



A community that grows together

Report To: Warden Horner and Members of County Council

Meeting Date: June 26, 2025

Subject: Residential Recycling Transition – Blue Cart Containers

From: Scott Burns, Director of Public Works/County Engineer

Recommendation

THAT the report from the Director of Public Works/County Engineer, Report #PW-2025-002, Residential Recycling Transition - Blue Cart Containers, dated June 26, 2025, be received.

Executive Summary

- As of July 1, 2023, residential recycling in Dufferin County is managed by Circular Materials on behalf of producers under Ontario's Blue Box Transition Regulation.
- Circular Materials recently provided notice that the current residential blue box recycling container will transition to 95-gallon (360 litre) blue carts
- Blue cart collection will start January 1, 2026, with anticipated distribution of the new blue carts ahead of time likely in fall 2025
- Circular Materials is responsible for the residential recycling system, including the purchase, distribution and replacement/repair of the new blue carts

Background & Discussion

As of July 1, 2023, residential recycling in Dufferin County is managed by producers of printed paper and packaging under Ontario's Blue Box Transition Regulation. Circular Materials, the Producer Responsibility Organization, oversees all residential and eligible sources including schools, long-term care facilities, etc., during and beyond the transition period of July 2023 to December 2025. Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional sources are excluded from this regulation, and are dealt with separately by the County.

In email correspondence from Circular Materials on May 28, 2025, the County received notice that Dufferin's residential recyclables collection container will be changing from standard blue boxes to 95-gallon (360 litre) blue carts as of January 1st, 2026. In their notice, Circular Materials states "...collection contractors are working to optimize collection services within communities and across catchments". The notice also says, "Circular Materials and GFL Environmental Inc. will be communicating these changes to your residents". Dufferin staff have asked for a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to be available for residents in the interim. Once available, this information will be posted along with other program FAQs for Dufferin County that can be found at <https://www.circularmaterials.ca/resident-communities/dufferincounty/>

With regards to accessibility needs and carts, Circular Materials confirmed the following:

- GFL will only be offering 95-gallon carts. However, if a special needs accommodation stop has been approved and set up, the operator will service the cart by emptying it and returning it to the original location.
- GFL will be handling the special needs accommodation requests on a case-by-case basis.
- Residents must contact GFL's Customer Service line directly for assistance.

As Circular Materials and GFL roll out this transition to blue carts, more details will be provided. This will include timing and logistics for blue cart deliveries anticipated ahead of the January 1, 2026, collection start, likely sometime in the fall 2025.

Several eligible sources under the residential recycling program, including schools, long-term care facilities, and multi-residential buildings, currently use 95-gallon carts for recycling, as this was already in place pre-transition in Dufferin to handle larger amounts of recycling from these communal locations.

Financial, Staffing, Legal, or IT Considerations

Residents are currently instructed to contact GFL and Circular Materials directly for residential recycling inquiries, issues etc. Dufferin staff will continue to inform residents to do so if contacted. Dufferin staff can also support inquiries through transfer calls and forward emails if requested as well. Dufferin staff will ensure local municipal staff are informed of the residential change to blue carts, and they will be asked to continue directing any residential recycling inquiries to GFL.

Circular Materials is responsible for the purchase of the residential recycling carts, distribution and replacing/repairing blue carts.

Blue boxes currently in use by residents will be permitted for other purposes, including storage, yard waste collection etc. Residents already bring back broken green bins for container recycling through the County, and it is to be determined if broken blue boxes will also be dealt with this way as Circular Materials has indicated their position that it is not their responsibility post January 1, 2026.

In Support of Strategic Plan Priorities and Objectives

Climate & Environment – establish the County as a leader in Climate Action/enhance and conserve Dufferin’s natural environment

Governance - identify opportunities to improve governance and service delivery/
improve the County’s internal and external communication

Respectfully Submitted By:

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