

Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario: Building the Circular Economy Released

On March 1st, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Glen Murray released the [Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario: Building the Circular Economy](#). The Strategy is intended to serve as a road map to shift Ontario towards a circular economy and a zero-waste future.

On January 30, 2017, AMO jointly submitted comments with the City of Toronto, the Municipal Waste Association (MWA), and the Regional Public Works Commissioners of Ontario (RPWCO) to the Ministry on the Strategy.

Key issues for municipalities that are outlined in the Strategy are:

- New legislation makes Producers fully responsible for end-of-life management of designated products and packaging. Municipal governments have traditionally played a key role in waste diversion programs. The most notable has been the Blue Box program where Regulation 101/94 of the *Environmental Protection Act* requires a municipality with population over 5,000 to provide Blue Box collection services. Under the new legislation, the Province has limited the role of municipalities to a "potential service provider" to Producers in the management of their designated materials.
- Wind-up and transition of existing diversion programs for Blue Box, Municipal Hazardous and Special Waste, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment, and Tires to the *Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act*. Regulations will be developed for each of these programs.
- The Organics Action Plan intends to ban food waste from disposal in 2022 and may also create new revenue opportunities with increased demand for renewable natural gas.