



2023 ANNUAL WASTE MANAGEMENT REPORT

PARTNERSHIPS DRIVING
Reduction | Reuse | Recycling | Recovery

2023 At-A-Glance



140,183
TONNES
RESIDUAL WASTE
SENT TO ENERGY-FROM-
WASTE FACILITIES



105,479
TONNES
GREEN BIN
ORGANICS
PROCESSED



44,640
TONNES
BLUE BOX
RECYCLING
MARKETED



41,978
TONNES
LEAF &
YARD WASTE
COMPOSTED



1,819
TONNES
DEPOT
DIVERSION
RECYCLED



1,197
TONNES
HOUSEHOLD
HAZARDOUS
WASTE
PROPERLY DISPOSED



861
TONNES
ELECTRONIC
WASTE
RECYCLED

94% DIVERSION FROM LANDFILL

The Regional Municipality of York, in partnership with its local cities and towns, provides an extensive waste management system to York Region residents. York Region operates waste depots where residents can drop off items for reuse, recycling and disposal and processes waste collected by its local cities and towns. Since 2012, York Region has established itself as a leader in sustainable waste management in the province. Guided by the Integrated Waste Management Master Plan (SM4RT Living Plan), York Region works towards reducing waste long-term and advancing the circular economy. Partnerships and collaboration are key to our success in achieving the SM4RT Living Plan's objectives. York Regional Council, along with local cities and towns' Councils in York Region, advocate and work together to ensure waste management services continue to meet our growing communities' evolving needs as we adapt to changing Government of Canada and Ontario government legislation. In 2023, York Region diverted 94% of its waste from landfill.

York Region, in collaboration with its local cities, towns and community partners, provides innovative waste reduction, diversion and disposal programs to ensure strong, caring, safe communities – today and tomorrow



Introduction



York Region's Annual Waste Management Report summarizes integrated waste management system performance, including the quantity of materials collected and processed in 2023. The report highlights progress made towards achieving the [SM4RT Living Plan's](#) objectives and is submitted annually to the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks to satisfy the Durham York Energy Centre Environmental Assessment approval condition for diversion reporting.

York Region, together with its local cities and towns, delivers waste management services to over 1.2 million residents in over 400,000 households across the Cities of Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan and the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Newmarket, Whitchurch-Stouffville and the Township of King. York Region manages 362,665 tonnes of waste including local municipal curbside waste, organics, recycling, yard waste and waste depot diversion programs and tonnes managed through energy-from-waste.

The SM4RT Living Plan sets the stage for waste diversion and prevention in York Region to 2059 and beyond with the visionary goal of **a world in which nothing goes to waste**. Created in 2013, it was updated in 2020 with the objective to advance the circular economy and commits to the "4Rs" waste hierarchy:

- **Reduce** the amount of waste generated in York Region
- **Reuse** items instead of discarding them
- **Recycle** as many materials as possible into new products
- **Recover** energy from waste that cannot be managed in other ways

The plan's [three objectives](#) and 2023 highlights of achievements can be found in **Figure 1**.

In 2024/2025, York Region and its local cities and towns will update the plan to identify priority actions for the next five-year cycle.

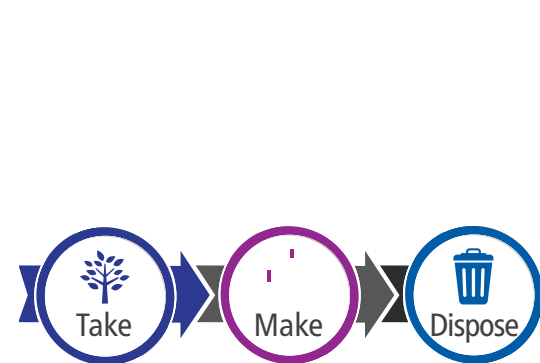
Figure 1: SM4RT Living Plan 2023 Highlights of Achievements

Objective	Objective Description	2023 Highlights of Achievements
<p>1</p> <p>Successfully navigate legislative changes</p>	Respond flexibly and use legislative changes to continually improve SM4RT Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ York Region continues to prepare for the Blue Box Program transition and manage the challenges of early implementation of transitioned producer responsibility programs such as batteries, electronics, hazardous and special products and tires ✓ In collaboration with local cities and towns, York Region continues to support residents and businesses to find alternatives to single-use items
<p>2</p> <p>Use resources and infrastructure more strategically to achieve SM4RT Living</p>	Focus efforts, innovate and improve coordination to create a more seamless, cost-effective system and do more with available resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In January 2023, York Regional Council awarded a long-term contract to locally process green bin waste in a new state-of-the-art biofuel facility that will produce fertilizer and renewable natural gas by 2027 ✓ York Region continues to leverage its long-term contracts using energy-from-waste technology to manage residual materials
<p>3</p> <p>Inspire people across York Region to embrace SM4RT Living and advance the circular economy</p>	Value partnerships and pioneers in driving SM4RT Living and the circular economy uptake across our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Through the Circular Economy Initiatives Fund, York Region supported five community groups to complete projects to reduce waste and advance the circular economy ✓ York Region supported two community groups through the Single-Use Innovation Challenge to help businesses reduce reliance on single-use items

York Region SM4RT Living

Shifts the focus from a linear economy to a circular economy that conserves resources and maximizes diversion from landfill.

Linear Economy



Circular Economy



Circular Economy



DID YOU KNOW?

The circular economy eliminates waste and pollution and conserves resources. It shifts the “take-make-dispose” linear economy model to one that is circular. Through better design, resources are continuously recaptured and reused, allowing natural systems to regenerate. Products are more durable, reusable, repairable and recyclable, and options to share, rent, repair and repurpose become more common. For more information and resources available to you, check out york.ca/CircularEconomy

Building Community Capacity to Advance Circularity in York Region

York Region continues to build upon its [Circular Economy Roadmap](#) endorsed by York Regional Council in 2022. The roadmap identifies five action areas to advance the circular economy:

-  Sustainable Food Systems
-  Reuse and Sharing
-  Community Capacity and Connections
-  Circular Procurement
-  Asset Management and Built Environment

In 2023, York Region focused efforts on community capacity and connections, building a foundation of knowledge about local circular economy activity.

A circular economy requires many players to work together to keep materials in use, conserve resources and create new solutions. One of our key learnings from past engagement with stakeholders is that more data is needed about where and how the circular economy is currently operating in York Region. Guided by the Circular Economy Working Group, York Region catalogued circular economy businesses and organizations operating locally (see Figure 2). This information will be used to identify potential collaborators and champions in the community and track change over time. Most organizations identified were non-profit or public sector, including public organizations like libraries, municipally-owned waste depots and school boards. More work is planned to better understand how businesses are participating in the circular economy.



Figure 2: The Circular Economy in York Region in 2023

158 ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

WHO ARE THEY?

68 NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS **55** BUSINESSES **35** PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS


WHAT DO THEY DO?


40 CONTRIBUTE COMMUNITY RESOURCES community gardens, commercial kitchens, makerspaces and coworking spaces

24 SELL SECONDHAND **21** REPAIR AND/OR REFURBISH

 **23** design, manufacture or recycle products

 **20** educate and train

 **15** refill, share, rent and borrow

 **15** drop off points for unwanted items

LEARN MORE AT ShareReuseRepairHub.ca

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Newmarket Public Library

Libraries are community champions of the circular economy, built on the foundation of empowering people by building knowledge and skills through shared books. Newmarket Public Library, like other libraries in York Region, has taken their circular concept beyond just books. Library card holders can borrow items like small appliances, tools and bikes from [the Lenderly](#) and [digital media](#) like ebooks, audiobooks, digital magazines and music. The library also applies circular concepts to reduce food insecurity, launching a [seed library](#) and [Community Fridge](#) with Newmarket Food Pantry allowing anyone to take fresh, donated food for free anytime. Programs and events to build repair skills or swap items are offered throughout the year at little or no cost to participants and material donations are accepted.

“...the Library of today is certainly not the Library of yesterday; it is more than just a collection of books. It is a catalyst and convenor of ideas and inspiration, sharing and collaborating, and, perhaps most importantly, community building.” ~Darryl Gray, Newmarket Public Library Board Chair

Learn more at Newmarketpl.ca



Diversion Achievements



York Region Continues to Exceed Diversion from Landfill Target Annually Since 2016

York Region remains committed to following the 4Rs, with a focus on reduction and reuse as the best waste management options. In 2023, York Region achieved 94% waste diversion from landfill, which includes all tonnes collected through curbside and depot diversion programs (see Table 1) and tonnes managed through energy-from-waste. With efforts from residents and strong collaboration with local cities and towns, York Region has exceeded its target of 90% each year since 2016.

York Region Diversion from Landfill Rate

Year	York Region Diversion from Landfill Rate*
2019	94%
2020	93%
2021	92%
2022	94%
2023	94%

* Includes energy-from-waste. All values are rounded.

York Region Achieves Highest RPRAs Diversion Rate in Ontario in 2022 With 66%

The Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRAs) manages the Ontario datacall process. The datacall is used to determine Blue Box Program cost and allocate funds from producers to municipalities to assist with operational costs. RPRAs also calculates community diversion rates and releases a ranking for Ontario municipalities. York Region has been the leader in the "Large Urban" category every year since 2012 and ranked first overall in the province in 2016 and 2022. With the Blue Box Program moving to full producer responsibility, the datacall process, verified diversion rates and rankings will end after the 2023 submission

in 2024. Municipalities that transitioned their Blue Box Program in 2023, including the City of Toronto and City of London are not included in the 2022 diversion ranking. York Region's 2023 RPRAs unverified diversion rate is 66% (RPRAs does not recognize energy-from-waste as diversion).

Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRAs) Annual Waste Diversion Rate

Year	Ranking	RPRAs Diversion Rate
2019	1st for Large Urban Municipalities	66%
2020	1st for Large Urban Municipalities	66%
2021	1st for Large Urban Municipalities	65%
2022	1st Overall in the Province	66%
2023	Pending Verification	66%*

All values are rounded. RPRAs does not recognize energy-from-waste as diversion.

*The 2023 diversion data presented is pending verification by the RPRAs at time of printing.

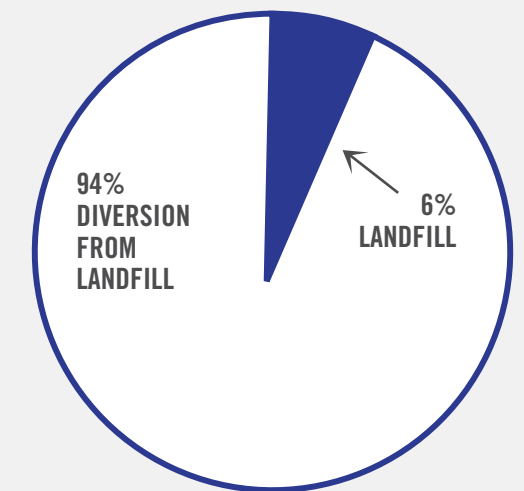
Table 1: Total Tonnes Collected

Material	Tonnes Collected				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Residual Waste (Garbage)	129,144	145,464	145,435	137,842	133,485
Green Bin Organics*	100,874	112,403	114,075	107,917	107,815
Blue Box*	78,243	79,087	78,417	76,032	75,509
Leaf and Yard Waste	42,814	44,216	42,029	42,509	41,978
Other Diversion - Depots	2,659	1,612	1,913	1,857	1,819
Household Hazardous Waste	1,297	1,459	1,365	1,277	1,197
Electronics	1,117	1,205	1,085	919	861

* Note: total blue box and green bin organics tonnes collected at curbside and depots include contamination

Achieving 94% diversion from landfill

Following the principles of the 4Rs waste hierarchy, York Region focuses waste management programming to reduce, reuse, recycle and recover resources. Waste is diverted through programs such as blue box, green bin, yard waste and collections at waste depots. Most residual waste (garbage) is diverted from landfill and processed at energy-from-waste facilities; only a small amount is sent to landfill.



How will diversion be measured once the RPRAs datacall process ends?

With the datacall process ending, York Region is exploring benchmarking performance initiatives in conversation with other municipalities to establish common metrics. The transition of the Blue Box Program to full producer responsibility may impact York Region's diversion from landfill metric given the large size of the program and its significant contribution to overall diversion. While York Region will continue to track diversion from landfill and waste generation rates, the review and update to the SM4RT Living Plan will include recommendations on metrics post transition.

Waste Generation



TARGETS



GREEN BIN

71 kilograms per capita by 2031



GARBAGE

66 kilograms per capita by 2031

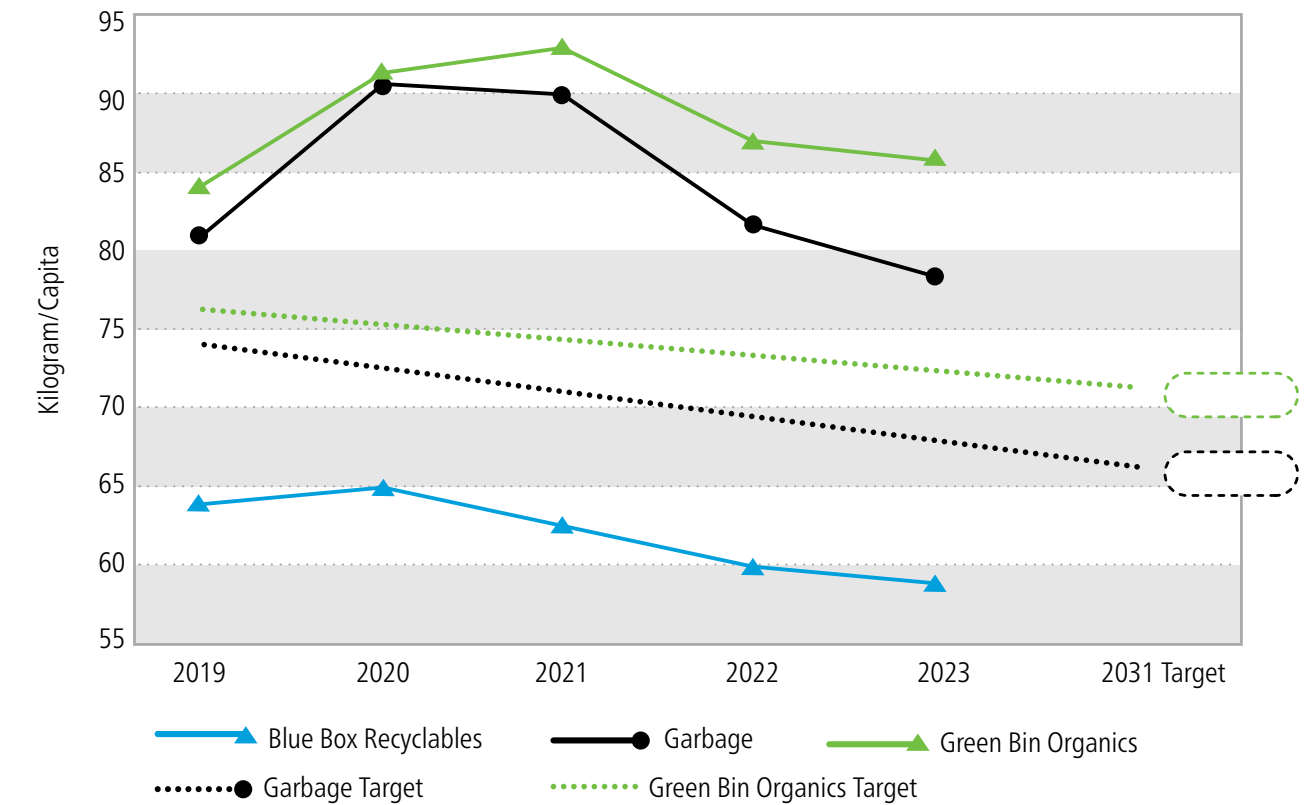
Waste Generation Rates Return to Pre-Pandemic Levels

York Region monitors its progress towards waste reduction targets set out in the SM4RT Living Plan through waste generation rates. Waste generation rates measure the tonnage of waste per person (kilogram per capita) collected curbside. With the RPRA datacall process ending soon, key performance indicators like waste generation rates will be reviewed and assessed through the five-year SM4RT Living Plan review and update.

With the Blue Box Program moving to full producer responsibility, reporting will focus on two key streams of collected curbside waste – green bin (organics) and garbage (residual waste) – which will remain as mandated municipal responsibilities.

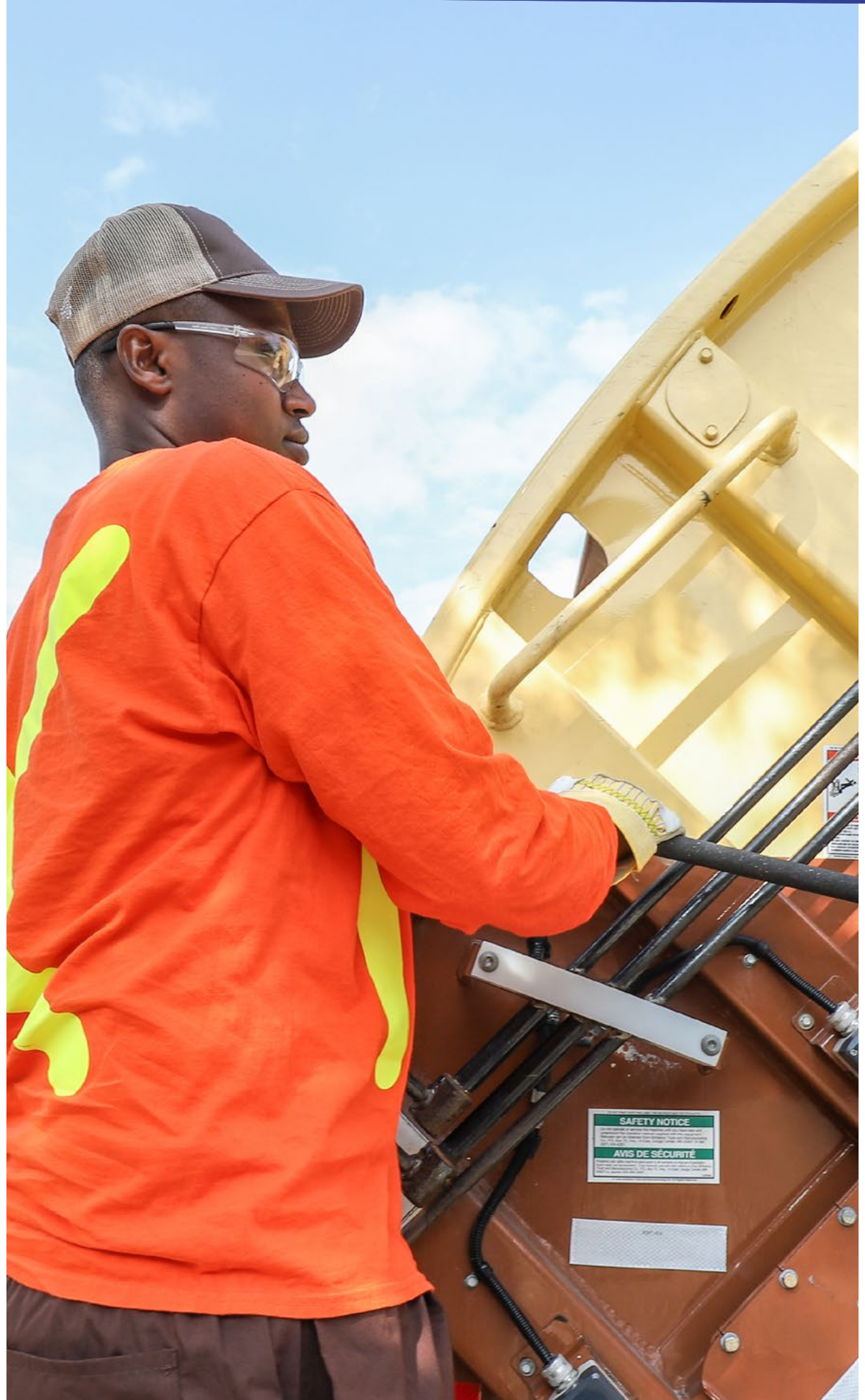
Waste generation rates continue to trend downward since peaking in 2020 and 2021 (as seen in Graph 1), likely due to a combination of factors. Fall 2023 community polling shows residents increasingly returning to workplaces full-time, up to 10% more than the year before, resulting in less waste generated at home. Regional and local municipal waste management programming may have also influenced this downward trend in 2023 as community engagement increased, depot reuse programs expanded and many [Repair Cafés](#) were offered. Economic conditions including inflationary pressures may have influenced consumer spending, potentially resulting in less waste generated at the household level. In 2023, York Region also experienced the largest annual population growth in the last five years, increasing by 1.51%. This population growth, combined with the decrease in tonnages collected, resulted in a lower per capita waste generation rate.

Graph 1: York Region Residential Curbside Waste Generation Rate (Kilogram/Capita)

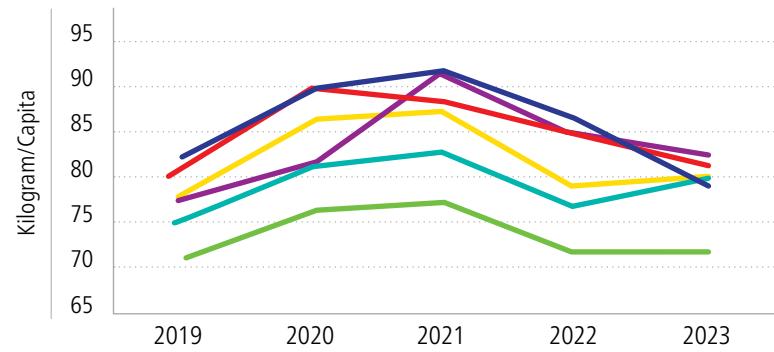


Waste generation rates continue to trend downward since peaking in 2020 and 2021

Consistent with the overall Regional trend, all nine local cities and towns saw declines in garbage waste generation rates and most saw declines in green bin waste generation rates (see Graphs 2 to 5). Decreases may have also been influenced by program and policy changes at the local level, as some local cities and towns made changes to their garbage bag tag program and conducted promotion and education on proper waste sorting. York Region continues to monitor waste generation rates and review audit data with local cities and towns. Audit data provides insights into current waste sorting practices and learnings are used to develop campaigns, programs and initiatives to reduce waste generation and minimize contamination.

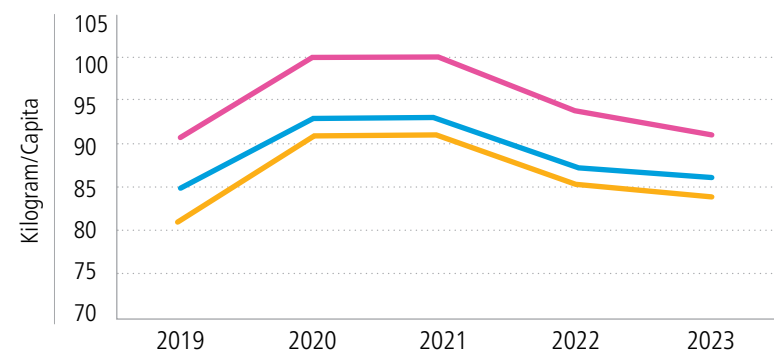


Graph 2: Northern Towns' Green Bin Waste Generation Rate (Kilogram/Capita)



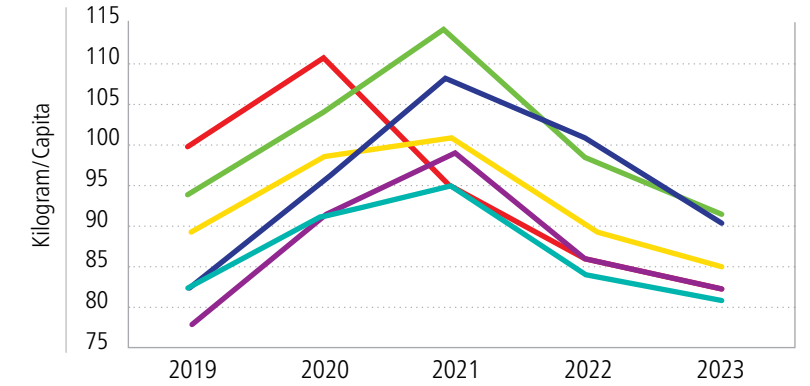
Local Town	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Aurora	80	90	88	85	82
East Gwillimbury	77	83	91	85	83
Georgina	71	76	77	72	72
King	83	90	92	87	79
Newmarket	75	81	83	77	80
Whitchurch-Stouffville	77	86	87	79	80

Graph 3: Southern Cities' Green Bin Waste Generation Rate (Kilogram/Capita)



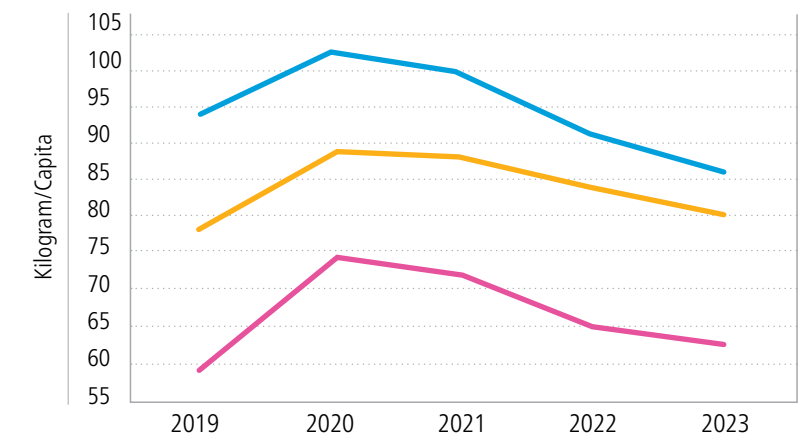
Local City	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Markham	91	100	100	94	91
Richmond Hill	81	91	91	85	84
Vaughan	85	93	93	87	86

Graph 4: Northern Towns' Residual Waste (Garbage) Generation Rate (Kilogram/Capita)



Local Town	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Aurora	100	111	95	86	83
East Gwillimbury	77	91	99	86	83
Georgina	94	104	114	98	92
King	83	96	108	101	90
Newmarket	83	91	95	84	81
Whitchurch-Stouffville	89	98	101	89	85

Graph 5: Southern Cities' Residual Waste (Garbage) Generation Rate (Kilogram/Capita)



Local City	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Markham	64	74	72	65	63
Richmond Hill	78	89	88	84	80
Vaughan	94	103	100	92	86

Partnerships



Good Food seed planting activity by York Region Food Network



The Lendery at the Milliken Mills Public Library in the City of Markham



E-waste event by the Town of Newmarket

Collaboration with Local Municipalities and Community Partners Drives Innovative Approaches to Reduction, Reuse and Diversion

York Region and its nine local cities and towns continue to collaborate to provide integrated waste management services and programs focusing on reduction, reuse and recycling initiatives. Together, we deliver a variety of programs to our residents including curbside giveaway days, battery, electronic waste and textile recycling in addition to regular curbside collection.

We are also working together to prepare residents and businesses for upcoming changes to provincial and federal legislation. This includes planning for the Blue Box Program transition to full producer responsibility (see Blue Box section for more information).

To support businesses and residents in adapting to the Government of Canada [Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations](#), York Region, together with waste, sustainability and economic development staff from local cities and towns, developed the [Single-Use Alternatives Guide](#). Staff continue with voluntary local efforts to reduce single-use items in line with actions identified in the SM4RT Living Plan despite recent legal challenges that may overturn the federal ban.

Various community partners also work with York Region and local cities and towns on innovative programs that combine waste prevention efforts with community capacity-building including:

- [Good Food](#) in partnership with [York Region Food Network](#)
- The [Lendery](#) in collaboration with various libraries across York Region
- [Repair Cafés](#) facilitated by [NewMakelt](#) and hosted at various libraries

York Region is building local capacity in the community with initiatives to support both organizations and residents. In 2023, five community groups and organizations completed

innovative projects focused on reducing waste and advancing the circular economy through the Circular Economy Initiatives Fund. Another round of applications was completed in 2023 and four organizations were selected to receive funding in 2024. York Region also expanded its partnership with [Circular Innovation Council](#) to update the [Share Reuse Repair Hub](#), an online directory and resource hub connecting residents with local organizations and businesses that enable sharing, reusing and repairing.

Demand Management: It Pays to Reduce and Reuse Waste

In 2023, York Region managed 362,665 tonnes of waste including curbside collected garbage, organics, recycling, yard waste and waste depot collected divertible streams and garbage.

The cost of managing streams that are not under a producer-responsibility framework falls almost entirely on the tax levy. After transition to full producer responsibility, York Region and its local cities and towns will continue to be responsible for the green bin, garbage and yard waste streams, as well as provided access to voluntary diversion programs such as construction waste. Each tonne of waste generated requires energy, money and resources to manage. The best way to contain costs and achieve environmental benefits is to reduce and reuse.

Whether local, regional or community-driven, waste reduction and

reuse initiatives contribute towards realizing the SM4RT Living Plan waste generation garbage and green bin targets. In 2020, York Region estimated that achieving SM4RT Living targets could mean \$44 million in cumulative cost avoidance by 2031. Each tonne of waste reduced is a tonne of waste that doesn't need to be collected, transported or processed. This not only results in monetary savings, but also provides environmental benefits. For example, York Region and local cities and towns collected 795 tonnes of textiles for reuse in 2023. This eliminates 17,768 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide equivalent) and 4.8 million litres of water that would have otherwise been used to make brand new textiles. Reduction and reuse efforts such as Curbside Giveaway Days, garage sales and clothing swaps contribute similar benefits across our communities.

 **TEXTILES**
YORK REGION AND LOCAL CITIES AND TOWNS

795 TONNES COLLECTED | **256** COLLECTION BINS

SAVED
17,768 TONNES OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (CARBON DIOXIDE EQUIVALENT)

 **4.8** MILLION LITRES OF WATER

 **CURBSIDE GIVEAWAY DAYS**

60 COMMUNITY EVENT DAYS



Blue Box

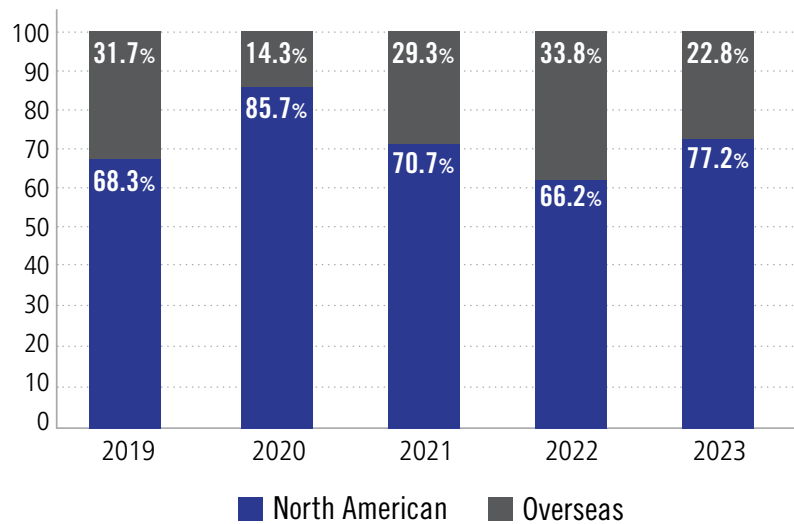


Blue Box Materials are Sorted and Sold to End Markets to Become New Products

York Region's local cities and towns collect recyclables from residential homes, multi-residential buildings, some businesses and schools. In 2023, 75,509 tonnes of blue box recyclables were collected and processed at the Material Recovery Facility, a Region-owned facility in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

In 2023, quantities of blue box materials marketed decreased by over 5,000 tonnes compared to 2022. This was primarily due to the loss of a market for mixed broken glass, which has been an industry-wide challenge for many years. When a buyer is no longer available, unmarketable blue box materials are recovered as energy-from-waste, wherever possible. York Region uses a combination of North American and overseas markets to ensure maximum material recovery. Graph 6 shows the end market destination of recyclables over the last five years. End market destinations fluctuate over time and can be influenced by the changing composition of blue box materials, consumer spending habits or broader variables like supply chain and geopolitical issues. In 2023, 77.2% of marketed recyclables were sold to North American companies.

Graph 6: End Market of York Region Blue Box Material



Transitioning Towards a New Blue Box Program

In 2019, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks announced the Blue Box Program would transition to full producer responsibility. Transition dates are staggered across the province and the first municipalities transitioned in 2023. York Region and its local cities and towns are scheduled to transition on December 31, 2025.

The move to full producer responsibility means organizations producing paper products and packaging will be responsible for the full cost and operation of the Blue Box Program and every community will be able to recycle the same materials. This standardized system will accept more materials than what is currently accepted and producers will be responsible for developing processing technology and end markets for problematic items such as beverage cups, flexible plastic pouches, plastic bags, plastic cutlery, polystyrene foam and more (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Items That Will Be Accepted in the Future Blue Box Program



York Region continues to engage with local cities and towns, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and producers to ensure a seamless transition for York Region residents.



Many plastics labelled as compostable, biodegradable or bioplastic don't break down in composting facilities and cannot be recycled. They are not accepted in most green bin and blue box programs and should go in the garbage. While designated in the Blue Box regulation, York Region continues to advocate that compostable items should be subject to management and performance targets to ensure they are diverted from disposal. Learn more at york.ca/ReduceWaste

All batteries are hazardous waste and should not go in the garbage or recycling. Batteries contain combustible, flammable materials. When crushed or overheated in garbage or recycling trucks or at waste management facilities, batteries can catch fire and put people at risk. Visit york.ca/HHW to learn where and how to properly dispose batteries.





Green Bin



Residual Waste

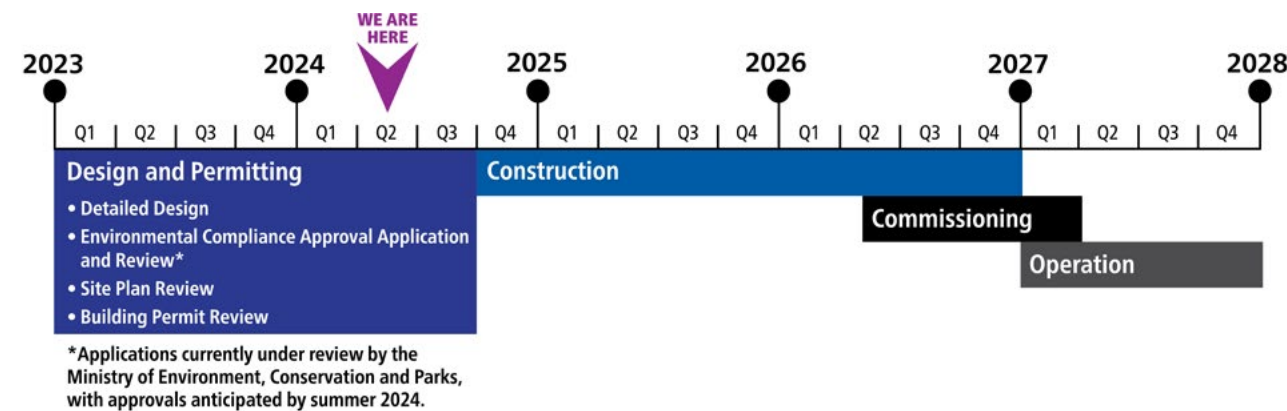
Processing Organic Material in Future Biofuel Facility Will Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Approximately 15,000 Tonnes per Year

In 2023, York Region residents generated 107,815 tonnes of green bin organics (source-separated organics). A total of 104,234 tonnes were transferred to contracted composting facilities to be turned into renewable biogas (for electricity and heat), compost and fertilizer. There were 2,336 tonnes lost to evaporation and 1,245 tonnes of liquid (leachate) managed through approved treatment facilities.

In January 2023, [York Regional Council awarded a 20-year contract to Convertus](#) to process green bin materials in a new [state-of-the-art biofuel facility](#) to be built in York Region. Local processing is a sustainable and cost-efficient solution

for York Region's long-term needs as it eliminates the need to transport green bin materials great distances (as much as 440 kilometres one way), reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions (approximately 15,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year). The facility will convert green bin material into valuable fertilizer and generate renewable natural gas which can be used in place of other fossil fuels. The biofuel facility will help York Regional Council action its [Strategic Plan](#) objective to deliver and promote environmentally sustainable services. York Region continues to work with Convertus to advance site permitting and facility design with an expected opening date by 2027.

Biofuel Facility Timeline



Energy Recovery Turns Garbage into Valuable Resource While Achieving Landfill Diversion Target

Materials remaining after reducing, reusing, recycling and composting are considered residual waste (garbage) and are managed through energy recovery as much as possible. Residual waste includes curbside garbage and items placed in the blue box that cannot be recycled.

Energy-from-waste (EFW) allows for energy and materials to be recovered, providing greater value than simply landfilling. Using EFW demonstrates York Regional Council's commitment to the 4Rs and is a key strategy to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Residual waste is currently managed at the [Durham York Energy Centre \(DYEC\)](#), an EFW facility York Region co-owns with Durham Region, and through other contracted privately-owned EFW facilities and landfills (see Table 2). Staff continue to evaluate existing waste processing contracts and are considering long-term solutions including additional EFW facilities within proximity to the Region.

York Region remains committed to educating the public on the DYEC and engaged with the community at the facility during National Public Works Week in May 2023. [Take a virtual tour of the Durham York Energy Centre.](#)

Table 2: Residual Waste Shipments

Destination	Tonnes	% of Total EFW
Energy-From-Waste (EFW)	140,183	
DYEC (Clarington, ON)	30,618	22%
Emerald Energy (Brampton, ON)	45,750	33%
Reworld Niagara (Niagara, New York) Formerly Covanta Niagara	63,815	45%
Landfill	22,426	
Year-End Carry Over*	439	
Total Residual Waste	163,048	

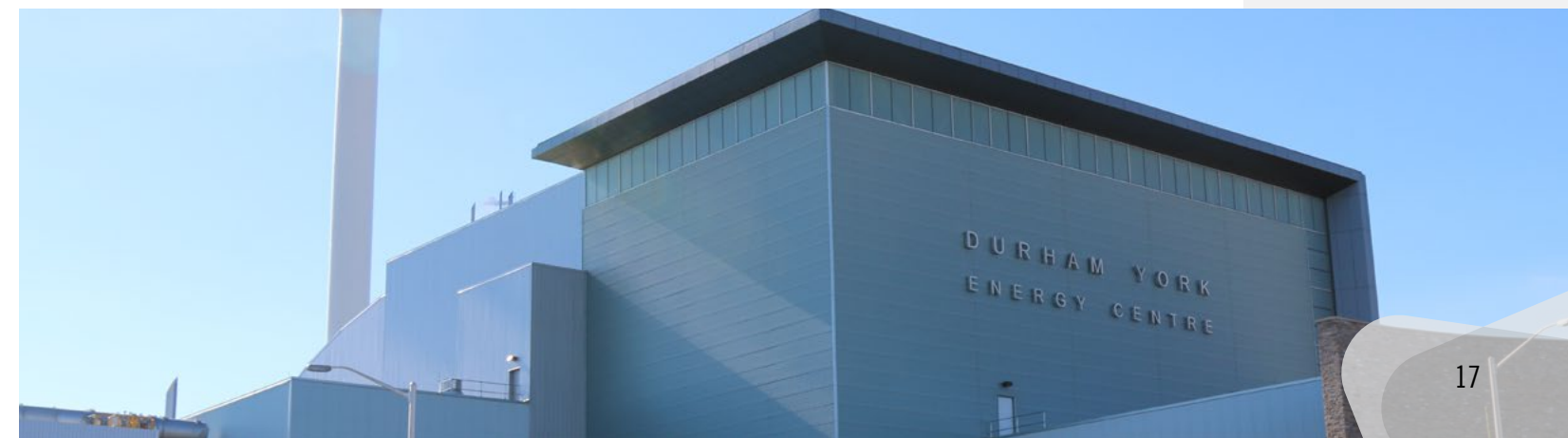
* Change in transfer station inventory January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023.

DID YOU KNOW?

Landfill capacity in Ontario is limited, making energy-from-waste a key strategy for managing York Region's garbage long-term. Waste 2 Resource Ontario's most recent 2021 Landfill Report found that Ontario's available landfill capacity is expected to be filled by 2032.

DID YOU KNOW?

Once fully operational, Convertus' local biofuel facility will produce enough renewable natural gas to heat 4,000 homes in York Region per year. Renewable natural gas is made from organic living matter like plants, food or animal waste and is a direct replacement for non-renewable natural gas (a fossil fuel). Renewable natural gas is made by capturing and cleaning biogas to meet clean, natural gas standards. Learn more at [york.ca/BiofuelFacility](#)





Depot Collection



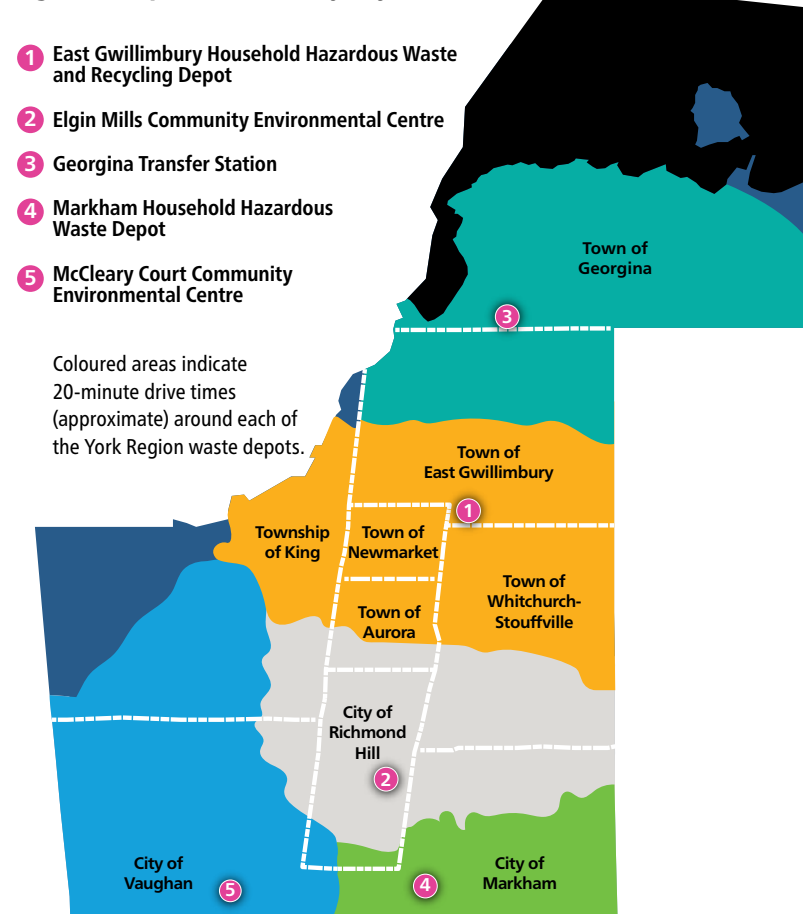
Strategic Locations of Waste Depots Increase Access to Diversion Programs and Ensure Safe Disposal of Hazardous Items

York Region operates [five waste depots](#) and collected 3,877 tonnes of divertible items not accepted at the curb including bicycles, concrete, cooking oil, drywall, electronic waste, household hazardous waste (HHW), refrigerated appliances, scrap metal, shredded paper, textiles, wood and others. Some depots also accept materials collected at the curb including blue box, yard waste and garbage.

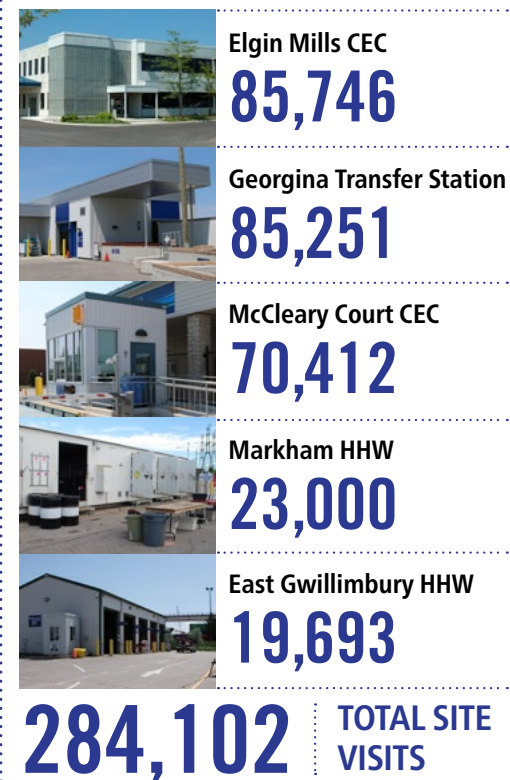
Waste depots are strategically located throughout York Region (See Figure 4). They bring value to the community, providing

ample opportunity to reuse and dispose items no longer needed. In 2023, opportunities to reuse were expanded with the addition of a second textiles collection partner ([B'nai Brith Canada](#)) at the McCleary Court Community Environmental Centre (CEC) in the City of Vaughan, on a pilot basis. The bike recovery and reuse program with [Markham Cycles](#) and [Newmarket Cycles](#) (Recycle to Ride) was also expanded to the Elgin Mills CEC in the City of Richmond Hill.

Figure 4: Depots Provide Majority of Residents Access Within a 20 Minute Drive



Depot Visitors

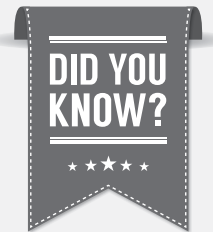


Waste depots continue to be a popular service, however visits have decreased since peaking throughout 2020 to 2022. This aligns with the pattern seen in waste generation rates over the same period. Saturdays remain the most popular day to visit.

Weight-based fees increased in 2023, promoting financially-sustainable operations through cost recovery while maintaining service levels.

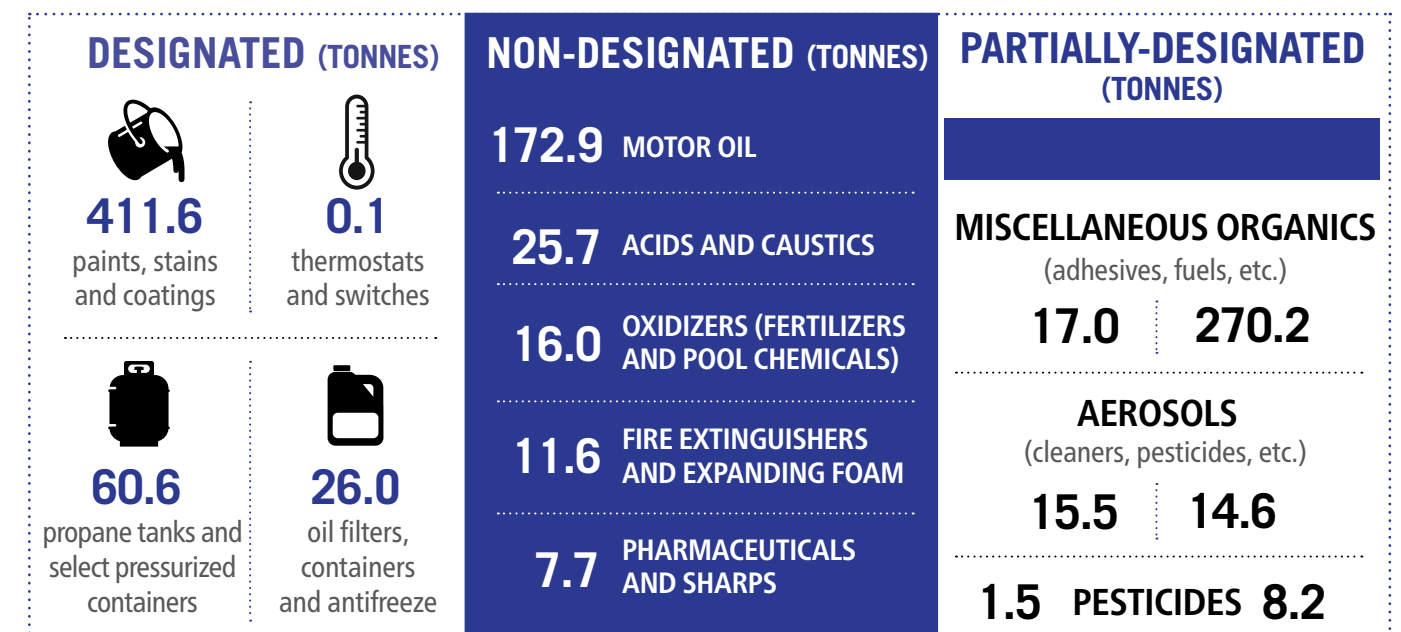
York Region regularly conducts surveys from depot users to gather feedback and continually improve programs and operations. Of respondents surveyed, 93% said that they were highly satisfied/satisfied with their overall experience at the depots. Survey results also indicate high interest in the expansion of the bike reuse program to more depot sites and highlight opportunities to raise awareness about textile collection.

In October 2021, hazardous waste diversion programs moved to a producer responsibility framework under the Hazardous and Special Products (HSP) regulation ([O.Reg. 449/21](#)), with the intent of making producers responsible for financing and management of these materials. York Region aligned waste depot operations to continue to collect and ensure safe disposal of hazardous products following termination of the prior program in September 2023. However, the list of products producers are responsible for has been reduced, with approximately 50% of the total weight of hazardous products collected by York Region in 2023 not designated under the new regulation (see Figure 5). York Region continues to advocate to the province for a full producer-led HSP program.



Do you have an item you no longer need? The majority of your waste can be reused or recycled through curbside collection, community donation centres and waste depots. Use the online [Bindicator tool](#) to find the best options for where it should go.

Figure 5: Designated, Non-Designated and Partially-Designated Hazardous and Special Products (HSP) collected at York Region Waste Depots in 2023 (in tonnes)



Community Engagement



Town of Aurora Community Cleanup

Opportunities to Engage Residents Increase in 2023 Through Partnerships and Innovation

York Region and its local cities and towns actively promote waste reduction programs and initiatives across our communities. This includes public communications, education and engagement activities occurring through in-person community outreach, traditional media, social media and community consultation events. Education empowers residents and businesses to become waste reduction ambassadors. Feedback enhances current and future programming. In-person community engagement opportunities continued to increase in 2023.

During Circular Economy Month in October 2023, York Region launched a circular economy educational campaign [Waste Less and Save More – Join the Circular Movement](#). This campaign included a webinar co-ordinated by [Circular Economy Working Group](#) members to educate residents about the circular economy featuring community ambassadors. A resident survey about awareness and participation in circular economy programs revealed 56% of survey respondents were familiar with the term “circular economy” but only 15% think circular economy services and resources are widely available. Based on these results, York Region continues to educate and raise awareness of local opportunities for residents to reduce, reuse and repair like the annual [Backyard Composter](#) sale, [Curbside Giveaway Days](#), [Cloth Diaper Rebate](#), [Good Food](#), [Lenderies](#), [Repair Cafés](#), [Share Reuse Repair Hub](#) and [textile donation](#).



Repair Café

10 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS
2,963 ATTENDEE INTERACTIONS

5 Circular Economy Working Group Meetings

1 Survey

1 Webinar

We're Active in the Community and Engaging with Residents



Aurora Street Festival



Chippewas of Georgina Island Pow Wow



Family Fun Day



City of Markham Celebrates Earth Month



Single-Use Item Display



City of Vaughan Winterfest

Community Participation in Waste Reduction, Reuse and Diversion Initiatives



COMPOSTER SALE

992 composters sold in 15 days

99 tonnes of organics diverted

"Great way to reduce green bin waste and to have compost for the garden. Wish I would have bought one a long time ago."
~ Resident



REPAIR CAFÉ SMALL APPLIANCE

most common item

11 events

"Everyone appreciated the Repair Café and has been asking when we will be offering it again." ~ Library Host



THE LENDERY

276 Lendery items

2,950 check-outs/renewals

"We loved borrowing the power washer from the library. We were able to clean the cottage deck and prepare it for stain without having to buy and store a pressure washer at home." ~ Lendery Participant



FOOD WASTE REDUCTION

114 composting workshop participants

"Some of the new volunteers expressed how happy they were to have discovered the Composting Learning Hub, who had no idea otherwise that land in the suburbs could look like this." ~ York Region Food Network



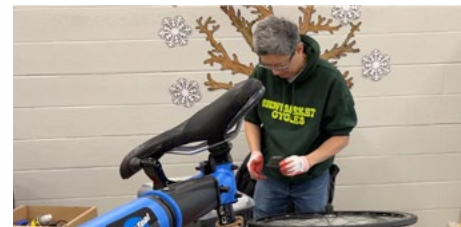
CIRCULAR ECONOMY INITIATIVES FUND

28 households participated in home waste audits

7 schools diverted 742 kilograms of clothing from garbage

660 kilograms electronic waste collected to be repaired/refurbished

128 residents picked up 32 kilograms of litter



MARKHAM CYCLES & NEWMARKET CYCLES

299 bikes collected from Elgin Mills and McCleary Court CECs

"This is a good initiative to know that old bicycles can be donated, fixed and recycled"
~ Recipient of a refurbished bike

Thank You for Supporting the Circular Economy in York Region



york.ca/Waste

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