

**RECEIVED**

October 1, 2025

REGION OF PEEL

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CLERK

Good morning,

As you know, Ontario is transitioning the blue box system from municipal control to a producer-run model where Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs) will be running a province-wide blue box collection system. This will save municipalities over \$171 million annually and the transition will be complete in 2026.

I am writing today to confirm that, under the Blue Box Regulation, PROs are not, and have never been, responsible for collecting blue box waste from industrial, commercial, and institutional (IC&I) sources. In addition, PROs have indicated that, beginning in 2026, they will not voluntarily continue to offer this service to municipalities who are willing to pay for it as they have been doing for some small IC&I locations during the transition.

As PROs have been communicating since 2023, this means that municipalities will need to continue to work with their small IC&I establishments to identify the best path forward for collection in their communities. It is the ministry's understanding that many municipalities have already started this work to be ready for January 1, 2026.

This is not the outcome I had hoped for when I wrote PROs on June 4, 2025, to ask them to prepare an offer of service that would continue small IC&I collection at municipal cost. I had heard from municipalities and PROs that PROs could leverage the province-wide blue box collection system to offer a cost-effective option for municipalities to consider.

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

While I remain disappointed that the design of the proposal does not support broader curbside collection, leaving a gap in service across municipalities, I am pleased that PROs have agreed to work with communities that rely on depots for blue box collection to facilitate small IC&I collection. They are proposing to allow for comingling of residential and small IC&I blue box in shared depot containers. This means that municipalities will not have to plan and pay for separate depot containers for small IC&I blue box waste, which would add cost and burden. Under the PROs' proposed approach, PROs will be responsible for hauling and recycling the estimated share of collected recyclables from residential sources, and municipalities will be responsible for hauling and recycling the estimated share from small IC&I establishments.

I am very disappointed that PROs were not able to deliver an offer for small IC&I collection. However, I also recognize that the vast majority of businesses in Ontario arrange their own recycling collection through private contracts, or through an arrangement with their municipalities. While PROs will not be making municipalities an

REFERRAL TO \_\_\_\_\_

RECOMMENDED

DIRECTION REQUIRED \_\_\_\_\_

18.1-1

RECEIPT RECOMMENDED

offer for small IC&I collection, these private sector solutions are still available to municipalities. If municipalities are not going to offer this service to businesses, proactive communication will be needed to inform individual businesses and business associations of the need to organize recycling independently.

My government 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 be looking into how any changes to the Blue Box Regulation could leverage the producer-run system and support our communities, small businesses, and institutions to cost-effectively maintain blue box services.

My ministry will be in touch with further information over the coming months as we move forward on this initiative. In the meantime, if you have questions about the PROs' offer to facilitate small IC&I collection in depot communities, please contact [info@circularmaterials.ca](mailto:info@circularmaterials.ca).

Thank you for your continued support of the transition to producer responsibility. This transition will improve the amount of material recycled in Ontario and save money for municipalities.

Todd McCarthy  
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks