

This is the final post in my five-part recycling series.

My goal throughout this series has been to provide residents with clear, accurate, and valuable information about Ontario's Blue Box curbside recycling program so everyone can better understand how it works and what the changes mean for our community.

Thank you everyone who took the time read, follow along, and engage in the conversation.

Part 5 – Recycling Enforcement: Education First, Success Through Planning

I believe that is an important discussion to have because the long-term success of any curbside recycling program depends not only on collecting recyclable materials, but also on helping residents understand the program and ensuring it is implemented fairly and consistently.

Having helped other municipalities to successfully transition to curbside recycling, I have seen firsthand what works. The most successful programs are built on planning, education, and communication before collection begins.

The Curbside implementation process should be a phased in approach.

Phase 1 – Education First

Before any enforcement is considered, residents should be given every opportunity to learn how the program works. This could include a recycling guide delivered to every household via mailboxes, information included with tax or water/sewer billings, social media videos and/or messages, public information sessions, promotional materials (example – fridge magnets), and recycling/garbage audits to ensure the items being discarded are in the proper containers.

Recycling/garbage audits could include a "sticker notice" system advising the household why the recycling and/or garbage could not be picked up.

Rather than immediately penalizing residents, education tags can be left explaining the issue so it can be corrected for the next collection.

Phase 2 – Progressive Enforcement

Once residents have had sufficient education and time to adapt, Council could consider a graduated approach, such as:

- First occurrence – Education notice
- Second occurrence – Written warning
- Third occurrence – Collection tagged and left behind until corrected
- Repeated occurrences – Enforcement through a municipal by-law, if Council chooses to adopt one

Many municipalities rely primarily on collection refusal rather than issuing fines.

Supporting the Program

To ensure consistency, Council could also consider adopting a Waste Collection and Recycling By-law that clearly outlines the requirements to recycle, allowable materials, and enforcement procedures, etc.

Working with Circular Materials

With thoughtful planning, strong public education, and collaboration between the Town, Circular Materials, and residents, I believe Iroquois Falls can implement a curbside recycling program that is effective, efficient, and well supported by our community.

Putting **Our Community First** means planning ahead, communicating clearly, and setting residents up for success.