



Port Moody heads list of region's top recyclers

Overall aim is to get Metro Vancouver to a 70-per-cent diversion rate from the landfill, committee chairman says

BY KELLY SINOSKI, VANCOUVER SUN APRIL 30, 2011



Port Moody's 61-per-cent waste-diversion rate is tops among Metro Vancouver municipalities. The city has been recycling longer than most municipalities.

Photograph by: Arlen Redekop, PNG, Vancouver Sun

Single-family households in the Tri-Cities are recycling more than those in other Metro Vancouver cities, with New Westminster, White Rock and Pitt Meadows among the worst in the region.

A Metro Vancouver survey found Port Moody at the top of the recycling ladder with a 61-per-cent diversion rate, which compares the amount of recyclables and composting at the curb with the amount of garbage collected. It is followed closely by Port Coquitlam at 59 per cent.

Coquitlam, with a 52-per-cent diversion rate, lagged slightly behind its two neighbours as well as Langley City (58 per cent), West Vancouver (56 per cent), and North Vancouver District (53 per cent).

All were above the Metro Vancouver average of 49 per cent.

Surrey and Vancouver, meanwhile, were below the average at 44 per cent and 43 per cent respectively, while White Rock dipped even lower with a diversion rate of 36 per cent and New Westminster was at 31 per cent.

Port Coquitlam Mayor Greg Moore, chairman of Metro's waste management committee, said the report's aim isn't to pit communities against one another, but to track and highlight what municipalities are doing and benefit from best practices.

He noted Port Moody and Port Coquitlam have been recycling longer than most municipalities. Port Coquitlam has bi-weekly solid-waste pickup, while its kitchen-scraps program -which other municipalities have just introduced -has been in place for three years.

Burnaby, for instance, has had its kitchen-scraps program in place for about a year, while Vancouver is phasing in the project, which is expected to be part of all Metro households by 2012.

Everything from apple cores to chicken bones, bread crusts, eggshells, coffee grounds, tea bags, paper towels and pizza boxes must be in the green bin instead of the garbage can by the end of next year.

"[All municipalities will] get caught up to where we are eventually," Moore said. "This just illustrates the work we have to do. We're not competing with each other; it's all about us as a region getting to a 70-per-cent diversion rate."

The single-family statistics in the report only represent one-third of the total waste stream.

Some of the data are also from 2009, while the rest is from quarterly reports from 2011. Multi-family households, which are the worst recyclers, are not included in the stats because haulers tend to lump those collections in with those gathered at local businesses.

The push to divert waste from garbage pails and city dumps is part of Metro Vancouver's Zero Waste challenge, an ambitious goal to recycle 70 per cent of the region's waste by 2015 -up from 55 per cent now -and 80 per cent by 2020.

To achieve that goal, Metro Vancouver must compost 265,000 tonnes of organics -roughly enough to fill a quarter of BC Place Stadium with compact garbage -each year.

Metro residents dump about 3.4 million tonnes of garbage annually.

The objects that can't be composted or recycled will be taken to a landfill or incinerated.

Metro Vancouver submitted a plan last September to build a trash incinerator to burn the region's waste, but has yet to receive approval from the provincial government.

Metro chairwoman Lois Jackson said the regional district is scheduled to meet with Environment Minister Terry Lake on May 9 to discuss its 5,000-page plan.

If it's approved, the regional district will need six years to put out a request for proposals, go through an environmental assessment review and develop potential sites for incinerators.

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HOLDING THE WASTE LINE

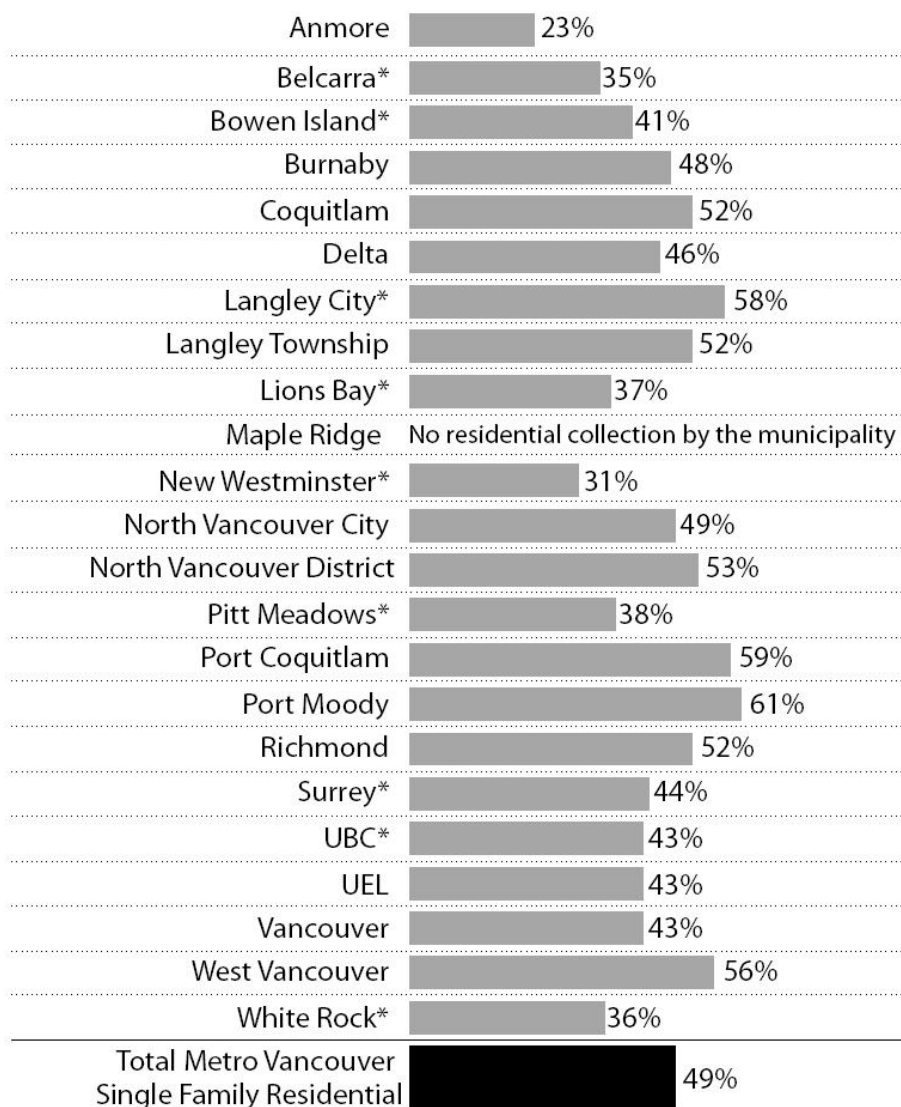
Waste diversion (waste kept out of landfills) is the amount of material recycled divided by the total amount of waste generated, expressed as a percentage. The following graphic presents the estimated waste diversion from each municipality for single-family homes, based on the data reported by the municipality.

Municipality Single Family Curbside Residential Diversion (%)

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