

Great Moments in Trash

The following list represents some significant milestones in the history of waste management in Canada.

1994

In Ontario all municipalities with more than 5,000 people are required by law to provide recycling services. In British Columbia paint producers are required to take back old paint for recycling. Over the year, on average, Canadians sent 734 kilograms of waste per person to landfills and incinerators.

1996

Canada attains the goal of reducing packaging by 50 per cent, four years ahead of schedule. The reduction is in industrial, commercial, and institutional packaging. Packaging for consumers has increased over the time period.

1997

Producers of pesticides, paint thinner, pharmaceuticals, and fuels are required by law to take back leftover products and recycle them in British Columbia. The province also expands its deposit system to include bottled water, wine and liquor, and all beverages except milk and milk substitutes.

1998

The province of Nova Scotia bans landfilling or incineration of organics including yard waste, food waste, and paper. Within a year, it becomes the only province to achieve a waste diversion goal of 44 per cent compared to about 30 per cent or less in other provinces.

1999

Canadians discard over 37,000 tons of electronic products that contain close to 1,500 tons of lead, two tons of cadmium, and half a ton of mercury. The majority of this ewaste is sent overseas where it is salvaged in small Asian communities.

“Nova Scotia has the lowest per capita disposal rate in Canada”

2000

Canadians discard 23 million tons of waste, an increase of about 60 kilograms per capita from two years earlier. Nova Scotia has the lowest per capita disposal rate in Canada at 459 kilograms per person. Toronto signs a five-year contract to send all of its 1.5 million tons of waste to a site in Michigan as part of a strategy they have to reach a zero waste disposal goal in the city of Toronto.

2002

Each Canadian sends, on average, 760 kilograms of waste to landfills and incinerators. Alberta has the highest waste disposal rate at 928 kilograms per person.

2005

Electronic waste in Canada doubles in a six year period prompting several provinces to consider legislation.