

Recycling in the Yukon is changing.

As a business owner in the Yukon, you might also need to change.

A new approach to waste management called **extended producer responsibility**, or "EPR," will soon be established by the Yukon government. EPR is already used in many other parts of Canada and the world.

EPR reassigns responsibility for the management of "product" waste from government to its "producer."

What is a producer?

A producer is a business or other organization that makes or supplies products to the Yukon market. This includes the original manufacturer of a product and everyone up to and including the final retailer of the product.

What is a product?

A product is a good that is delivered to the Yukon market. Parts of a product – for example, cardboard packaging – become "waste." Ensuring producers responsibly manage that waste is the point of EPR.

How does responsibility get assigned?

EPR assigns responsibility as high on a product's supply chain as possible. Consider a plastic bottle of shampoo manufactured in the USA, for example. A Yukon EPR regulation cannot assign responsibility for that bottle to its original manufacturer. However, responsibility can be assigned to a Canadian grocery franchise that imports the bottle into the Yukon. A local grocery store would then not be directly responsible for the management of the plastic bottle when it becomes waste.

Does EPR apply to all producers?

Some smaller organizations will be exempt from EPR if they don't meet certain financial or waste output thresholds. BC, for example, exempts producers with annual revenue of less than \$1 million or those businesses that supply less than one tonne of printed paper and packaging per year. BC also exempts all non-profit organizations and charities.

What's the point?

Managing products at the end of their lives is the ultimate concern of EPR. By moving responsibility for this as high up the supply chain as possible, EPR can motivate manufacturers to improve the design of their products to reduce waste and make them more reusable and recyclable.

EPR also provides opportunities for businesses to find efficiencies and cost savings in waste management.

What products are covered by EPR?

The government designates products to be part of the EPR system. The Yukon will likely begin with three product categories. Other types of waste may be included in an expanded EPR system in the future.

1. Printed paper and packaging

Packaging includes food containers, bags and boxes, but does not include beverage containers. Paper products include flyers, catalogues, magazines and paper used for copying or writing. This category may cover just residential waste or include waste generated by the industrial, commercial and institutional sectors.

2. Household hazardous waste

This includes solvents, flammable liquids, domestic pesticides, paint and household batteries and their containers. It may include lights, non-refillable gas cylinders, alarms and devices that contain mercury.

3. Automotive waste

This includes waste oil and oil filters, waste antifreeze and associated containers.

How do producers fulfill their responsibilities?

Producers work collectively through agencies known as producer responsibility organizations, or "PROs." There are already a number of PROs in Canada.

PROs determine responsibility for product waste and collect fees from producers appropriately. They also establish, fund and operate waste management programs.

PROs also deal with the administrative side of EPR. They prepare any required program plans and annual reports for government.

Who pays for EPR?

Costs to run EPR systems are built into the price of goods. This makes recycling a pre-paid service for consumers.

Most jurisdictions let producers decide whether to make these visible to consumers as "eco-fees."

Benefits of EPR

- ✓ Business and job-creation opportunities for the private sector
- ✓ Producers have an incentive to reduce the waste associated with their products
- ✓ Improved access to recycling programs over time
- ✓ Savings for taxpayers
- ✓ More waste can be diverted from landfills

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