSB), in partnership with the Grenfell Campus of Memorial University of Newfoundland and College of the North Atlantic, unveiled a new high-tech campus composting initiative in Corner Brook today. This is the first industrial composting application established in Newfoundland and Labrador.

"I commend all of the partners who have helped make this composting project a reality," said the Honourable Terry French, Minister of Environment and Conservation. "Keeping organic waste out of landfill sites is imperative to moving forward with a more progressive and environmentally-sound waste management plan for the province, and this is a great example of how the institutional sector can continue to play a role in helping us do just that. We dispose of more than 300 tonnes of organic waste in our landfills on a daily basis, and this is clearly a step in the right direction."

The MMSB has made an investment of \$100,000 through the Waste Management Trust Fund to help finance the capital costs, training and education associated with the industrial composter located at the Grenfell campus. The industrial composting project will not only divert organic waste from the landfill, but also demonstrate simple, cost-effective waste management solutions for the industrial, commercial and institutional sectors. Industrial scale composters can handle meat, dairy, fats and oils, and are able to break down organic matter more quickly. In addition, the industrial compost process generates heat and allows composting to continue year round. The technology has applications for hospitals, restaurants, farms, supermarkets and other players who generate significant volumes of organic waste.

"By making strategic investments like the one announced today, we are able to directly increase the amount of waste being diverted from landfills," said Leigh Puddester, MMSB Chair and Chief Executive Officer. "We have been doing a lot to reduce waste at the residential level, which we will continue, but this composting project marks the start of a greater focus on the industrial, commercial and institutional sector. Developing and finding cost-effective solutions that can help reduce waste is imperative to achieving the waste management goals for the province, as this sector accounts for approximately one half to two thirds of all the waste generated in the province."

Through this one project, Grenfell and College of the North Atlantic can divert approximately 20 per cent of their total waste from landfills. By adding organic waste from other local partners, this composter can manage up to 100 metric tonnes of organic waste annually, producing valuable compost for landscaping applications in the process.

"This project is good for the environment, the university and the community," said Dr. Gary Kachanoski, President and Vice-chancellor, Memorial University of Newfoundland. "Experts at Grenfell Campus, the Multi-Materials Stewardship Board and other partners have been working diligently on this project for two years. We're pleased that the first industrial composter in the province is situated on a campus of Memorial. Memorial University is committed to reducing its environmental footprint, and this composter is an example of the leadership we demonstrate in conservational technology and environmental awareness and education."

Composting will commence at Grenfell in the coming months, followed by College of the North Atlantic. Receptacles will be placed in key areas throughout the Grenfell campus, including student housing and the food court. Select Grenfell staff and students will be trained in composting mixing and monitoring techniques to ensure the production of a superior product. In addition, there will be a supporting educational program launched to ensure students, staff and faculty understand and know how to participate in the campus composting program. Once the program is successfully up and running at Grenfell and College of the North Atlantic, the MMSB will work to continue to add other clients, including the Western Health Authority.

"Environmental stewardship is a part of the community fabric of Corner Brook, and this program will certainly help them with their green efforts," said the Honourable Tom Marshall, Minister of Finance and MHA for Humber East. "Initiatives like this not only bring the community together, but also promote valuable environmental education at the same time."

Mayor Neville Greeley stated that Corner Brook is pleased to be the first community in the province to have a composting program in place for this type of institution.

"The City of Corner Brook thanks the MMSB and all the other partners that helped make this project a reality," said Mayor Greeley. "Our residents and businesses understand and are committed to reducing waste and getting to half, and this new campus composting initiative with Grenfell and College of the North Atlantic is a great example of innovative, local solutions for waste management that will result in not only reducing greenhouse gas emissions but also lowering the costs associated with trucking waste for disposal."

The MMSB is a provincial Crown agency that reports to the Minister of Environment and Conservation. The MMSB supports modern waste management practices in the province, with a particular focus on waste diversion, recycling and public education, in order to ensure a clean and healthy environment throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

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