

Some businesses singing blue-box blues

From page 3

the data we were able to find that we could only see about 10 per cent of the glass being supplied into the marketplace was actually being recycled," he said. "So it gets collected but often during the collection and sorting process, it breaks down into such a small size that it often ends up going to landfill."

Langdon said they also found that broken glass would lodge into other materials, such as plastic and fibres.

"That then impacts the ability to recycle those materials. So we think by segregating glass we'll

recycle more glass, but we'll also recycle more plastics and papers," he said.

Matt Torgerson, committee chair of the Waste Management Association of B.C., said that although glass can degrade other materials and be more difficult to sell in market, waste management companies have developed systems and found markets for the product.

"A lot of our glass heads south as an aggregate product," said Torgerson. "It did degrade the product, it did not make it a non-recyclable item."

Torgerson said one example of such a system is

Emterra Group, a recycling company with locations across Canada, which offers a single-stream recycling. The single-stream pulls all recyclable materials, including glass, together and through a mechanical system segregates them into their respective streams.

"So we were never worried about the product," he said. "We as waste haulers, we know what happens when you make recycling hard, it goes into the garbage stream. You're not going to get in your car and take a couple of glass jars to the depot."

The Waste Management Association of B.C.,

along with the CFIB, the Canadian Newspaper Association and six other businesses and associations, have formed a coalition called #RethinkItBC to protest the new regulations.

"We're moving forward with a multitude of other associations from around B.C. to basically pause this program," said Torgerson. "Basically we're asking the government, continue to ask the government, to take this back to the drawing board. There's some big issues with this that we've never seen before in the province of B.C."

Peter Kvarnstrom, chairman of the Canadian Newspaper Association, as well as president of B.C. operations at Glacier Media Group, North Shore News' parent company, said the new regulations would do nothing to improve the already high recovery rate of newsprint at 89 per cent, well above the government target of 75 per cent.

"We basically have a great system in place now and the government has taken it upon themselves to reinvent it and contract it out to corporate interests



The new provincewide recycling plan would see glass containers removed from blue-box collection. PHOTO MIKE WAKEFIELD

Newspapers form coalition

From page 10

that are creating the majority of the waste in the recycling system now," said Kvarnstrom.

Newspapers could face a bill of upward of \$14 million annually, he said, with almost no ability to pass that cost on to consumers.

"The money has to come from somewhere," said Kvarnstrom. "The reality will be that it will come from job losses, reduced coverage, editorial, lesser quality, lesser debate and in some cases the potential loss of the community papers servicing communities, small and large."

Torgerson said the coalition is seeing a lot of funding issues with the regulations. "We're going to see some big problems on them trying to collect the money they promised the municipalities," he said.

Klassen said he thinks British Columbians and small businesses are very supportive of measures to reduce waste and to continue to ensure the province has the best

recycling in the world. "But at the same time, it has to be put forward in a practical way that isn't going to force businesses to close or lay off staff."

Klassen said this plan has impacted a lot of sectors in B.C.'s economy, including community newspapers, farms and people in the recycling industry. "Had this been done properly from the beginning, businesses would have been consulted," he said. "And government would have been able to get British Columbians' ideas on how to improve these services without having to go out of province."

The new regulations go into effect May 19.



Kevin Skett, supervisor at NSRP's Recycling Drop-off Depot on Riverside Drive, sorts refundable glass bottles and non-refundable glass jars. For now, glass will not be refused if put out for collection in your blue box. PHOTO **MIKE WAKEFIELD**