



NEWS RELEASE

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Newfoundland and Labrador Celebrates Compost Awareness Week

The Department of Environment and Conservation and the Multi-Materials Stewardship Board (MMSB) reminds all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that Compost Awareness Week is May 4 to 10. It's time for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to take action by composting at home, at work and at school.

"In Newfoundland and Labrador, we throw 300 tonnes of organic waste into our overburdened landfills every single day. Organic waste accounts for approximately 30% of all waste generated in the province," said the Honourable Charlene Johnson, Minister of Environment and Conservation. "In addition, organic waste when buried in our landfills produces harmful greenhouse gases as well as a toxic liquid, commonly known as leachate, that can pollute our soil and water," added Minister Johnson. "Composting is an efficient and effective way to reduce the amount of organic waste we send to our landfills. Together, through simple actions such as backyard composting, we can all make valuable contributions towards protecting our environment."

In the fall of 2005, MMSB launched a two-year backyard composting program with a substantial investment from its Waste Management Trust Fund. Through the sale of subsidized compost bins and a major public education and awareness initiative, MMSB set out to increase participation in backyard composting by 50%. "The program received an overwhelming response throughout the province," said John Scott, MMSB Chair and CEO. "In fact, MMSB sold out of its 10,000 inventory of compost bins in the first six months of the program. MMSB therefore acquired an additional 10,000 bins that were quickly taken up by residents from across the province," added Scott.

Composting is a quick, simple way for individual households to take ownership of this waste stream and manage it in a more environmentally responsible way. With little effort, most households can reduce the amount of organic waste going to waste disposal sites, help reduce pollution, lower waste collection and disposal costs at the local level and create healthy and beautiful lawns and gardens just by composting in their own backyards.

MMSB encourages residents to participate in activities that promote composting this week. MUN Botanical Gardens in St. John's is offering free composting demonstrations and MMSB will be on hand providing composting information as well as demonstrations and fun activities for the whole family. For a complete schedule of events visit www.mun.ca/botgarden/ or to find out more about composting visit www.mmsb.nl.ca or call MMSB toll free at 1-800-901-6672.

MMSB is a provincial Crown agency that reports to the Minister of Environment and Conservation. Its mandate is to support progressive waste management practices in the

province, with a particular focus on waste diversion, recycling and public education, in order to ensure a clean and healthy environment throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

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