

(a) Government Actions

Governments have pursued numerous individual strategies to meet waste reduction goals. The Government of Ontario developed a Paper Fibre Strategy to increase the diversion of paper products from the waste stream. By 1992, Ontario had diverted 25 percent of solid wastes from disposal from 1987 levels. The British Columbia government has met with the plastics industry and users of plastic packaging to discuss ways to make these materials more recyclable and to reduce their presence in the waste stream. That government has also implemented a comprehensive reporting system to track the amounts of waste disposed of and recycled in the province.

As part of the ratification of the Basel Convention, the federal government amended the Canada-USA Agreement on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes to include non-hazardous solid wastes.

(b) Private Sector Actions

To play their role in solid waste reduction, businesses and their representative organizations are pursuing numerous initiatives. One of the most significant is the development of industry-funded collection and recycling of certain products such as corrugated cardboard. The programs of Ontario Multi-Material Recycling Inc. and Collecte sélective Québec have become models of this approach. Other examples of initiatives are pilot projects sponsored by the Paper and Paperboard Environmental Council and the Plastic Film Manufacturers Association to collect selected materials for recycling and develop new technologies to recycle their materials. The Canadian glass industry and the aluminum industry have both been part of a successful effort for recycling and to develop new technologies. The Composting Council of Canada released a national survey on composting infrastructure.

Radioactive Wastes

(a) Domestic Activities

As a country that mines and uses radioactive substances, Canada has long had mechanisms to control radioactive wastes. It has also pursued initiatives to respond to technical issues and public concerns.

In 1989, the federal Minister of the Environment appointed an independent panel to conduct an environmental assessment and review of the concept of disposing of nuclear waste in the granitic rock of the Canadian Shield. The review is designed to encourage participation by the public, NGOs and government agencies in decision making.

Producers of low-level radioactive wastes must develop their own storage and disposal facilities. Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, a corporation owned by the federal government, is currently planning a demonstration unit of a near-surface disposal facility for its own wastes and those received from small-volume producers who