

**Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks**

**Ministère de l'Environnement,
de la Protection de la nature et des
Parcs**



Office of the Minister

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357-2025-2905

December 12, 2025

Ms. Karey Anne Large, A.C.E.
Chief Executive Officer
Whitby Chamber of Commerce
Email: karey@whitbychamber.org

Dear Ms. Large:

Thank you for your email to MPP Lorne Coe regarding blue box recycling for small industrial, commercial and institutional (IC&I) establishments, and for your chamber's continued advocacy on behalf of businesses in Whitby. Your email was forwarded to me for a response.

Since 2023, Ontario has been transitioning the residential blue box system from municipal control to a producer-run model, where Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs) operate a province-wide collection system. This change will save municipalities over \$171 million annually and will be completed by 2026.

Under the Blue Box Regulation, PROs are not and have never been responsible for collecting blue box waste from IC&I sources. This aligns with the previous system, where municipalities that offered small IC&I collection did so at their own initiative and expense.

During the transition period, PROs offered continued small IC&I collection to municipalities willing to pay for it. This was intended as a temporary measure to give municipalities time to arrange alternative service delivery and ensure a smooth transition for 2026. As PROs have communicated for several years, municipalities must work with their small IC&I establishments to identify the best path forward for collection in their communities for 2026 and beyond.

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks understands that many municipalities have already made alternate arrangements before January 1, 2026. However, at the request of several municipalities that had not, I wrote to PROs on June 4, 2025, asking them to prepare an offer of service to continue small IC&I collection at municipal cost.

On September 19, 2025, PROs indicated they could not fulfill my initial direction. They identified operational, infrastructure and financial challenges that would make small IC&I collection impractical and unaffordable for most municipalities and potentially disruptive to the residential collection run by PROs.

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I am disappointed that PROs could not deliver an offer for small IC&I collection. While PROs will not provide this service, private sector solutions remain available for municipalities that want to continue offering it.

If municipalities do not offer this service, individual businesses and associations will need to consider organizing recycling independently, as most businesses in Ontario already do through private contracts.

Regarding your question about obligations for medium and small businesses to manage packaging and products under the Blue Box Regulation, the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRA) is responsible for compliance and enforcement. The RPRA's compliance team can help individual businesses understand their obligations under the regulation. Businesses can contact the RPRA at registry@rpra.ca or 1-833-600-0530.

Our government recognizes the importance of blue box recycling for residents and businesses and is committed to the best possible blue box system for both producers and municipalities. To this end, we will be considering improvements to the system over the coming year. As this occurs, we will look into how changes to the Blue Box Regulation could leverage the producer-run system and support communities, small businesses and institutions to cost-effectively maintain blue box services.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Todd McCarthy", with a long, sweeping underline.

Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

c: Lorne Coe, MPP, Whitby