

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Curbside recycling tote audits now being conducted in the Cowichan region

Duncan, BC – The Cowichan Valley Regional District is cracking down on curbside recycling contamination – the items that should not be placed in curbside recycling totes. Plastic bags, Styrofoam containers, and other non-curbside recyclables add unnecessary costs to the service when placed by the road. Much worse are items like broken glass, used diapers and lighters, all of which have been found in curbside recycling totes and pose health and safety hazards for CVRD staff. To reduce contamination levels and help educate residents on which items need to be brought to regional Recycling Centres, CVRD staff will be conducting curbside recycling audits in certain areas of the Cowichan region through the month of August.

“With four CVRD Recycling Centres strategically located across the Cowichan region, there is ample opportunity for residents to recycle non-curbside items at their respective drop-off depots,” said Jon Lefebure, Chair of CVRD. “When banned items are placed in curbside recycling totes, it can result in entire loads of recyclables going to landfill as well as the region facing financial penalties, making recycling more expensive for everyone.”

The CVRD curbside recycling program is funded by participating in Recycle BC’s curbside recycling program. Part of the conditions of the program is for the CVRD to maintain a 3% or lower rate of unaccepted material. Currently the region has one of the highest contamination rates in the Province at 15%, which means the CVRD could face steep financial penalties from Recycle BC going forward.

“The most effective way to reduce curbside contamination is through the tote auditing process,” said Jason Adair, Superintendent of Recycling and Waste Management Operations at CVRD. “We hope residents who are unsure will visit our website or call us to learn more about which items are acceptable in their curbside totes. However if our staff continue to find items that are not recyclable in curbside totes, we will be forced to stop picking up recycling from those homes.”

Staff will be checking the contents of curbside recycling totes for contaminants and leaving an “Oops” sticker indicating which items are not curbside recyclable. The stickers will direct residents to the Recycling Hotline and CVRD website which provide valuable resources for learning how and where to recycle items. If curbside recycling totes are overly contaminated, staff may not collect the tote material and will leave a sticker specifying why the tote was not emptied.

Call the Recycling Hotline at 250.746.2540 or visit <http://www.cvrld.bc.ca/recycling> to learn more about recycling in the Cowichan region.

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