

# Waste Management

Some businesses (including farms) are responsible for end-of-life management of primary packaging and packaging-like materials they bring into Ontario.

Ontario has adopted a [Individual Producer Responsibility](#) (IPR) waste management framework, to replace municipal waste management, whereby industrial waste material stewards reported the materials they brought into Ontario, and paid fees to help cover end of life material management. Stewardship programs determined funding entitlements each municipality or First Nations community received for their waste management programs.

Regulations under Ontario’s [Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act](#) designate materials for IPR framework; Blue Box, Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE), Batteries, Tires, and Hazardous & Special Products (HSP). The Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRA) enforces Ontario’s Circular Economy laws.

Obligated parties are directly accountable for their product and packaging materials at consumer disposal. They may enlist the services of Producer Responsibility Organizations to carry out the actual processes to manage waste materials and help producers meet their regulatory obligations.

## Blue Box Exemptions for Business Size and Amount of Material

Not all businesses that bring primary packaging and packaging-like materials into Ontario are obligated parties under IPR. There are exemptions based on revenue and quantity of material.

Producers with gross annual Ontario revenue from products and services less than \$2,000,000 are exempt from all IPR requirements, but they must maintain their revenue records for five years. Producers are exempt from minimum management requirements for a blue box material category based on their supply in that category:

Material	Exempt Level	Material	Exempt Level
Paper	9,000 kg	Glass	1,000 kg
Rigid Plastic	2,000 kg	Metal	1,000 kg
Flexible Plastic	1,000 kg	Beverage Containers	1,000 kg

There are two combinations of revenue and material weights that impact exemptions:

1. If annual revenue is more than \$2 million, and supply weight in all material categories is less than the tonnage exemption threshold, producers are required to register and only to report.
2. If annual revenue is more than \$2 million, and supply weight in at least one material category is above the tonnage exemption threshold, producers are required to meet all obligations (registration, reporting, collection, management, and promotion and education). However, producers are only required to meet their minimum management requirement in material categories where they are above the exemption level.

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## Materials Regulated Under IPR Framework

1. Since July 1, 2020, the [Batteries Regulation](#) designates single-use batteries and rechargeable batteries weighing 5 kg or less, sold separately, as IPR materials.
2. Since January 2021, the [EEE Regulation](#) designates IT, telecom, audio-visual and lighting equipment as IPR materials (lighting came under IPR on January 1, 2023).
3. The [HSP Regulation](#) designates automotive materials (oil filters, oil containers and antifreeze), solvents, paints, pesticides, fertilizers, mercury-containing devices and pressurized containers (non-refillable and refillable, and refillable propane containers), under IPR as of October 1, 2021.
4. The [Tires Regulation](#) designates used light truck, medium truck, and off-the-road tires under IPR as of January 1, 2019, replacing the Ontario Tire Stewardship Used Tires Program.
5. The [Blue Box Regulation](#) designates products and packaging at end of life and disposal. By December 31, 2025, producers become fully responsible for collecting and recycling their consumer-discarded materials. During the transition, Stewardship Ontario will continue program administration.

The types of blue box materials producers are responsible for include glass, flexible or rigid plastic, metal, and paper, used as packaging, packaging-like products, or paper products. Producers report compostable materials, but there are no collection or recovery requirements.

**Packaging includes:** Primary (point-of-sale containment, protection, handling such as a fruit basket); Transportation (such as a pallet, but not a shipping container); Convenience (end user handling such as check out bags); Service Accessories (single-use products for food or beverage consumption such as a straw, cutlery, or a plate); and Ancillary Elements (such as a mascara brush forming a container closure, or dosage cup that forms part of a container cap).

**Packaging-like products include:** single-use materials for containment, protection, handling, delivery, presentation or transportation of things (such as aluminum foil, metal tray, plastic film, beverage cup, plastic bag, or cardboard box), but not a product made from flexible plastic used for the containment, protection, or handling of food (such as a sandwich or freezer bag).

**Paper products include:** paper, newspaper, magazines, greeting cards, notebooks, catalogues but not soft or hard cover books and periodicals.

There are two regulations for the Hazardous Waste and Excess Soil Registries

1. In 2022, RPRA implemented the Hazardous Waste Program (HWP) registry. The EPA [General Waste Management Regulation](#) requires obligated parties to report information through a digital reporting system. The Circular Economy Act [Subject Waste Program Regulation](#) maintains fee exemptions for certain hazardous waste management activities in the new Registry.
2. The [On-Site and Excess Soil Management Regulation](#) details rules related to the reuse of Excess Soil in Ontario and the Excess Soil Registry. MECP is responsible for policy and programs related to Excess Soil and regulatory compliance and enforcement activities.

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