



2020 Report—Volume 2: Provincial Auditor Reports Need to Assess if Recycling Successfully Diverts Enough Waste

REGINA, SK., December 8, 2020: In her *2020 Report – Volume 2*, Chapter 20, Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson reports the Ministry of Environment’s eight waste-diversion recycling programs each need material-specific, incremental targets to help the Ministry determine whether the program successfully diverts sufficient waste from Saskatchewan’s 203 landfills.

Other recycling programs routinely use material-specific targets, such as BC Recycle’s target to recycle 90 percent of household paper by 2020.

Waste not diverted from a landfill potentially leads to greater risk of water pollution, soil contamination, greenhouse gas emissions, and human health impacts. Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson said, “Without program targets, the Ministry of Environment does not know whether its waste diversion recycling programs help achieve the provincial waste reduction goal—to reduce the amount of waste generated per person from the 2014 baseline by 30 percent by 2030, and by 50 percent by 2040.”

The audit found while the Ministry regularly receives information from operators of each of the regulated recycling programs, it does not use the information. For example, it does not consider trends in key information such as program costs, and rates of waste collected or diverted.

The audit also found, to help ensure it receives consistent and comparable data, the Ministry needs to:

- Define, in writing, the meaning of key terms (like collection and diversion rates) and how to calculate them
- Require program operators to provide detail on how information reported was measured

Ferguson said, “Periodically reporting to management using defined and consistent measures, and improved comparative analysis will help the Ministry of Environment evaluate the success of its recycling programs, and make decisions about future programs.”

Recycling helps repurpose materials that would otherwise end up in the landfill and is an important part of environmental sustainability and stewardship. “Diverting waste from landfills helps reduce associated greenhouse gases emissions, thereby helping Canada meet its greenhouse gas emission goal,” Ferguson said.

Saskatchewan produces the second highest amount of waste per capita, has the highest number of landfills and the lowest waste diversion rates in Canada.

In December 2015, Canada agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent below 2005 levels by the year 2030.

The full Provincial Auditor’s *2020 Report – Volume 2* is available online at www.auditor.sk.ca.

The Provincial Auditor is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. The Office promotes accountability and better management by providing Legislators and the public with an independent assessment of the government’s use of public resources.



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Additional issues highlighted in the Provincial Auditor's *2020 Report – Volume 2* include:

- Chapter 21: Saskatchewan Cancer Agency—Delivering the Screening Program for Colorectal Cancer
- Chapter 3: eHealth—Stronger IT Processes Needed to Reduce Health Sector Disruptions
- Chapter 11: Provincial Capital Commission—Makes Some Progress on Recommendations Related to Major Developments in Wascana Centre
- Chapter 19: Agriculture—Mitigating the Impact of Regulated Pests in Crops and Pastures
- Chapter 32: Health—Preventing Diabetes-Related Health Complications
- Others from 41 additional chapters

See accompanying news releases and backgrounder for further details about key topics.