

Moving Towards a New Partnership with Municipalities but not at Any Price!

For 80% of Quebecers, financing curbside recycling should remain a shared responsibility

Montréal, April 13, 2010 – As part of the Commission des transports et de l'environnement on the bill amending the Environment Quality Act and regulation on the compensation plan, Éco Entreprises Québec (ÉEQ) has agreed to develop a new partnership with municipalities, but would not do so at any price. The position taken by the organization is supported by a majority of Quebecers, who also believe that financing curbside recycling must remain a shared responsibility.

As Jacques Légaré, Chairman of ÉEQ's Board of Directors, explained, "companies are prepared to gradually increase compensation for the cost of efficient and effective collection, transportation, sorting and conditioning to 100%." He added, however, that "ÉEQ refuses to pay administration fees, management fees and the costs of raising awareness and recycling bins considering that municipalities must take on a minimum of financial responsibility in managing this municipal task over which they have been given authority."

Quebecers support ÉEQ's position

In a Léger Marketing poll of 1,000 Quebecers conducted on April 6 and 7, 2010, 72% of respondents believe that the financial split for curbside recycling between municipalities and industry is fair and 80% of them believe that the responsibility should remain shared.

The absence of measures in the Bill to ensure municipality accountability has generated a unanimous reaction from companies. "ÉEQ noted the willingness of Quebec's Minister of Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs to include such measures in Bill 88. The compensation plan requires a great deal from companies and we expect municipalities to be as thorough," said Maryse Vermette, President and Managing Director of the organization, reiterating ÉEQ's full cooperation in pursuing work on Bill 88.

Moreover, the government cannot expect companies to compensate unreported and undocumented costs of curbside recycling. For ÉEQ, it is clear that if data is not reported, there should be no compensation. To ensure that municipalities are accountable for their management, the type of services to be compensated must be known by companies and necessary indicators should be in place to enable analysis and validation of eligible costs.

In the same spirit, ÉEQ would like to see compensation to RECYC-QUÉBEC limited to 1% annually, since it has voluntarily invested nearly \$7 million over the past four years in studies and projects to support curbside recycling. The organization would, however, be prepared to compensate the public corporation for management costs if RECYC-QUÉBEC were designated as the most appropriate government authority to conduct informed audits of municipal reporting.

"Since the compensation plan came into force, including the soon-to-be-published 2008 Schedule of Contributions, companies and organizations have paid over \$140

million to Quebec municipalities," Mr. Légaré added.

In addition, ÉEQ believes that companies must not be required to compensate services that are taxed by municipalities. Siding with ÉEQ on the issue, 75% of people responding to the survey said they disagree with the idea that municipalities can continue to bill these services as part of municipal taxes if industry compensates all those costs.

About Éco Entreprises Québec

Éco Entreprises Québec is a non-profit organization certified by RECYC-QUÉBEC. ÉEQ's mission is to represent companies with regard to their responsibility to finance their share of the net costs of municipal curbside recycling, to establish reasonable fees to ensure program financing and, in partnership with other stakeholders, to promote efforts to increase the quantities of recovered materials through curbside recycling at the lowest possible cost.

To view ÉEQ's submission, click on the following link (PDF – 400 KB):
http://www.ecoentreprises.qc.ca/_site/documents/applications/pdf/memoire__eeq_p rojet_de_loi_88_vff_12_04_10.pdf (French version)

Source:

Maryse Vermette
President and Managing Director
Éco Entreprises Québec

For information:

Rosalie Bergeron
Advisor
HKDP Communications and Public Affairs
418-523-3352 ext. 243
Cell: 418 570-6775
E-mail: rbergeron@hkdp.qc.ca