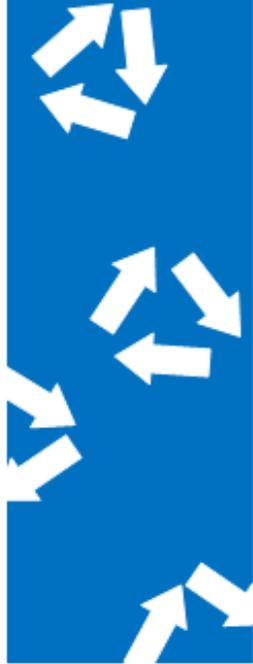


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RECYCLING
REPORT



Robert Motum
Waste Management Educator

*Strong should be proud of their efforts towards waste diversion.
I'm proud to have taken part.*

Abstract: This report is meant to summarize my work as the Recycling Promoter / Waste Management Educator with the Township of Strong from June 4 – August 28, 2012. From my experiences working on “the front lines” at the landfill, and through speaking with the public, I will make recommendations and advise on future steps.

Goals: I began this job with the intention of building on the work I had done with the Township last summer.

Office: I have spent approximately 15 days in the office, during my 13 weeks of employment with Strong. During this time I have:



♻️ **Created Promotional Material:** I updated the handouts that I created last summer and created two brand new flyers. These new flyers will be given out when residents receive their landfill card. The information includes common tipping/replacement fees, HAZ-MAT dates, tire and electronic waste recycling, and the 2011 recycling revenue. I handed out close to 300 flyers at events such as: the LBPOA meeting, the CLCA meeting, two farmer’s markets, the Sunflower festival, and a HAZMAT open house. The pamphlets have been well accepted.

♻️ **New Logbooks:** After reviewing the strategic plans for both Landfill 1 and 2, I created 2 logbooks in which Mike and Carl will record inspections for litter, odor, and vermin. These record books will be kept onsite at Landfill 1 and 2.

♻️ **Home Waste Audits:** I edited a home waste audit that I found on the Durham Region website. This audit tells homeowners where they can reduce their impact on the environment. I have handed this sheet out at both the Sunflower Festival and my HAZMAT day Open House.

♻️ **Marketing Handouts:** I looked around for small “giveaway” products that could be handed out at events. After discussing with Linda and council, I settled on a reusable shopping bag made from 25% recycled plastic. This was promptly ordered with our “Blue Box Billy” superhero logo. These bags were a HUGE hit at the Sunflower Festival. We we’re the “cool” booth because we had the only free product.

♻️ **Signage:** I reviewed the current signage at the recycling center, and created a proposal on how this could be updated and made more effective/user friendly.

*“I wish Machar had something like this [handout]”
-Machar Resident*



Events: Much of my time has been spent talking to the public, and handing out information at several events:

♻️ **Farmer’s Markets:** I set up shop at 2 Sundridge Farmer’s Markets. These days were very successful and there was interest in Strong’s initiatives. I gave out flyers, and played the Dimestore Fisherman DVD on my laptop.

- ♻️ **Lake Bernard:** Although I did not attend the Lake Bernard Property Owner’s Association meeting, I sent several personalized flyers. I emailed the president saying that I would gladly respond to questions through email.
- ♻️ **Cheer Lake:** I spoke at the Cheer Lake Cottager’s Association meeting about the importance of recycling, Strong’s current initiatives, and answered questions. I also handed out flyers and bags after the meeting. Cheer Lake straddles the border of Magnetewan and Strong – although I could not speak directly to Magnetewan’s waste initiatives, I emphasized the importance of diverting waste from our area’s landfills.
- ♻️ **Sunflower Festival:** I attended this year’s Sunflower Festival, where I handed out bags, flyers, audits, and colouring pages. I went through 100 bags, 50 colouring pages, and 100 flyers in 2 hours. I had the opportunity to speak with residents of Strong, Sundridge, Machar, Magnetewan, Jolly, and South River, and Burk’s Falls (probably more).
- ♻️ **Open House [upcoming]:** I have decided to create a new event – a Recycling Open House. We (Strong) have such an amazing recycling facility and we need to show it off! Because Landfill 1 receives a high amount of traffic on HAZ-MAT day, I will set up an information booth, next to the recycling center, on HAZMAT day. I will have flyers, audits, and bags. This would be a perfect time for people to ask questions about the operation of our center.

Landfill: Most of my time employed by Strong has been spent at Landfill 1. Every day I speak directly with the public. This role, on the “front lines”, is important to gauge the effectiveness of recycling promotion. I hear the comments, complaints, and praises; and I see the common mistakes people make while sorting their recyclables. This information helps Strong make our facilities more “user friendly”, and improve upon our amazing facilities.

I have noticed an increase in recycling participation. I see new faces at the recycling center every week. More people are recycling, and doing a better job of recycling. The staff have spent less time sorting materials (that have been placed in the wrong pile) this summer, than last. I feel that my work this summer has built upon last year. We haven’t gone back to square one.

Re-use Center: I agree with council’s judgment on this idea. Although in premise, a re-use center seems like a great way of diverting items from the landfill, Strong should not implement such an idea – at least until they are sure that the center would be used properly, and would not create additional work or headaches for the staff.

People who use our recycling center often marvel at the scale of our operation, the cleanliness of the facilities, and the amount of waste we are diverting from our landfill.



I feel that my work this summer has built upon last year. We haven't gone back to square one.

Work with Brian: This year I had the unique opportunity to work alongside Brian Hachkowski. We spent a morning surveying Landfill 2, where we walked around the site, and examined some leachate. In the afternoon, Brian and I took water level readings from the wells around Landfill 1. This was a great learning experience, and offered a change in my daily schedule. When Brian returned in August, we spent part of the day staking out a piece of landfill 1.

Suggestions / Points to Consider:

Signage: Although Strong has upgraded recycling center signage over the past year, some signs are still out of date. I would recommend that new signs include more information, such as a sign:

- ♻ Explaining the difference between corrugated cardboard and “cereal boxes”/ box board. This is a common (and understandable) mistake, but it becomes a waste of time to re-sort.
- ♻ Explaining that we do not accept: Styrofoam (commonly put in plastics) and Aerosol cans.
- ♻ Explaining that scrap metal is not to be put in with the metal cans (common offense)

I have put together, and given Linda a signage proposal. Easier recycling reduces stress, and ultimately saves time.

7 Days a Week: In the past I have questioned Landfill 1's hours. They're amazing, but perhaps, not necessary. I would suggest that Strong re-examine the need to be open 7 days a week. Of course, this should involve communication between the employees, council, and the public before any operational changes. I would suggest closing the landfill once a week to the public; but letting the staff work. This would allow the staff time to “catch up” on the endless waste materials. There are dozens of items to consider before going ahead with such a proposal.

From here: Strong has an amazing facility. People who use our recycling center marvel at the scale of our operation, the cleanliness of the facilities, and the amount of waste we are diverting from our landfill. It is important that everyone can see the waste being diverted. It's one thing to say, “we diverted over 154 tones of recycled wasted in 2011”, it's another to see the dozens of stacked bails, and piles of recyclable materials. It's a great system – it works.

Strong should be proud of their efforts towards waste diversion. I'm proud to have taken part.