

R(16)574

Phase 2 of the Single Use Retail Bag Fee Implemented

YELLOWKNIFE (February 1, 2011) – Beginning today, all paper, plastic and biodegradable bags will cost 25 cents in all Northwest Territories (NWT) stores.

“When we think about the three R’s – reduce, reuse, and recycle – it is the first R (reduce) that is the most important,” said the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), J. Michael Miltenberger. “This program is a great example of a waste reduction program: the fewer bags that we use mean the fewer natural resources we consume and the less waste we produce.”

Phase 2 of the Single Use Retail Bag Program is part of the Government of the Northwest Territories’ (GNWT) Waste Reduction and Recovery Program Expansion and is intended to reduce litter on the land and in communities. The 25-cent environmental fee does not apply to bags used inside stores for unpackaged bulk items such as produce, bakery items, candy and small hardware items. It also does not apply to bags used for dry cleaning, prescriptions or primary packaging of prepared food.

Fees for single-use retail bags have consistently worked to reduce consumption, with higher fees linked to fewer bags purchased. Fees collected from Phase 2 of the program continue to go into the GNWT’s Environment Fund to help pay for future waste reduction and recycling programs.

The GNWT’s Waste Reduction and Recovery Program Expansion is part of the *Managing This Land* strategic initiative identified to meet the 16th Legislative Assembly’s goal of an environment that will sustain present and future generations.

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