This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Fri Oct 30 8:29:10 2026 / +0000 GMT

Changes to Blue Box recycling program could soon be coming to Dufferin County

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

Dufferin County has thrown support behind an effort to have producers pay all costs to collect and recycle the materials for which their responsible.

County council agreed during its May 28 meeting to stand by the Municipalities Association Ontario in its effort to change the setup of the Blue Box Program.

Changes to the program have been in the works since 2019.

Environment, Conservation and Parks Minister Jeff Yurek said the change will take municipal taxpayers off the hook for the program's costs. Producers of products and packaging will become completely responsible.

?Transitioning the Blue Box Program to full producer responsibility will promote innovation and increase Ontario's recycling rates while saving taxpayers money,? Yurek said in August 2019.

?This shift is a big step towards diverting waste, addressing plastic pollution and creating a new recycling economy that everyone can be proud of in Ontario.?

Given the terms of the county's current collection and processing contracts, a transition in 2023 is optimal for Dufferin County.

In Dufferin, the curbside collections contract expires May 31, 2022. A further one-year extension will need to be negotiated with the collections contractor to align with the 2023 timeline.

?This avoids a new long-term contract at a time of much uncertainty and would bridge the county into the new producer responsibility framework,? reads a report to council by Public Works Director Scott Burns.

Dufferin's recyclables processing contract expires May 31, 2023.

?The way it is now, in some instances, it's overkill as far as packaging is concerned,? said Councillor Bob Currie, Amaranth's mayor. ?What it's going to be is the producer of the garbage, the extra packaging, is going to have to pay for it.?

Coun. Sandy Brown, who is also Orangeville's mayor, said early morning thefts of recyclable aluminum cans and bottles from curbside residential Blue Boxes has become a frequent occurrence.

?And that is dipping into our funds we get from the recycling,? said Coun. Brown. ?People taking things out of Blue Bins is actually theft,? he said.

Coun. Currie said there's a few hundred thousand dollars annually put into county coffers through recycling.

?Aluminum is worth money,? he said. ?You might think you only have a few tins of your own but, if you put that across the whole county, there's quite a few tonnes of metal every year and Dufferin (County) gets the revenue for it.?

Coun. Steve Anderson, Shelburne's deputy mayor, recognized there could be another issue in play associated with thefts of recyclables. And that should be addressed when details about the program changes are brought to the public, he said.

?In addition to letting people know there are consequences for the theft, I would also point out any resources that are available for

people who are in need,? said Coun. Anderson. ?If these thefts are occurring because these people feel they have to get money to feed their families, there are alternatives that will not get you in the hands of the law.?