

Manitoba Association of Cottage Owners



Issues / Opportunities Advisory



Prepared: June 2012

Issue: Environmental responsibilities at the Cottage and Home

Background to the Issue:

- The Environment needs our active help.
- We should not rely on Government to solve the issues confronting us today. We must all do our part in as many areas of participation as possible.
- As human population and income increases, society is beginning to realise that the present and projected rates of resource consumption in the world are not sustainable.
- Many natural resources such as oil, mining minerals are non-renewable and should be used with care towards maximizing their need and extending their use as much as possible.
- While water contamination is associated with poor environmental practices; water by itself cannot be destroyed but it is subject to the effects of unsustainable practices as we note from the effects of algae on Lake Winnipeg.
- We must be more aware of global issues in the production of all materials and their potential environmental impact.

Cautionary Notes:

- Any type of Goods manufactured in countries which do not use environmentally sound practices in production should be avoided by purchasers.
- The cheapest choice is not always the best way to go when considering the more important environmental implications.
- Many companies are joining the environmental initiative as means of selling more products. Words like eco friendly, sustainable, wild and phosphate free are very misleading.

Budget Implications:

- Always consider the eco logo on the product first and ensure that it is the recognized federal government registered label. Read labels carefully and do not get sucked in by advertising and labelling. Check the web for Ecologic Program Canada for the easily recognised symbol on products. Click the logo on the right to go to this site.
- Use as much of any product as you can before considering it waste. Recycle all packaging material as much as possible.



Policy or Program Implications: What is current Policy or Program for this issue?

- Cottage/ Home Owners are encouraged to utilize all those programs in place to ensure that they are complying with the 3Rs. This includes Transfer stations and depots in provincial parks and RM's.
- Increasingly municipalities are becoming involved in electronic waste collection and recycling. Home and cottage owners should find out what their municipality is doing.
- **Considerable information is available on the [Green Manitoba Website](#) and it should be the starting point for more information.**

Action Taken by MACO:

- MACO will provide basic education to address environmental issues.

MACO's Recommendations for the Future:

- Follow the 3Rs of environmental stewardship; Reduce, Reuse and recycle.
- We need to conserve in every aspect of resources, whether that be natural or man-made materials.
- Paper usage should be controlled as much as possible. While trees are a renewable resource, it takes time to replace them. Trees also perform as a carbon sink and should be preserved for that purpose alone.
- We need to avoid purchasing goods from those countries that do not have sound and safe environmental practices in their methods.
- No hazardous waste should be disposed at regular pick up garbage sites as they will enter the ground waters, rivers and lakes through the water table system.
- Materials using natural resources should be examined for their method of production to ensure that within this process no waste is tolerated or poor disposal actions used which may harm and / or contaminate the environment.
- Man-made products using modern production methods and chemicals to produce materials should be labeled as to their generic composition, so that it is easily readable by consumers when making their choices. Look for more natural and renewable products first.

Position of MACO

- MACO believes that environmental protection is everyone's responsibility.
- MACO believes that if cottager's wish to have a pristine environment at the cottage they must practice good environmental stewardship in all their activities.