

BACKGROUND: The Blue Box Program

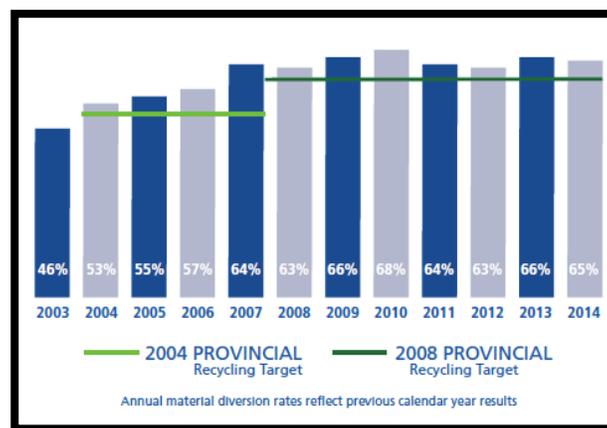
Launching the Blue Box in Ontario:

The Blue Box was the world's first curbside recycling program and made its official debut in Kitchener in 1981. Since then, Ontario's Blue Box has become a blueprint for recycling programs in more than 150 countries around the world.

The Blue Box Program launched in 2003 and is managed by [Stewardship Ontario](#), a not-for-profit, industry-funded organization. Stewardship Ontario (SO) operates the Blue Box and Orange Drop (otherwise known as the Municipal Household Hazardous or Special Waste Program) Programs under the authority of the [Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 \(RRCEA\)](#) and the [Waste Diversion Transition Act, 2016 \(WDTA\)](#), enacted by the [Waste-Free Ontario Act, 2016 \(WFOA\)](#). Stewardship Ontario receives no funding from government or taxpayers for the Blue Box Program. Instead, the program is uniquely designed where stewards and municipalities share financial responsibility for recycling collection.

Quick Facts:

- The Blue Box Program continues to exceed the Ontario mandated recycling rate of 60%, diverting over 850,000 tonnes of waste diverted from landfills in 2014.



- Expanding from the original five materials that were available for collection back in the 80's, the Blue Box now collects hundreds of products in more than a dozen material categories.
- 97% of Ontarians are aware of the Blue Box Program.
- The Blue Box Program provides service to over 13 million Ontarians and 97% of households.



- Municipalities and stewards share the costs of the program.



How we operate:

The management and funding of the Blue Box Program is shared between municipalities and stewards (first importers, brand owners or franchisors of the products and packaging materials that end up in curbside Blue Boxes). Since its start in 2003, steward contributions to the Blue Box Program have totalled close to one billion dollars. These fees help fund the costs of collecting, transporting, recycling and safely disposing of waste across the province.

Fees are set in a transparent, consistent fashion based on a fixed formula determined through discussions with Stewardship Ontario and Waste Diversion Ontario, which is accountable to the Ministry of Environment. These fees help fund the costs of collecting, transporting, recycling and safely disposing of waste across the province.

As the Blue Box Program continues to expand, the investment from industry stewards contributes to job creation, improved technology, expanded service and accessibility, and stronger markets for recycled materials.

More information:

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Thinking
beyond
the box

Stewardship Ontario