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## Information Bulletin

For Immediate Release

February 7 2018

### Changing World Markets for Canada's Recyclable Materials

**Victoria, BC**—In an effort to curtail pollution and protect the environment, China—the principal end-market for the majority of North American post-consumer plastics, paper and other recyclable materials—has restricted its importation of waste and recycled items from international sources by significantly lowering its allowable levels of contamination as of December 31, 2017.

Although China's new "National Sword" policy has closed the market for the majority of recyclable plastics and mixed paper from North America, materials collected through the curbside blue box program on behalf of Recycle BC are typically less contaminated and, as such, Recycle BC has been able to maintain both its international and domestic markets for these items.

As a result, no changes have been made to the curbside recycling program in the capital region.

Residents are asked to continue to make sure that their household recycling is clean and appropriately sorted to ensure that these plastic packages, paper products and other recyclable materials continue to have an end market.

However, recyclable materials collected privately from many commercial and multi-family sources often have higher levels of contamination. As a result, the volume of unmarketable material from these private programs has increased and these items are being brought to Hartland landfill for disposal under CRD Bylaw 3881.

The collection of large rigid plastic items (e.g. lawn furniture and car seats) was also recently discontinued at the Hartland recycling depot because, up until its recent policy change, China was the only market for this material. Representing less than 0.4% of the tonnage diverted by CRD recycling programs annually, large rigid plastics brought to Hartland will be disposed of as solid waste until a new market for them emerges.

CRD staff will continue to monitor global recycling markets closely and will provide an update to the Environmental Services Committee by June 2018.

For more information on the region's curbside collection program, please visit [www.crd.bc.ca/bluebox](http://www.crd.bc.ca/bluebox).

*The CRD collects residential recyclables through its curbside blue box program under contract to Recycle BC, who owns the recyclable materials and is responsible for marketing them. For more information, please visit <https://recyclebc.ca/>.*

-30-

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