

Part 4 – Responding to Resident Questions and Complaints

As I continue sharing information about Ontario's Blue Box transition, another important question is:

If a resident has a problem with curbside recycling, who do they contact?

During the **June 15 Council meeting**, a Councillor asked how Town staff would respond to resident complaints once curbside recycling is implemented. The Public Works Manager indicated that the Town would direct residents to **Circular Materials**, the organization responsible for administering Ontario's Blue Box program.

That response is understandable because, under Ontario's producer responsibility model, organizations such as **Circular Materials** are responsible for operating the residential Blue Box program and contracting the collection service.

Who is responsible for what?

Circular Materials or its collection contractor

-  Missed recycling collection
-  Recycling cart not emptied
-  Damaged recycling cart (if supplied through the program)
-  Questions about accepted recyclable materials
-  Collection crew conduct
-  Repeated contamination notices

Town of Iroquois Falls

-  Municipal garbage collection issues
-  Garbage by-law enforcement
-  Illegal dumping
-  Municipal waste collection policies

How the process typically works

In municipalities that have already transitioned to Ontario's Blue Box program, the process generally works as follows:

1. A resident reports a missed recycling collection or service concern directly to **Circular Materials** using its website, telephone customer service line, or online reporting portal.
2. Circular Materials records the complaint and forwards it to the contracted collection company.
3. The contractor investigates the concern and, where appropriate, returns to complete the collection—often within one or two business days.
4. Circular Materials monitors complaint trends and contractor performance to help ensure service standards are being met.

Where does the Town fit in?

Once the Town is no longer responsible for operating the Blue Box program, residents will often continue to contact the municipal office first.

For that reason, I believe the Town should continue to play an important role by:

- Ensuring staff have the information needed to provide residents with the appropriate Circular Materials contact information.
- Meeting with Circular Materials to review service levels and identify concerns.
- Providing Council with updates on recurring issues and overall program performance.

In other words, while the Town may no longer operate the recycling program, it is imperative that the service levels expected are met by the program administrators.

What should Iroquois Falls consider?

As part of implementing the new program, I believe Council should consider requesting a formal **Service Level Agreement or Communication Protocol** with Circular Materials that clearly outlines:

- Who receives resident complaints.
- Expected response times.
- Procedures for missed collections.
- Escalation procedures for unresolved concerns.
- Regular meetings between Public Works and Circular Materials.

Having these expectations documented promotes accountability and gives residents confidence that concerns will be addressed promptly.

Putting Our Community First means more than simply directing residents to another organization. It means ensuring there is a clear process, strong communication, and ongoing collaboration so residents receive the level of service they expect and deserve.

#michelle4mayor#clarity#puttingourcommunityfirst#keepinguptodate

Sources

The information presented in this post is based on publicly available information from:

- Town of Iroquois Falls Council Meeting (June 15, 2026) regarding curbside recycling implementation

References

Government of Ontario

- Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/16r12>
- Ontario Regulation 391/21 – Blue Box
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/210391>

Circular Materials

- Ontario Blue Box Program
<https://www.circularmaterials.ca/ontario>

- Find Your Collection Schedule / Report a Missed Collection
<https://www.circularmaterials.ca/ontario/resident>

Note:

This series is intended to provide residents with factual information about Ontario's Blue Box program based on provincial legislation, Circular Materials' published information, and publicly available municipal information. Any recommendations or opinions expressed are my own and are offered as suggestions for consideration based on my experience.

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