
Canada - 35

Québec

Québec

Packaging waste management

In 1999 Québec became the first jurisdiction in North America to implement a European-style Extended Producer Responsibility law that included a wide range of packaging. The Provincial Government was empowered to enact take-back regulations for packaging and a wide range of other products. Brand-owners were obliged to take back their packaging or join an organisation providing industry funding to municipalities. (If the brand-owner has no office in Québec, the first supplier in the province is responsible.)

A Regulation Respecting Compensation for Municipal Services Provided to Recover and Reclaim Residual Materials of 2004 amended the Environment Quality Act by creating a legal obligation for stewards of flexible and rigid packaging and printed materials to fund municipalities up to 50% of the net cost of kerbside collection with effect from March 2005. This includes containers for wine, spirits, water, uncarbonated soft drinks, juices and milk which are collected through the municipal kerbside systems, but not deposit-bearing beer and soft drink containers and their associated packaging materials (cases, etc).

About 98% of households have access to kerbside collection.

An Act to amend the Environment Quality Act was adopted in June 2011. The amendment, which is known as Bill 88, establishes the framework for industry contributions towards Québec's municipal recycling programmes. Industry will pay 100% of municipalities' costs for collection, transportation, sorting, 'conditioning' (counting and weighing), and indemnity for the management of the kerbside collection programme from 2013. Industry's share was 70% for 2010, 80% for 2011 and 90% for 2012.

Bill 88 contains a number of safeguards:

- Eligible costs will be defined. These will be collection, transportation, sorting and conditioning materials. Provision of bins and consumer awareness campaigns are specifically excluded. Each municipality's costs will be calculated by Recyc-Québec (the crown corporation with regulatory authority), and the totals aggregated. The industry organisation ÉEQ will then calculate the levies applicable to each packaging material.
- Only effective and efficient systems will be fully compensated. This will reduce costs by an estimated 20%. Municipalities are divided into six groups, according to size of population and distance from the cities of Montreal and Québec, and efficiency is calculated as
$$\frac{\text{(cost/tonne)}}{\text{(kg/inhabitant)}}$$

However,

- a flat 8.55% will be added to the costs of effective and efficient kerbside recycling services to cover other municipal costs;
- Recyc-Québec will be compensated for its management costs and other expenses, but this will be capped at \$3 million per annum.

Transport packaging has been added to the list of designated containers and packaging for the first time.

On the basis of the government's 2011-2015 Action Plan on the Residual Materials Management Policy, ÉEQ, which is responsible for 90% of the costs payable by industry, estimates that its contribution payments will rise as follows:

Canada - 36

Québec

Contribution Year	Share of Net costs	Estimated Payments	Year of Payment	Increase on Previous year
2009	50%	\$ 56.4 million	2011	
2010	70%	\$ 77.2 million	2012-13	36.9%
2011	80%	\$ 97.1 million	2012-13	25.8%
2012	90%	\$ 109.4 million	2013	12.7%
2013	100%	\$ 133.7 million	2014	22.2%
2014	100%	\$ 136.4 million	2014-15	2.0%
2015	100%	\$ 139.1 million	2015	2.0%

The new Regulation backdated the extra industry contribution to 2010, which is why there has been a delay in collecting it from 'industry stewards'. ÉEQ circulated provisional contribution rates in October 2011, and those relevant to beverage containers are shown below. The 2005 and 2009 rates are also shown, to demonstrate how costs have risen steadily, especially for aluminium cans:

¢ per kg	2005	2009	2010	2011	2012
Glass – clear	2.557	3.765	3.933	4.436	5.158
Glass – coloured	2.682	3.560	3.493	3.936	4.571
Aluminium cans	1.121	5.465	9.225	10.195	11.557
Steel containers	3.531	6.237	10.144	11.240	12.784
PET bottles	8.604	12.329	22.227	24.991	28.944
PLA bottles		17.124	22.297	25.070	29.037
Beverage cartons	7.024	13.838	22.257	25.178	29.377

In 2010 ÉEQ and Recyc-Québec set up a committee to propose solutions and concrete actions for the collection, sorting and recycling of polystyrene. Two pilot projects were initiated, one focusing on a voluntary deposit system and the other on a sorting centre programme.

The government's 2011–2015 Action Plan on its Residual Materials Management Policy says that in 2013 it will assess the advantages and disadvantages of transferring the management of container, packaging, print material and written media recovery and reclamation programmes from the municipalities to industry.

Special rules for beverage containers

There is a quota system to protect the refillable beer bottle system. Brewers are not permitted to produce more than 37.5% of their output in non-refillable containers (measured by number of containers, not by literage). In 2009, 19% of Québec's beer was distributed in non-refillables.

All non-refillable containers for beer and carbonated soft drinks, energy drinks and flavoured waters are managed through a deposit-return system. This was established through 'non-legislative agreements' between the provincial government, Recyc-Québec and the soft drink bottlers (l'Association des Embouteilleurs de Boissons Gazeuses du Québec Inc.) and brewers. These agreements were originally signed in 1999 and have subsequently been renewed several times.

Recyc-Québec runs the system for non-refillable beer bottles and cans, and Boissons Gazeuses Environnement (BGE) runs the system for non-refillable soft drink containers. Refillable beer bottles are collected voluntarily by the beer industry using the same collection infrastructure. Deposit-bearing containers can be returned to more than 20,000 licensed grocers, service stations, pharmacies etc. Consumers receive a full refund of their deposits. Unredeemed deposits are retained by Recyc-Québec and BGE.