

BACKGROUNDER

EXPANDING HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE RECYCLING IN MANITOBA

Background

The Manitoba government is proposing to expand or add more material categories to the [Household Hazardous Material and Prescribed Material Stewardship Regulation \(MR 16/2010\)](#) (Regulation) under The Waste Reduction and Prevention Act.

The Regulation requires industry to take responsibility for the entire lifecycle of the designated materials they place on the market. The manufacturers, distributors and retailers (the “stewards”) of regulated materials can either collect waste products from consumers and safely process them or pay non-profit stewardship organizations to do this on their behalf. Stewards generally pass these costs on to consumers through small environmental handling fees (such as an extra \$0.50 fee for a 1 to 2 litre container of paint thinner) on the purchase price.

In other words, once regulated materials reach end-of-life, industry and consumers pay for the materials to be collected and processed into new materials or neutralized to prevent harm to the environment prior to disposal. This approach follows the “polluter pays” principle, which is widely used in Canada and at the basis of The Waste Reduction and Prevention Act in Manitoba.

Stewardship programs provide valuable waste diversion services while keeping hazardous waste out of landfills and the environment.

Current State

In Manitoba, six government-approved stewardship programs manage the regulated household hazardous materials and prescribed materials in the Regulation, including:

- household hazardous waste (e.g., flammable, corrosive, toxic products), domestic pesticides, paint products and fluorescent lights ([Product Care Association](#))
- medical sharps and pharmaceutical and natural health products ([Health Product Stewardship Association](#))
- automotive antifreeze ([Manitoba Association of Resource Recovery Corporation](#))
- lead-acid batteries ([Canadian Battery Association](#))
- small batteries ([Call2Recycle](#))
- mercury-containing thermostats ([Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada](#))

Together, these programs recycle or safely dispose over 10,000 tonnes of hazardous materials every year in Manitoba.

Issues

1. No new hazardous materials have been added to the Regulation in 13 years. As new products and materials enter the marketplace over time, it is important to add new and expand existing types of materials to the Regulation. This will help to keep as much hazardous waste out of the environment as possible and align our processes with the “polluter pays” principle. When new household hazardous products aren’t incorporated into regulations, consumers or landfill owners are left to pay for safely processing waste products.

Examples of emerging consumer products include spray foam insulation tanks, helium and carbon dioxide canisters, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, animal deterrents with capsaicin, lighting products, solar panels and electric vehicle batteries.

2. The department provides an annual grant to Product Care Association (a non-profit stewardship organization) for the collection and processing of household hazardous waste that falls outside of the Regulation. This allows Manitobans to drop off many types of household hazardous waste to their local collection depot without needing to know whether each product is regulated or not. Examples of these products include:

- Fire extinguishers
- Flammable solids, pastes and gels (e.g. caulking compounds, adhesives, sealants)
- Combustible or flammable liquids (e.g. diesel fuel, non-aerosol craft and hobby paint, non-aerosol automotive paint)
- Products containing mercury (e.g. thermometers, barometers)
- Oxidizing substances (e.g. pool and spa chemicals)
- Organic peroxides and other reactive material (e.g. fiberglass repair kits, catalysts, hardeners)
- Light ballasts
- Fertilizers
- ‘Weed-and-feed’ products

The Manitoba government is exploring adding these materials to the Regulation, which would transfer the waste management costs from taxpayers to the industries that manufacture and sell those products.

What are other provinces and territories doing?

The types of household hazardous waste regulated for recycling and safe disposal programs vary across Canada.

Material categories	Canadian jurisdictions with regulations for industry-funded waste management programs
Paint, batteries and automotive antifreeze	Most provinces and territories
Flammable materials or solvents Domestic pesticides Toxic materials	British Columbia, Yukon, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario
Corrosive materials	Yukon, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba
Some types of non-refillable pressurized containers	Yukon, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec (Quebec and Ontario also regulate some types of refillable pressurized containers, and Quebec further targets these products in remote or isolated areas where they are sold.)
Smoke and/or carbon monoxide alarms	British Columbia, Yukon and Ontario
Lighting products, including fluorescent lights, high-intensity discharge blubs, incandescent bulbs and light-emitting diode lamps	Yukon regulates these as hazardous and special products
Animal deterrents containing capsaicin	Yukon

Some provinces are exploring options to regulate compressed cannisters, fire extinguishers, solar panels, electric vehicle batteries and other products.

Proposed Future State

Amendments to the Regulation by the Department of Environment and Climate Change to expand and/or add material categories would be made with the goals of:

- Protecting the environment.
- Increasing opportunities for Manitobans to reduce waste.
- Enhancing Manitoba's waste diversion rate and environmental protection.
- Keeping industry accountable for the products they sell to Manitobans.
- Decreasing waste management costs shouldered by municipalities and communities.
- Harmonizing regulatory requirements for industry across Canada.