



February 2016

Glass Recycling and You: What Happens In the Yukon

So, glass. We've been using it for a long time, after all it is a very useful material and it comes from sand which is easy to find. Glass isn't perfect though, we've all had a careless moment and ended up having to pick up sharp shards of the stuff while trying not to get hurt. It's heavy as well, you don't need a whole lot of glass to reach a truck's weight limit. Places that are close to the glass recycling markets find it easier to transport all their glass. Places that are far away such as the Yukon have a harder time doing so. It would require about a truck a day to carry all the glass that Yukoners want to recycle. That's a lot of cost right there, even before we start considering how to keep it from breaking, separating it into the multitude of types and colours, or sweet-talking people into accepting a truckload of shards. Glass in blue boxes is also a safety issue due to the possibility of breakage when the recycling is put into a truck. Lastly, and often not thought of, is the hardship glass puts on machinery. Glass is extremely abrasive and will break down machinery faster than any other product. In fact, almost all blue box collection services in Canada choose to either collect glass separately or not at all due to the expense of maintaining and repairing machinery used in glass recycling.

Yes, some glass is shipped out for reuse. Breweries that use industry standard beer bottles, such as our own Yukon Brewing, can wash and reuse bottles many times before they have to be disposed of. Some other bottles can be reused, as they are all the same size they can be put onto pallets for shipping. Packaging wine bottles, small liquor bottles, pickle jars and baby-food jars is difficult because of the varying shapes and sizes. This adds another complication to the shipping problem.

Most of the glass received at Raven is crushed and then used for other purposes. Why crush it? There are a couple of reasons, one is that it prevents people from getting hold of glass refundables and claiming a second refund. Another is that crushed glass takes up much less space than bottles and jars, wherever they are. The crushed glass has more uses as well. Glass sand can be used to sand roads and walkways, it can be used as cover at the landfill to weigh down the garbage and be used in place of gravel for decorative effects in landscaping. Some artists also make use of coloured crushed glass. It is not practical to stockpile the glass so it gets reused rather than recycled.

So what can we do in the Yukon to help with this problem? Making good choices when we shop is one way to help. Aluminium is the best choice for containers as it is easily recyclable, plastic is actually a great second choice as we can send it out to be recycled. Glass comes in as the third choice. Tetrapaks are also accepted for recycling, if that's what you have to buy but are further down the list due to their extreme difficulty to recycle. As always when shopping, the best option is the one with the least packaging. Cleaning and reusing bottles and jars is another way to help, Raven also stores some wine bottles for reuse which we sell. As far as Yukon glass is concerned, reusing locally is our best form of recycling it.

Dump The Dumpster All About Zero Waste

By Ben Derochie

Have you heard about the “Working Towards Zero Waste in the North” conference? It's happening in Whitehorse from 3rd to 5th March at Yukon College. The conference website is up, registration is open and the schedule is nearly final. Invites are going out and we expect over 50 delegates from the Yukon, the NWT, Alaska, northern BC and northern Alberta to be converging on Whitehorse for this exciting meeting.

Several notable guests from across the country will be speaking at the conference, including:

- **Jen Rustemeyer & Grant Baldwin** – *Filmmakers of 'Just Eat It' & 'The Clean*

Bin Project'

- **Christina Seidel** – *Executive Director of Recycling Council of Alberta*
- **Lawrence Alvarez** – *Founder of Toronto Tool Library & President of Institute For A Resource Based Economy*
- **Ruben Anderson** – *Board Chair of City Green & Behavioural Change & Sustainable System Design Consultant*
- **Enzo Favoino** - *Scientific Coordinator of Zero Waste Europe and Member of the Board of ZWIA; he chairs the Scientific Committee of Zero Waste Italy.*

We're planning sessions that will interest the business community, students, researchers and the public – there will be something for everyone, including a trade show. We are also working with our sponsors to ensure that we can support participation from people outside of Whitehorse and the territory. Raven Recycling is pleased to be one of the sponsors along with Yukon College, the City of Whitehorse and YTG. There is still room if you're interested in becoming a sponsor.

This is an exciting event as it's the first Zero Waste conference north of 60 and it's a big step towards a Zero Waste Yukon. If you're interested in taking part in the conference then you can register at www.zerowasteconference.com Come along and be part of something special.

If you want more information then go to the website or call me at 667-7269 ext 27.

Ravings of a Computer Geek:

The 01100011 01100110
01110011 01111001 Column
By Ean McDonald



Pictured left to Right are TWEPS Paul Banks, Josh Durand, and Nick Skookum (not pictured: Jin Lee)

Each year, CFSY provides paid work experience opportunities to high school graduates ages 18-30, seeking a career in the IT field through the Technical Work Experience Program, an initiative of the Computers for Schools program. TWEPS Hardware Technicians refurbish computers for distribution to schools and other learning organizations in the Yukon. Working with CFSY exposes technical interns to many makes and models of computer equipment. This allows youth to hone their hardware expertise and develop critical team-building, communication, and mentorship skills.



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