

## Phase 2 of the Single Use Retail Bag Program

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*Hon. J. Michael Miltenberger*  
*Monday, February 8, 2011*  
*16th Legislative Assembly*

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to announce that Phase 2 of the Single Use Retail Bag Program is now underway. As of February 1, 2011, paper, plastic and biodegradable bags now cost 25 cents in all stores in the Northwest Territories.

The Single Use Retail Bag Program is the second Program created under the *Waste Reduction and Recovery Act*. The Program was started in January 2010 to address the millions of disposable shopping bags that cause unsightly litter in our communities and on the land.

Phase 2 of the Single Use Retail Bag Program includes clothing stores, convenience stores, hardware stores, and jewellery stores. The Program does not include bags used inside the store for unpackaged bulk items like produce, bakery items, candy and small hardware items. It also does not include bags used for dry cleaning, prescriptions or primary packaging of prepared food.

Information and details on this Phase of the Program was shared with Northwest Territories businesses and retailers last summer and again in December.

Fees collected from Phase 2 of the Program continue to go into the GNWT's Environment Fund to cover program expenses and help pay for future waste reduction and recycling programs.

As we have seen with Phase 1 of the Program, fees placed on single use retail bags work to reduce consumption. Reducing consumption, reusing materials and recycling waste products are ways we can all reduce our impact on the environment.

The 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.

Information regarding the Single Use Retail Bag Program can now be found on the I-Care-NWT website at [www.icarenwt.ca](http://www.icarenwt.ca). The website highlights the changes for retailers and distributors. It also includes the amended regulations, a plain-language summary of the regulations, program policies and all the forms a retailer or distributor needs to complete at this time.

When we think about the three R's, reduce, reuse and recycle, Mr. Speaker, it is the first R, reduce, that is the most important. This program is a great example of a waste

reduction program. The fewer bags we use, means the fewer natural resources we consume and the less waste and greenhouse gases we produce.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that waste reduction and recycling is important to the people of the Northwest Territories. Expanding the Waste Reduction and Recovery Program will reduce litter on the land and in communities as well as reduce our consumption of natural resources.

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