



Saskatchewan's Solid Waste Management Strategy

2023-24 Annual Report

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Minister's Message

I am pleased to share the 2023-24 Annual Progress Report for Saskatchewan's Solid Waste Management Strategy. Since its launch in January 2020, we have made significant progress. Notably, we introduced new paper and packaging regulations in March 2023. The new regulations shift us from a shared responsibility recycling program to one fully funded by producers and operated by Multi-Material Stewardship Western Inc. This move reduces burdens on municipalities and ensures a consistent list of accepted materials across the province.

In March 2023, a new environmental code chapter for transfer stations also came into force, and work is underway on a new code chapter for compost facilities. Ministry officials are also modernizing regulations for waste management facilities, enhancing efficiency and environmental stewardship throughout their lifecycles. Also, we continue to implement single-stream recycling and compost programs in government-owned buildings, promoting responsible waste management.

As Saskatchewan's population grows toward 1.4 million people by 2030, waste generation also increases. The strategy serves as a roadmap to address ongoing waste management challenges and identify economic opportunities. Taking strides to ensure effective waste management is essential to responsible growth.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine Tell'.

Christine Tell
Minister of Environment



Saskatchewan's Solid Waste Management Strategy was released on January 23, 2020.

Overview

Vision

Working together to create a practical, sustainable, integrated solid waste management system that protects the environment and promotes economic development and innovation opportunities.

Target

Reduce the amount of waste generated per person by 30 per cent by 2030 and 50 per cent by 2040, based on 2014 baseline levels.

Most waste generated in the province ends up in Saskatchewan's landfills.

Recycling and composting help extend landfill life, prevent water and soil contamination, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the health of our communities. Saskatchewan has several stewardship programs for waste diversion. A list can be found at saskatchewan.ca/recycling.

Goals

The strategy focuses on six goals to achieve Saskatchewan's vision for waste management:

1. **Enhance education, awareness and technical understanding** of waste management best practices and the risks of improper practices across Saskatchewan.
2. **Encourage regional collaboration** to enhance the cost effectiveness of waste management infrastructure.
3. **Provide a modern, efficient and effective regulatory system** for waste disposal and management.
4. **Enhance waste diversion** across Saskatchewan.
5. **Foster innovation and sustainable solutions** to manage waste.
6. **Demonstrate government leadership** in waste management.

Progress in 2023-24

Goal 1: Enhance education, awareness and technical understanding of waste management best practices and the risks of improper practices across Saskatchewan.

Key Actions

The Ministry of Environment developed a comprehensive, multi-year communications strategy and education campaign to raise awareness about waste reduction and best practices in waste management. In the second year, the campaign continued to engage the public through online advertisements, social media campaigns, media events and news releases, including tips for a low-waste holiday season. Additionally, the ministry began collaborating with Recycle Saskatchewan to create a resource toolkit for municipalities, helping them understand waste management costs and the advantages of stewardship programs.

Next Steps

The Government of Saskatchewan remains committed to partnering with Indigenous communities to increase education and awareness of waste diversion programs across the province. This collaboration aims to share best practices in waste management and demonstrate the benefits of regional partnerships. Additionally, the ministry is working on a youth education campaign, including a waste management toolkit for educators. This resource will coach young people on waste management practices and empower them to be leaders in their schools and homes.

Goal 2: Encourage regional collaboration to enhance the cost effectiveness of waste management infrastructure.

Key Actions

The federal government's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program allocated all \$50.3 million in available funding to 73 Saskatchewan projects. These projects primarily focus on landfill decommissioning and have received federal approval or conditional approval for funding.

Next Steps

The Ministry of Government Relations continues to work with Indigenous Services Canada to develop integrated, regional waste management services for Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities across Saskatchewan through the *First Nations Waste Management Initiative*. A regional landfills project in northwest Saskatchewan will see the construction of two regional landfills in 2025. Planning is also underway for a regional landfill in northeast Saskatchewan.

Goal 3: Provide a modern, efficient and effective regulatory system for waste disposal and management.

Key Actions

Saskatchewan is updating its solid waste management regulations. The Ministry of Environment recently concluded consultations on a new environmental code chapter for compost facilities. This chapter will provide a made-in-Saskatchewan, results-based, flexible approach for the siting, design, construction, operation, monitoring and closure of compost facilities.

Next Steps

The ministry has started developing new waste management facility regulations and standards. These rules will replace *The Municipal Refuse Management Regulations* and cover everything from construction to operation and closure.

Did you know?

All municipal landfills follow *The Municipal Refuse Management Regulations*. Private and industrial landfills operate under *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2010*.

The Saskatchewan Environmental Code Chapters for waste management, such as the Transfer Station Code Chapter, are adopted pursuant to *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2010*.

Goal 4: Enhance waste diversion across Saskatchewan.

Key Actions

As part of the strategy, the ministry is reviewing all stewardship programs for effectiveness and efficiency, while exploring the possibility of new stewardship programs. They reviewed the Multi-Material Recycling Program and recommended amendments to the governing regulations. *The Household Packaging and Paper Stewardship Program Regulations* are now in effect, as of March 31, 2023. Multi-Material Stewardship Western will introduce a new program in December 2024.

Did you know?

In most of Saskatchewan's stewardship programs, producers are responsible for properly managing products at the end of their useful life. This approach is called **extended producer responsibility**.

Next Steps

The ministry will review *The Household Hazardous Waste Product Stewardship Regulations* to ensure they remain current and to assess if additional products should be included in the program.

Goal 5: Foster innovative and sustainable solutions to manage waste.

Key Actions

The Ministry of Agriculture supports research and development related to agricultural bio-related projects through the Agricultural Development Fund. These initiatives create growth opportunities, enhance competitiveness, and divert waste that would otherwise end up in landfills. In 2023-24, the fund paid for 10 new value-added projects aligned with these goals, including:

- Sustainable agricultural waste management through the development of fire-resistant ducts using natural fibers;
- Exploring agricultural plastic waste conversion for sustainable circular economies; and
- Development of reusable clamshell food containers using hemp fiber reinforced bioplastic-composite.

In 2023, Candle Lake Provincial Park hosted a pilot project by BrewNature. Their innovative composting vessel processes organic waste 95 per cent faster than traditional methods. The park addressed fish waste that would typically be disposed of locally by allowing BrewNature to continue testing their innovative composting technology.

Next Steps

The Ministry of Environment remains committed to fostering innovation in waste management and actively seeks opportunities to promote and encourage new technologies that enhance responsible waste diversion.

Goal 6: Demonstrate government leadership in waste management.

Key Actions

The Ministry of Government Relations provides funding programs for projects for landfill decommissioning, transfer station development and new or expanded landfills. These programs are available to municipalities through the Canada Community-Building Fund and the Northern Capital Grants for northern communities. Over the past 10 years (2014-2024), 75 projects were approved for funding.

Additionally, the Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement conducts waste audits at major government facilities to enhance waste diversion. In 2023-24, audits were performed at 16 facilities, and the ministry continues to expand single-stream recycling and composting programs across government facilities.

Next Steps

The Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement will continue implementing single-stream recycling programs in 80 of the largest government-owned buildings in Saskatchewan.



Monitoring and Reporting

Performance measures are used to monitor progress on commitments in the Solid Waste Management Strategy.

Amount of waste generated in kilograms per capita

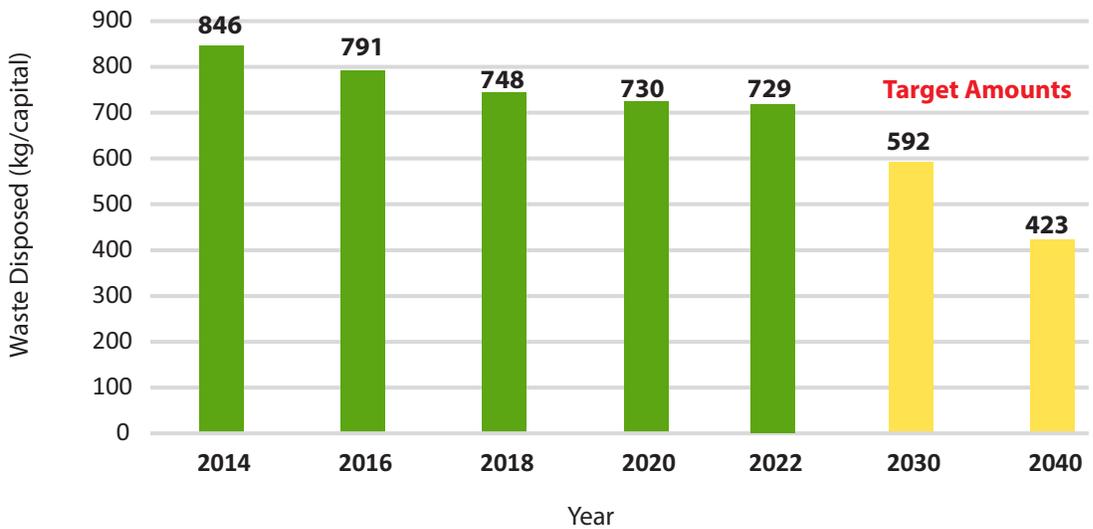
Target

Reduce the amount of waste generated per person by 30 per cent by 2030 and 50 per cent by 2040, based on 2014 baseline levels.

Waste generated refers to the amount of waste going to landfills. Since 2014, waste generated in Saskatchewan has steadily decreased. In 2022, the waste generated was approximately 729 kilograms per capita. This indicates a decrease of 14.9 per cent from 2014.

Why does this measure matter?
Reducing the amount of waste going to landfills increases their longevity and reduces negative impacts on the environment.

Amount of Waste Disposed(kg/capita)



The ministry reports the most up to date data available. As such, values for waste disposed have been updated. This is to reflect recent value adjustments to population estimates by Statistics Canada.

Percentage of population served by a regional landfill model

As of 2023, at least 13.2 per cent of Saskatchewan's population is served by a regional landfill. This data is from the Association of Regional Waste Management Authorities of Saskatchewan, which represents most regional landfill authorities in the province. The ministry continues to collect information on regional landfills for reporting purposes.

Why does this measure matter?

Regional landfills can allow rural communities to share the costs, risks and liabilities associated with landfills.

Number of landfills closed and decommissioned

Proper landfill construction is crucial for environmental protection. The number of operational landfills in the province has decreased significantly over time. In 2015, there were approximately 500 municipal landfills. By 2024, this number has dropped to 111 – a substantial 78 per cent reduction.

Factors contributing to this decline include landfill closures, decommissioning efforts and the establishment of more regional landfills.

Why does this measure matter?

Managing environmentally compliant landfills is an investment. Reducing the number of operating landfills in the province enables the development of regional landfills and cost-sharing.

Operating Municipal Landfills

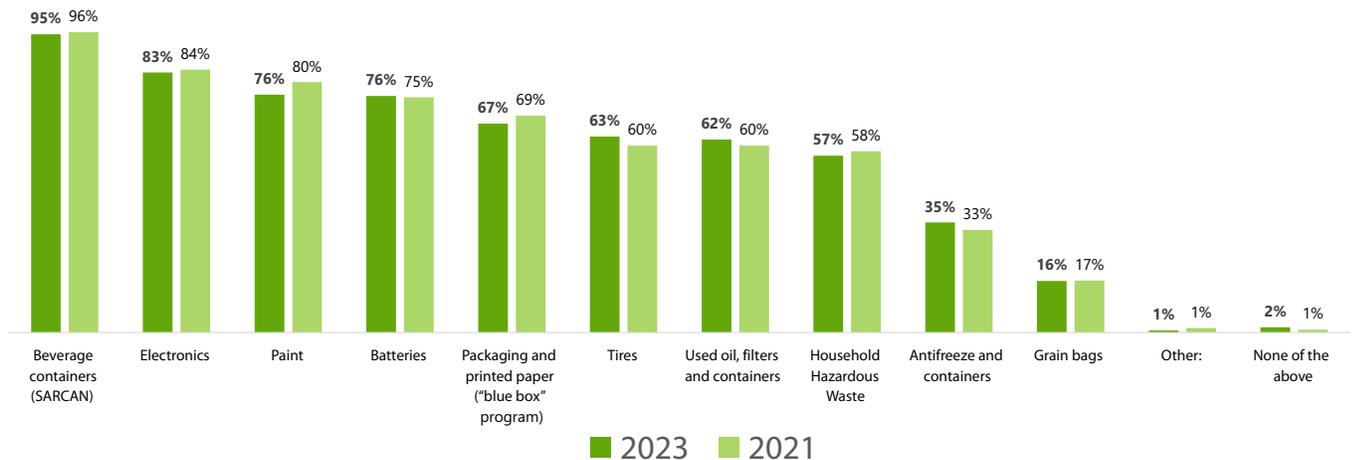


Percentage of population aware of provincial waste reduction and recycling programs

In Saskatchewan, recycling efforts are increasing. According to the 2023 public awareness survey, 90 per cent of respondents actively recycle waste. Satisfaction with recycling programs increased from 82 per cent in 2021 to 84 per cent in 2023. Residents are aware of waste reduction programs, including beverage containers, electronics, paint, batteries and packaging and printed paper, tires and used oil.

Why does this measure matter?

The success of provincial waste reduction and recycling programs increases as more people become aware of their waste reduction and recycling options.



New investment to reduce, manage and divert solid waste from landfills

Effective solid waste management requires investing in suitable infrastructure, including engineered landfills, recycling or eco depots, transfer stations and composting facilities.

According to Statistics Canada's latest data, 1,678 people were employed in the province's waste management sector in 2018. Fluctuations in employment within this sector can indicate changes in investment trends within the industry.

Why does this measure matter?

Tracking investment in waste management systems may indicate improvements in diversion technology.

Number of landfill operators with landfill operator certification

The strategy aims to have all landfill operators certified by 2025. A landfill operator certification program will be established as part of the new waste management facility regulations. These regulations will specify the certification timeline. Once the program is operational, progress reporting will begin.

Why does this measure matter?

Certifying landfill operators improves health and safety at waste management facilities.

Percentage of population with access to recycling programs

The ministry receives data on residential access to recycling programs from various stewardship program operators. Ministry officials are working on a project to map the accessibility of recycling programs across the province.

Why does this measure matter?

By understanding the reach of recycling programs across the province, government can focus on increasing access to recycling programs in areas with limited access, including rural and remote northern areas.

More Info?

More information about the Solid Waste Management Strategy is available at saskatchewan.ca/recycling.