



Ontario's Blue Box Transition Questions & Answers

What's happening to Ontario's Blue Box Program?

In 2021, the Ontario government passed a new regulation that shifts the financial and operational responsibility of blue box recycling programs to producers – those that produce and supply blue box materials to residents. In this new extended producer responsibility framework, producers will become fully responsible for collecting and recycling blue box materials.

Transition to extended producer responsibility will take place between 2023 – 2025, with the new framework fully in place by January 1, 2026. As a result, Atikokan's blue box recycling program is now managed by Circular Materials, who is the administrator of the common collection system and a not-for-profit organization that is committed to building an efficient and effective recycling system in Ontario.

What can I expect when Circular Materials manages my recycling program?

Atikokan's recycling collection will now take place weekly on MONDAY. More information on recycling in Atikokan can be found at www.circularmaterials.ca/atikokan.

When will Circular Materials be managing my recycling program?

Circular Materials began managing Atikokan's blue box program as of October 1, 2023. More information on recycling in Atikokan can be found at www.circularmaterials.ca/atikokan.

Who do I contact for recycling collection questions and inquiries now?

Please contact GFL for recycling-related questions: 1-807-577-0411 or c35@gflenv.com.

Why is the program changing?

Historically, Ontario's blue box programs were operated by municipalities who were responsible for paying about half of the costs of the program, with producers responsible for the other half. Now, under the Blue Box Regulation, Ontario is transitioning to a new model where producers – the organizations that produce the products and packaging – are 100% responsible for operating and funding the program.

How does Circular Materials Ontario fit into this?

Circular Materials is the administrator of the common collection system and a not-for-profit organization that is committed to building an efficient and effective recycling system in Ontario. Atikokan is collaborating with Circular Materials to deliver a best-in-class system that continues to deliver recycling services and support our residents.

During the transition period, there will be no change to how and what residents can recycle. Following transition, Ontario can expect to have a convenient, consistent, and effective recycling system in place that will improve recycling rates and meet the needs of Ontarians. Learn more about Circular Materials at www.circularmaterials.ca/ON.

What does extended producer responsibility mean?

EPR is a framework in which producers – the businesses that supply paper and packaging to residents – are responsible for managing the end-of-life management of these materials. EPR enables innovation, operational efficiencies, increased standard levels, and access to materials. It is recognized as one of the most effective mechanisms to improve recycling rates.

What advantages are associated with this new system?

EPR is recognized as one of the most effective mechanisms to improve recycling rates and advance a circular economy where materials are collected, recycled, and returned to producers for use as recycled content in new products and packaging.