

# WINTER 2022 WASTE DIVERSION UPDATE



REGIONAL  
DISTRICT  
NORTH  
OKANAGAN

*One Region, One Future*

## FEATURED IN THIS EDITION:

Waste Composition  
Study at  
Greater Vernon DDF

ReTHINK Waste Grant  
Projects

Commercial Food  
Waste Prevention  
Guides

## WASTE COMPOSITION STUDY AT GREATER VERNON DIVERSION & DISPOSAL FACILITY

### CATEGORIZING WHAT IS IN OUR WASTE

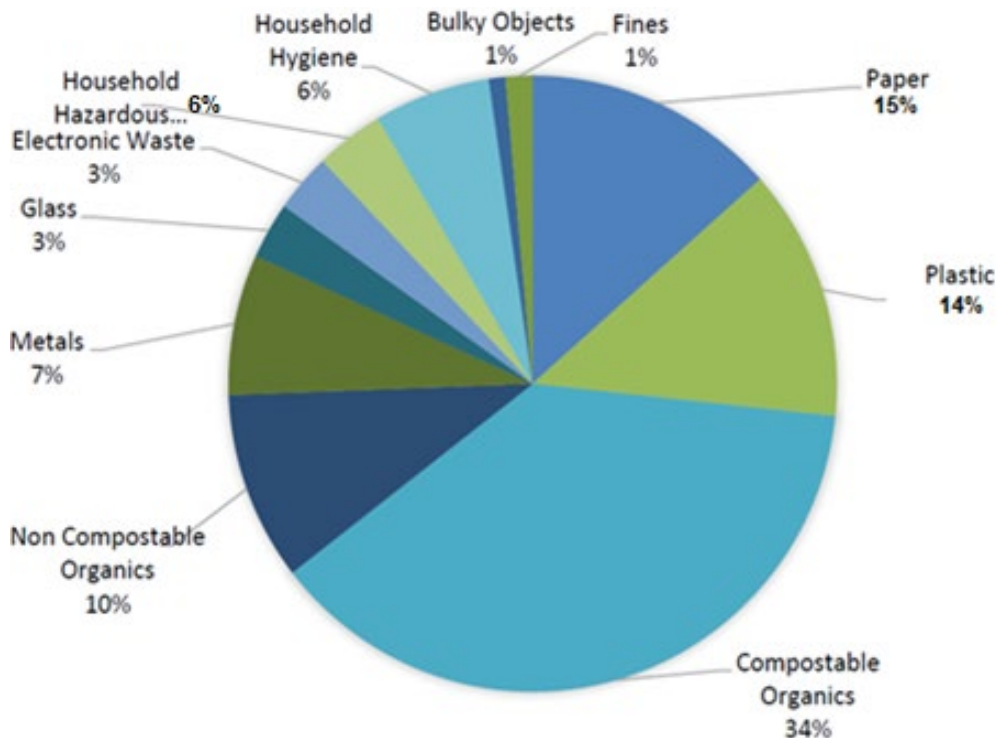


**Samples that were sorted in Greater Vernon DDF's Waste Characterization Study.**

This last October was the first of two sampling sessions to characterize the composition of waste dropped off at Greater Vernon Diversion & Disposal Facility (GVDDF). GVDDF has the largest landfill in the North Okanagan region accepting almost 70% of the regions municipal solid waste. The extensive study being done by Tetra Tech takes samples from various waste source categories including: single-family residential, industrial/commercial/institutional, self-haul and construction/renovation/demolition sources dropped off at GVDDF.

In this study, waste is sorted from the targeted sources (i.e. single-family residential or industrial/commercial/institutional) and then classified and weighed into 12 primary categories which are broken down further into 121 subcategories. This helps provide information on what types of wastes are coming from various sources. It also provides an overall perspective for various waste categories such as paper, plastics, metal, glass electronics and building materials.

**Primary Waste Categories and Composition from the 2012 Waste Composition Study  
(Results for the current study to be released in summer 2022.)**



Meanwhile the more detailed 121 categories provide data on various specific materials such as quantities of drink cups, batteries, lightbulbs, lumber, carpet or yard waste that are ending up in waste. This data is valuable in evaluating how current programs are working such as the Free Yard & Garden Waste Drop off and provincial Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs for items such as beverage containers, batteries and electronics. It also assists in determining priorities for future solid waste management planning and programming.

A primary concern in the region's solid waste management planning is the significant amount of compostable organics being landfilled. The previous waste characterization study completed in 2012 found that over 1/3 of waste was compostable organics which consists of food and yard and garden waste. So far, preliminary findings from the first study session are that compostable organics remain to be a very significant component of the region's waste. Breaking compostable organics down into sources and sub categories including "food waste that is avoidable" (food discarded that could have been eaten (such as plate scrapings and whole fruits and vegetables) and "food waste that is unavoidable" (such as peelings, coffee grounds and egg shells) can help identify the potential need for initiatives that encourage food waste prevention or food recovery efforts in addition to composting initiatives.

The second sampling session for this Waste Characterization is planned for April/May 2022. Findings from the two study sessions will then be compiled into a report that is expected for release in June/July 2022. We are looking forward to sharing the results in a future newsletter.

## RETHINK WASTE PROJECT GRANT

### 2022 GRANT AWARDS AND 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Each year the RDNO budgets \$50,000 in its ReTHINK Waste Project Grant Program to support innovative projects that reduce waste in our region. Congratulations to the two projects that were approved to be awarded funding for the 2022 program.

Brain Garden's Pocket Ashtray and Tobacco Waste Product Recycling Initiative works to inform about and reduce harmful litter and waste resulting from cigarette butts. Cigarette butts are the most littered item on the planet and are the most frequently found item in shoreline cleanups. Also, carelessly discarded cigarettes can cause wildfires. A major component of the project involves a plan to distribute pocket ashtrays which provide a safe and portable way to extinguish and store cigarettes and trap odour inside an air tight pouch. Pocket ashtrays are reusable and made of recycled materials. Collected cigarettes can be recycled through Brain Garden's Butts for Bucks program.



**Pocket ashtrays from Brain Garden help prevent tobacco product waste in our environment and prevent wildfires. Collected cigarette waste can be recycled.**



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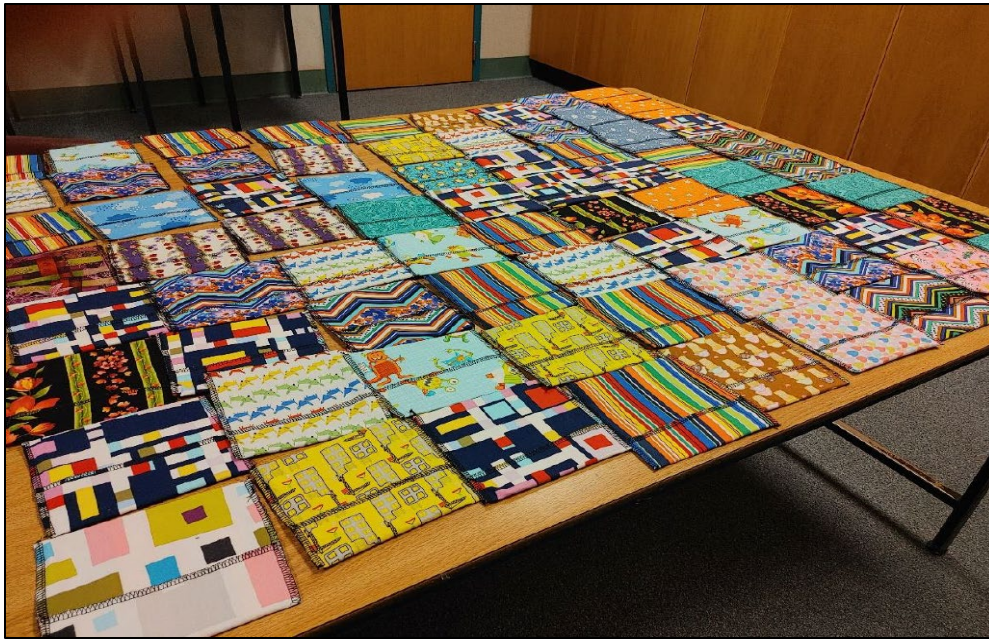
The Vernon Compost Gang has plans to expand of their Compost Collection and Community Cleanup program. This involves an on foot compost collection service by subscription. Also, along the route, the group will use garbage pickers and buckets to help clean the streets and encourage healthier, cleaner communities that reduce waste. The program employs and empowers youth to make a difference in their community and the expansion if this project will also allow students with varying learning, behavior and social needs to contribute to their community alongside their peers. The funding from this grant is intended to support Vernon Compost Gang in obtaining collection wagons, flashlights and high visibility vests to help in collection efforts.



**Vernon Compost Gang has already diverted over 700 bags of compost in its first year!**

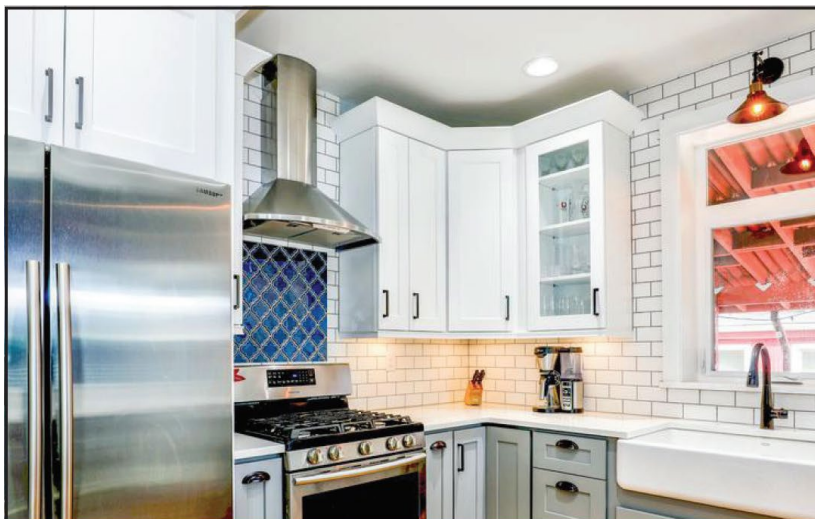
## **2021 Project Highlights**

The hard working volunteers in the Crafting a Change Program are tackling the issue of single-use plastics with reusable bags. In 2021 a group at Fulton Secondary School learned about the environmental toll of single-use plastics. Then these students stepped up to help younger students to produce reusable bags from clean repurposed fabrics. This initiative was then taken further to Beairsto Elementary School where younger students made additional bags. Over a hundred reusable bags were made that have the potential to replace over 100,000 single used plastic bags over their life. Another part of this initiative extended to Vernon Montessori Society who produced reusable Christmas/Holiday Bags that replace holiday wrap and can be used for many Christmases to come!



Reusable snack bags made by the talented and hard working volunteers at Clarence Fulton Secondary School in the Crafting a Change Program.


Habitat for Humanity Okanagan's Kitchen Salvage Program was very busy in 2021 as they dismantled and salvaged over a 100 kitchens during the year. Items donated are sold at the Habitat for Humanity Restore and funds raised are used to help fund Habitat for Humanity Homes. In the RDNO, the program salvaged and kept over 30,000 kilograms of reusable materials out of RDNO landfills.



**It's easy as 1, 2, 3.**

- 1 Contact us BEFORE taking out your existing kitchen.
- 2 We will evaluate your kitchen to determine if it can be removed and reused safely.
- 3 We will schedule a date and carefully dismantle your old kitchen and take it away, leaving a blank canvas for your brand new kitchen.

*It really is that easy!*

**ReStore**  
  
**Habitat for Humanity**  
 Okanagan

778-755-4346 x 213  
 Build Services  
 1793 Ross Road  
 West Kelowna  
[hfhokanagan.ca](http://hfhokanagan.ca)

**FREE**

**kitchen removal service**

Donating useful goods to our local ReStore keeps quality items from going to waste. Your old kitchen will help fund local Habitat for Humanity homes and in return you receive a taxable receipt for our resale value.

The City of Vernon received 2021 ReTHINK Waste Project Grant funding to help support organics diversion programming. Residents enthusiastic response to Community Compost Bin program in 2021 helped keep over 375,000 kilograms of organics out of RDNO landfills which also contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from organic materials, like food waste, being buried in landfills. In 2022 the city is planning for even more accessible ways to keep organics out of our landfills with an automated residential curbside collection program.



An average of 500 kilograms per person of garbage go to RDNO landfills each year. If you are interested in learning more about opportunities to reduce waste and are considering potential ideas for an innovative project to reduce waste please check out [rdno.ca/rethink](https://rdno.ca/rethink) and the grant page at: [rdno.ca/our-communities/community-grants/rethink-waste-project-grants](https://rdno.ca/our-communities/community-grants/rethink-waste-project-grants). The registration period for 2023 grants is expected to open during September 2022. If you are considering a project for the 2022 year, funding may still be available; email [darren.murray@rdno.ca](mailto:darren.murray@rdno.ca) for further inquiries.

## COMMERCIAL FOOD WASTE PREVENTION

### NEW GUIDES CAN HELP BUSINESSES KEEP FOOD WASTE OUT OF GARBAGE.

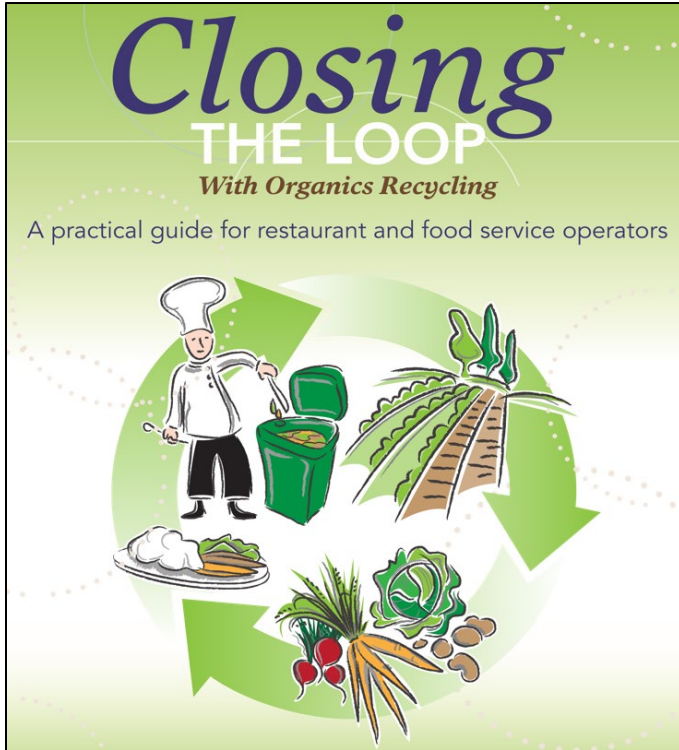
Food waste makes up the largest portion of landfilled materials in the commercial sector in the RDNO. Also, food waste in landfills is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions because when buried in landfills, organic waste produces methane, a greenhouse gas over 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

Keeping food waste out of garbage is an effective and efficient way that businesses can show their commitment to protecting the environment while minimizing costs. Businesses are encouraged to find solutions to keep food waste out of garbage that best suits their organization.





Tried and tested methods for how businesses can keep food waste out of garbage can be found in two new guides on the RDNO website. These guides include the extensive “Closing the Loop With Organics Recycling” guide and a more compact quick reference guide. These guides and more information about the RDNO’s planned Commercial Food Waste Disposal Regulation can be accessed at: [rdno.ca/commercial-food-waste](http://rdno.ca/commercial-food-waste).



Extensive Guide

### REDUCING FOOD WASTE

A guide for food service operators to help divert food and food scraps from the garbage.

#### Managing Food Waste in the North Okanagan

We have a regional goal to reduce waste going into our landfills by 1/3 by 2028. Keeping food waste out of our garbage is a major step to reach this goal and also reduce significant greenhouse gas emissions.

#### Commercial Food Waste Disposal Regulation

In 2022 the RDNO is planning to regulate the disposal of Commercial Food Waste to encourage businesses to separate food waste from regular garbage. Instead of being thrown away, food scraps and other compostable organic materials are collected in food scraps bins and then recycled into compost.

#### Waste by the Numbers

In the North Okanagan, the largest component of the region’s garbage is organics (44%).

Category	Percentage
Organics	44%
Paper	15%
Plastic	14%
Metal/Glass	10%
Other	17%

*What's in the garbage in the North Okanagan (2016 estimate).*

#### Three Ways to Reduce Commercial Food Waste

Wasting food is costly to your business, and food scraps disposed in the garbage are a wasted resource. There are three main ways for food service operators to reduce their food waste: prevent, donate, and recycle.

**Prevent**

Prevent food waste and reduce cost of garbage service

**Donate**

Donate safe and healthy food through social service agencies

**Recycle**

Set up and manage a food scraps recycling program

**Food waste reduction goal for your restaurant, community and the region**

Quick Reference Guide