

# Waste Reduction Week

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*Hon. J. Michael Miltenberger  
Thursday, October 21, 2010  
16th Legislative Assembly*

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, October 18<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> is Waste Reduction Week in Canada. This week is an opportunity to provide residents with information about the environmental ramifications of wasteful practices and to encourage all of us to reduce, reuse and recycle.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has organized a number of activities to celebrate Waste Reduction Week. Random acts of greenness include a clothing swap, a cell phone and rechargeable battery recycling opportunity, a litterless lunch workshop and potluck, daily waste reduction tips, and ideas on how to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

The GNWT is committed to conserving our natural resources and protecting our environment. Waste reduction and recovery are a key component of this commitment.

In the hierarchy of waste management, the gold medal goes to reducing the amount of waste that we produce. Reduction is the most important action in waste management. The silver medal is for reusing and the bronze medal is awarded for recycling.

The Department is finalizing plans to implement phase II of the Single-Use Retail Bag Program on February 1, 2011. Phase II will extend the 25 cent environmental fee on single-use retail bags to all retail stores in the Northwest Territories. Each household will receive two highly compact reusable bags through the mail this weekend as part of this program implementation.

Revenue generated from the Single-Use Retail Bag Program will go into the Environment Fund and will be used to fund the expansion of waste reduction and recovery activities in the NWT.

As Members are aware, this program is intended to reduce litter on the land. By limiting and ultimately eliminating our consumption of single-use retail bags, we are achieving the gold standard of waste reduction and management.

The Northwest Territories Liquor Commission is also introducing its own reusable bag program next month. Liquor stores will be offering reusable bags made of recyclable materials at an affordable price. The bags will feature northern scenes that will change as supplies are reordered. The existing paper bags will continue to be offered for a few months to allow customers time to transition to the new reusable bags.

Over the past five years, ENR has implemented a number of waste reduction and recovery programs. These include the Beverage Container Program, which was recently expanded to include milk containers, the Waste Paper Products Initiative and Phase I of the Single-Use Retail Bag Program. The department will also be researching electronic waste programs this winter.

Mr. Speaker, Waste Reduction Week is an opportunity for all of us to remember the importance of reducing our consumption and protecting the environment for future generations. I invite all NWT residents to reduce, reuse and recycle this week and every week.