

**ONTARIO APPROVES NEW DIVERSION PLAN FOR MUNICIPAL HAZARDOUS OR
SPECIAL WASTE**
More Recycling Options For Ontarians, A Cleaner Environment

TORONTO – Environment Minister John Gerretsen has approved a new program that aims to double the amount of household hazardous or special waste that Ontario diverts from landfills and the environment over the next five years.

The program, developed by Waste Diversion Ontario, will help Ontarians reduce, reuse, recycle and responsibly dispose of common household products such as paints, solvents, batteries and oil filters that can often end up being poured down the drain or thrown out with regular garbage.

"We're moving aggressively to step up diversion efforts in Ontario over the next couple of years," said Gerretsen. "This new program ensures we can each do the right thing for the environment when it comes to dealing with these wastes."

Phase One of the program will begin on July 1, and includes paints and stains, paint thinners, strippers and other solvents, oil filters, lubricating oil containers, non-rechargeable batteries, engine coolant, pressurized containers such as propane tanks, fertilizers and pesticides.

The program will make it easier and more convenient for consumers to return these wastes for proper management. For rural and northern Ontarians where service often does not currently exist, this will mean the introduction of new collection events. For urban Ontarians with some level of existing service, this will mean extending depot hours and increasing the number of collection events.

Gemma Zecchini, chair of Waste Diversion Ontario's board of directors, congratulated the government for approving the program. "Now that the program has been approved, we can set the wheels in motion to expand the opportunities for Ontarians to recycle and dispose of these products and their containers responsibly."

Jim Quick, president of the Canadian Paint & Coatings Association, and chair of the Stewardship Ontario committee that developed the program for Waste Diversion Ontario commented that "this new program means more opportunities to divert many of the products we've had around our houses and used for years that shouldn't go into the garbage.

"Lots of products like unused paint can be recycled," said Quick. "Other products, like pesticides, which can't be recycled, will be disposed of responsibly. This is a great opportunity for Ontarians to build on the success of the Blue Box program to divert more waste from landfill."

Doug Reyecraft, president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario also praised the program. "Improved diversion methods and added opportunities for collection means landfill sites will be spared more tonnes of waste. We applaud industry in taking on a greater stewardship responsibility that will help communities in their pursuit of a cleaner environment and sustainability."

Phase Two of the plan will soon be under development, and will include portable fire extinguishers, fluorescent lights, rechargeable batteries, pharmaceuticals, syringes and thermostats and other measuring devices containing mercury.