



Agenda No: 7.2 + 7.3

Mtg Date: Oct 9/08

Governance & Services Committee Report

TO: Governance & Services Committee

FROM: Carol Suhan, Regional Waste Reduction Supervisor

DATE: September 29, 2008

SUBJECT: 1) Agricultural (Ag) and Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) Plastics Recycling
2) Single Use Plastic Bag Policy

In June 2008, the Board requested that the Regional Waste Reduction Office (RWRO) research and recommend positions on the establishment of an Agricultural and Commercial plastics recycling program and develop a single-use plastic bag policy for the region.

The following are updates on the progress on these initiatives:

1) Agricultural and Commercial Plastics Recycling Program

Pilot projects to collect, process and market agricultural plastics (i.e., greenhouse plastic, irrigation plastic, silage bags, fertilizer and feed bags, baler twine, and plastic containers and pots) have been completed in the Regional Districts of Fraser Valley, Nanaimo and Okanagan Similkameen. Staff reviewed the three pilot projects' results and, given their consistent success, moved forward by contracting a firm to conduct local research to determine the volumes of these kinds of plastics generated in the Central Okanagan. This research is being conducted in partnership with the Regional District of Central Okanagan. Once the plastics' volumes study is completed, costs can be attributed and a decision can be made about a collection program initiative.

The Regional District of North Okanagan is also interested in partnering with the RDCO in issuing a joint RFP for the collection, processing and marketing of the plastics in 2009, if warranted. The Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen is issuing an RFP for these services in its region in October 2008.

2) Single-Use Plastic Bag Policy

There has been significant debate about single-use plastic bags over the past several years with numerous jurisdictions deciding to restrict their use through tax levies, bans and/or campaigns to promote reusable bags. The Board requested that, following the UBCM debate and position, the RWRO make a recommendation for a local policy.

Due to limited resources caused by changing personnel levels and the focus on the launch and roll-out of the automated waste collection system, staff has written a draft report but is unable to bring it forward for discussion at this time. It is recommended that the request be deferred until mid to late-2009 when staff levels are re-established and the automated collection system is fully rolled-out.