

December 29, 2011

Dear Municipality:

**Re: Stewardship Ontario/Federation of Canadian Municipalities Benchmarking and Best Practices Project**

As you may have noted when completing the Annual Municipal Datacall, Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) has identified a number of what it terms "Best Practices" for municipal blue box recycling programs, and is placing increasing importance on them as a funding criterion.

Municipalities who do not meet the Best Practices requirements, which are designed to encourage more program efficiency, are being effectively penalized and their annual funding from WDO is being reduced.

In 2010, with funding from the Continuous Improvement Fund, we organized a series of workshops on the topic of recycling planning, one of the Best Practices requirements we felt could be responded to positively with some assistance and encouragement, and more than 200 municipal program staff attended. This invitation is being sent to those individuals who were invited to and/or attended those sessions.

Last fall, this time with funding from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Municipal Waste Association, assisted by Genivar, held a series of working sessions with two mandates. Four sessions were held—in Sudbury, Huntsville, Ottawa and Kingston. On January 31 and February 2, two more sessions will be held in London and Barrie. The first mandate of the sessions is to provide an opportunity for municipalities to respond to WDO with concerns and suggestions that would make the Municipal Datacall "Best Practices" questions more useful and fair. The second is to teach municipalities about how to answer the Best Practices questions so that they can maximize their funding.

Municipal performance factors are used to compare and reward municipal programs that reside in similar groupings based on size and character, and as such are, in effect, employing a benchmarking technique. Benchmarking in this sense is done when one program against is compared to the cost and recovery numbers of a similar municipality but not against activities.

Even with all the WDO-based activity focusing on program optimization, both the concept of benchmarking and the application of these Best Practices remain somewhat elusive in practice. The application of these questions to a diverse community of municipal recycling programs has, in some cases, created confusion and uncertainty with respect to funding. Part of these sessions will be dedicated to seeking opinions from municipalities about how the questions are worded and whether these are the appropriate questions for their situation. We are looking for constructive input that will improve the workability of these questions. There is currently a process under way which is reviewing the Best Practices questions so this would be very timely.

We do hope you are able to attend one of these one-day sessions.

Please indicate which session to you are able to attend by either faxing back the registration form on Page Two of this letter to the MWA office (fax # 519-823-0084) or registering online (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8MQ9K9B> ). This form can also be linked from the Municipal Waste Association (MWA) website (<http://www.municipalwaste.ca>).

There is no charge and refreshments and lunch will be provided. If you plan to stay overnight before the sessions, it is UP TO YOU to make your own arrangements. Space at each session will be limited to ensure effective discussions, and we ask that each municipality send just one person to allow for maximum representation. This person would ideally be the appropriate waste management staff member or the individual who completes the annual Municipal Datacall survey.

Based on the feedback we received from last year's sessions, we are confident you will find this a good use of your time.

A follow-up email will be sent to you in a couple of weeks to confirm your participation. Please feel free to call me at the MWA office at (519) 823-1990 if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

*Ben Bennett*

Ben Bennett  
Workshop coordinator  
Municipal Waste Association

# Tackling WDO's *Best Practices* Datacall questions

## A series of working sessions - 2011/2012

### REGISTRATION FORM

(Space is limited –so **one registration** per municipality/program please.)

**Name:** .....

**Municipality/Program:** .....

**Address:** .....

.....

**Phone No.:** .....

**Email:** .....

Please indicate which working session you are planning to attend.

Tuesday, January 31 – London (Lamplighter Inn)

Thursday,, February 2 – Barrie (Holiday Inn)

DO YOU HAVE ANY DIETARY ISSUES?.....

**Please fax this form to the MWA office at 519-823-0084.**

(You can also register online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8MQ9K9B> )