



October 20, 2010

Used Beverage Container Recycling Program Reports Record High Results and Reduces Carbon Footprint

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians recycled 157 million used beverage containers through MMSB's province-wide network of Green Depots in 2009-10. That's 7.7 million more than the previous year, representing a five per cent increase, and a record high since the program began in 1997.

Research conducted by the Multi-Materials Stewardship Board (MMSB) indicates that last year the provincial Used Beverage Container Recycling Program saved the same amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as would be saved by planting eight million trees. GHG emissions are measured in metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions. MMSB has estimated that the 157 million used beverage containers that were recycled last year saved 8,768 metric tonnes of GHG emissions. That's equivalent to taking 1,461 cars off the road.

"We have always known that recycling is good for the environment, but now we have documented the impact that recycling used beverage containers has on reducing our collective ecological footprint on the earth," said the Honourable Charlene Johnson, Minister of Environment and Conservation. "Participating in MMSB's Used Beverage Container Recycling Program is one positive action people in our province can take to reduce the impact on our environment."

Utilizing industry standard processes, MMSB conducted its own research on the carbon footprint of the Used Beverage Container Recycling Program. Stantec Consulting, a sustainable design and GHG consulting firm, reviewed the research and methodology and confirmed that the results provide an accurate representation of the carbon footprint of MMSB's Used Beverage Container Recycling Program.

"Green Depot customers throughout Newfoundland and Labrador are really making a difference one beverage container at a time" said Leigh Puddester, Chair and CEO of MMSB. "Each beverage container recycled means a smaller carbon footprint and that means a healthier, greener future for our province and the earth."

This research reinforces how important recycling is to the environment. When beverage containers are recycled into new products, it's not necessary to manufacture new products from raw materials, resulting in less depletion of

natural resources such as aluminum and petroleum reserves. At the same time, as this study shows, recycling helps to reduce GHG emissions which contribute significantly to global warming.

Recycling aluminum cans into new cans takes 95 per cent less energy than creating new ones from raw material. In fact, the energy saved from the aluminum cans recycled by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians last year would power three hours of television in every home in the province, every day for almost an entire year.

For a copy of the Carbon Footprint Summary Report contact MMSB at 754-0948 or e-mail inquiries@mmsb.nl.ca

The MMSB is a provincial Crown agency that reports to the Minister of Environment and Conservation. Its mandate is to support progressive 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.

- 30 -

Media contacts:

Melony O'Neill
Director of Communications
Department of Environment and
Conservation
709-729-2575, 689-0928
moneill@gov.nl.ca

Carol Ann Carter
Director of Communications
MMSB
709-757-3696, 689-4795
ccarter@mmsb.nl.ca

BACKGROUND

Highlights from MMSB's 2009-10 Carbon Footprint Summary Report

In September 2009, MMSB began research to calculate the carbon footprint of the Used Beverage Container Recycling Program in the province. A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) produced to support human activities, measured in metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) emissions. The goal of the carbon footprint study was to quantify the environmental benefits associated with MMSB's Used Beverage Container Recycling Program. To calculate the carbon savings, MMSB determined each activity throughout the collection and recycling of used beverage containers that created GHG emissions and compared this amount to those that would have been created if the containers were sent to a landfill.

Two types of emissions were calculated:

1. GHG emissions produced by the operation of the recycling program, such as transportation and processing of materials; and,
2. GHG emissions avoided by manufacturing new products with recycled materials from the Beverage Recycling Program instead of extracting raw materials to manufacture new products.

MMSB used industry standard methods for calculating GHG emissions from the Used Beverage Container Recycling Program operational activities (e.g. fuel and electricity consumption) and subtracted the estimated GHG emissions reduced by using recycled materials in the manufacturing process to estimate the overall emission reduction.

Calculations were independently reviewed by Stantec Consulting Ltd. in June 2010. Stantec, a North American leader in GHG management and sustainable design, concluded that MMSB's methodologies were sound and the analysis provided an accurate representation of the GHG emission reductions associated with the Used Beverage Container Recycling Program.