

Subject: FW: Your letter re batteries

Date: Thu, 13 Mar 2003 16:23:27 -0800

From: "Ernie Crist" <ernie_crist@dnv.org>

To: "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>

CC: <cagebc@yahoo.ca>

> Subject: Your letter re batteries

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> Dear Ms Yokota:

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> I can appreciate your frustrations. On the heels of your letter I received an e-mail from another citizen telling me that our transfer stations and/or recycling depot DO accept batteries. When I followed it up, however, it turned out that this is not so. I went to the transfer station and the recycling place myself to listen to 'the horse's mouth' only to be told that they will not accept batteries of any kind. The only way you can get rid of them is by hiring a company to take them out to Richmond or Surrey I am told. Either that or take it there yourself. Not very practical I would think.

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> Most people, of course, don't bother and just dump them in the waste stream. Yet all the while our high priced waste management staff and bureaucrats including GVRD and all those who serve on it as well as our politicians are boasting what a wonderful waste management system we have.

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> The issue is simply this. No waste management system can and will work unless it is based on the principle whereby the manufacturer, by legislation, is being compelled to accept and re use recyclable products in the production of new products. This includes batteries.

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> In the case of batteries, this would mean that the store who sold them would also have to take them back. The store in turn would pass them on to the manufacturer either direct or indirect. This applies to all recyclable materials not just batteries. If this were so, instead of having to pay for the blue box material being hauled away you would get re-imbursed for its value. To put it another way - you would pay for it only once when you buy it in the form of packaging as the case may be, rather than pay for it again for having it picked up as recyclable material.

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> In some cases there are contracts with manufacturers who are in the market to reuse it but it is on the basis of "begging" more or less rather than legislation. All told it is nothing less then feudal. A clue as to how "not with it" we really are may be seen by the fact that the US is importing Canadian waste material. You would think someone would twig to the idea that the Yanks would not do that unless there is some money in it. There are individual agreements with mostly US manufacturers of course but it is on the basis of ad hoc, piecemeal and certainly not based on legislation made in Canada which would simplify the process and make it truly economical.

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> Dealing with the matter based on legislation is in place in all developed countries and is, we were told, essential for any system to work. This point was stressed over and over again on our European waste management tour which ended with an international waste management conference in Berlin many years ago. But apparently this is too much for us. We are just not up to this simple task. What we can do, however, is go around and tell everybody what a wonderful job we are doing.

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> I am sorry I can not be more helpful. I can only tell you that as long as the residents in the Lower Mainland including the District of North Vancouver put up with the present "boondoggle" nothing will change. Unfortunately it seems that most people just take mediocrity for granted. God knows I have tried - indeed, if I were to make a motion to change the present fiasco, it is unlikely that I would even get a seconder for debate for such is the level of understanding by the people who are our "leaders".

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> Yours truly,

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> Ernie Crist

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