



News Release

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Waste Management Research Fund Established with \$300,000 in Funding

A new research partnership was announced today between the Multi-Materials Stewardship Board (MMSB) and Memorial University's Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development (Harris Centre) to stimulate research into Newfoundland and Labrador's waste management needs and opportunities. The new waste management research fund is established with \$300,000 in funding through MMSB's Waste Management Trust Fund.

"One of government's critical roles in advancing the Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy is to identify solutions to the unique waste diversion challenges that exist in our province, and research plays a critical role in this process," said the Honourable Charlene Johnson, Minister of Environment and Conservation. "The partnership with the Harris Centre will result in tangible lessons to help us improve and accelerate waste management activities in Newfoundland and Labrador."

The fundamental goal of the Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy is to divert 50 per cent of material going to landfills and implement full province-wide modern waste management by 2020.

"Memorial has traditionally played a role in addressing issues of importance to the province, and waste management is an issue that has major implications for small municipalities and larger towns in Newfoundland and Labrador," said Dr. Gary Kachanoski, president and vice-chancellor of Memorial University. "We care about sustainability and environmental stewardship and this new waste management fund will help stimulate innovative, community-engaged research aimed at reducing the amount of waste being sent to landfill sites."

The objectives of the research fund include developing an inventory of issues relating to waste management in the province; translating these issues into research opportunities at each stage of the waste management process; and producing a number of new waste management solutions for Newfoundland and Labrador. The fund will be modeled similar to other research partnership programs managed by the Harris Centre. Memorial faculty and graduate students will have the opportunity to apply for project funding, up to a maximum of \$15,000 per project. The total operating cost contribution by the MMSB is \$100,000 annually for each of the next three years.

“Emphasis will be placed on reducing the amount of waste created, reusing materials and products, recycling or reprocessing waste, recovering some useful benefit from waste, and disposing of waste that has no further economic or environmental benefit,” said Leigh Puddester, Chair and CEO of the MMSB. “We are very excited by this unique partnership that will, undoubtedly, produce some interesting results.”

Harris Centre Director Dr. Robert Greenwood explained, “The program will consist of two key pillars: research and dialogue. Each will inform the other, so that dialogue and consultation shape research questions, leading to new ideas which then encourage further research to achieve implementation. The research may relate to policy issues, regional or local management, or technology and best practices.”

A steering committee will advise the Harris Centre on the coordination of the waste management research fund initiatives, and will consist of representatives from numerous sectors including the MMSB, Department of Environment and Conservation, Department of Municipal Affairs, Newfoundland and Labrador Environmental Industry Association, Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, MITACS Inc. Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Research and Development Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador.

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BACKGROUNDEERS

MMSB's Waste Management Trust Fund

The Trust Fund provides financial assistance to aid in the development and implementation of waste management initiatives in the province. It is governed by provincial waste management regulations and is administered by the MMSB under direction of the Minister of Environment and Conservation. MMSB through the Trust Fund provides funding for long-term, strategic solutions that support a progressive and modern approach to waste management as prescribed in the provincial Waste Management Strategy. The Waste Management Trust Fund is intended to support the implementation of the provincial Waste Management Strategy to advance the goals of that strategy through the regional waste management authorities and otherwise. MMSB is a provincial Crown agency responsible for educating, motivating and enabling the people of the province to reduce waste and recycle in an effort to protect our environment.

The Provincial Waste Management Strategy

In May 2007, the Provincial Government announced implementation of the \$200 million Provincial Waste Management Strategy. The strategy calls for three full service regional waste management facilities on the Avalon, Central and in Western areas of the island portion of the province, and programs will be developed for the zones in Labrador to meet the provincial waste management goals. Regional waste management authorities will be established in 12 waste management zones. The provincial strategy will aim to reduce the amount of waste going into landfills in the province by 50 per cent supported by the use of disposal bans and development of new waste diversion programs with full implementation planned for 2020.

The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development

The Harris Centre is Memorial's hub for regional policy and development, linking Memorial researchers with groups all over Newfoundland and Labrador. Working with all units at Memorial, The Harris Centre builds connections, encourages informed debate and supports collaboration, enhancing the University and the Province through mutually beneficial partnerships. A key part of Memorial University, the Centre helps diverse groups and individuals connect with the research resources of Memorial, through teaching, research, and outreach initiatives, including research funding, community brokering and public education sessions.

Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

Memorial University of Newfoundland is Atlantic Canada's premiere comprehensive university, and one of the region's most important research organizations. With approximately 17,500 students, 1000 faculty members and 1,500 support staff, it is the largest in the region. Memorial is committed to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, and service to the public. More than 100 undergraduate and graduate degrees are offered through our faculties (arts, science, education, medicine, engineering and applied science, business) and schools (music, human kinetics and recreation, nursing, pharmacy, social work, graduate studies).