

For Immediate Release
June 9, 2006

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT FURTHER PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Industry To Develop And Fund Diversion Program for Household Hazardous and Special Wastes Such As Aerosols and Paints

TORONTO — Ontario households will soon have more effective ways to dispose of common hazardous and special wastes such as cleaning solvents and unused paint, Environment Minister Laurel Broten announced today.

“It is in everyone’s best interests to ensure that we are not sending harmful pollutants to landfills,” Broten said. “By working with municipalities and industry to increase the diversion of these materials, we are helping to protect the environment for future generations.

The ministry has issued a draft regulation that, once enacted, would require the producers of household hazardous and special wastes to develop and fund a diversion program for specific materials.

Materials that are corrosive, flammable, reactive or toxic are considered hazardous wastes and carry the hazardous symbol. Special wastes, while not necessarily harmful to users, can be detrimental to health and the environment if handled improperly. Special wastes could include materials such as paints, pressurized and aerosol containers, and used batteries.

While the program is being finalized, Ontarians should continue to take these hazardous products to local community “environment days” or collections depots where they can be safely disposed of. A listing of community environment days or collection points can be found on most municipal web sites.

Ontarians purchase about 46,000 tonnes of common household hazardous materials annually. Any unused product – like leftover paint, cleaning solvents and half empty aerosol cans – ends up as waste that needs to be managed in an environmentally smart and safe way.

“The Blue Box is an example of the strong partnerships our government has helped build between manufacturers and municipalities,” Broten said. “Just like the industry-funded Blue Box program, this initiative will reduce waste going to landfills and save municipalities money.”

Waste Diversion Ontario, the agency that will develop and administer the diversion program and funding, welcomed the news. Said Gemma Zecchini, chair of WDO's board of directors: "This is a very positive development, in our view. The staff and board of directors are extremely enthused about accepting this mandate from the Ministry of the Environment. We look forward to working with industry partners to develop a program that manages these wastes safely and effectively."

Eliminating household hazardous waste from landfills is one more way the McGuinty government is working for Ontario communities and protecting Ontarians' health and the environment. Other government actions include:

- Banning the land disposal of untreated hazardous wastes in Ontario.
- Cleaning up our gasoline by including five per cent ethanol in gasoline which will make Ontario gasoline some of the cleanest in North America.
- Worked to fight air pollution by closing the coal-fired Lakeview Generating Station.

The public is invited to comment on the draft regulation titled *Municipal Hazardous or Special Wastes*. It is available on the Environmental Registry on the ministry's website at <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/land/wda/mhsw.htm> or by calling 1-800-565-4923. The deadline for comments is July 10.

— 30 —

Contacts:
Anne O'Hagan
Minister's Office
(416) 325-5809

John Steele
Communications Branch
(416) 314-6666

Disponible en français

www.ene.gov.on.ca