

# Administration learning to be green

by Graeme Lendon

When it comes to preserving the environment, Paul Mayol, York's Waste Management Coordinator says that "the university has a moral obligation to be a leader in the field."

This may be so, but to date any efforts to recycle and reduce waste at York have been isolated and operated largely on a volunteer basis.

The current situation, however, will be changing as the administration implements a comprehensive, university-wide policy on waste management.

Mayol was hired in July on the recommendation of York's Waste Recycling Advisory Committee.

The committee, over the past year, developed proposals for reducing garbage and recycling both on the Keele and Glendon campuses.

It is the beginning of a much more ambitious scheme for Mayol as he plans to do things "building by building, site by site, product by product."

Eventually, all newspapers, tins and glass will be collected throughout the university. He also has plans for a campus compost heap to turn food scraps into fertilizer. Although Mayol wants to work as quickly as possible, he feels there are some obstacles.

"The university simply can't afford to implement the various projects all at once," Mayol said. Start-up costs for the coming year have been estimated between \$200,000 and \$300,000.

In order to help offset the cost, Mayol is seeking outside sources for funding.

He has applied to Ontario's Ministry of the Environment for a

grant. A decision is expected in three or four months.

According to Drass and Barrett, the programme worked well for a time, but in September of last year, both students left school to travel.

"After that, things just sort of fizzled," explains Drass "People were left in charge, but I guess it just wasn't enough."

a problem getting the tins taken away routinely for recycling.

However, not all student initiatives falter. Last year, Chia-Yi Chua, while president of Bethune College's student council, started up a programme to recycle tins, glass and newspaper. According to Chua, the program is still

ever possible; for letterhead, stationery, and pamphlets. Even this year's student handbook, Up York, was printed on recycled paper.

In the YFS budget, tabled in June, money was set aside for environmental purposes. As yet, however, the funds have not been specifically allocated.

YFS' concern extends to its support of Envision York, a volunteer organization open to people who want to work on environmental issues at the York level.

## One of the problems that Envision York is trying to solve concerns the use of styrofoam containers in the cafeterias

Envision York, in co-operation with the environmental studies faculty, is holding an environmental awareness week beginning November 5.

Blass, who in addition to his work at YFS, acts as Envision York's Undergraduate Coordinator, emphasized that Envision York is not merely out to promote awareness.

"Envision York is also about action," Blass said. "We identify problems and then try to solve them."

One of the problems that Envision York is trying to solve concerns the use of styrofoam containers in the cafeterias. Blass admitted that this is not an easy problem to tackle.

"It's really hard to come up with a viable solution," Blass said.

According to Blass, Envision York would welcome the chance to work with the administration's recycling program.

"Perhaps we could help them identify problems, or they could give us advice on how to set up a student network," Blass said. "If the students, the faculty and the administration all work together, it will be easier to accomplish our goal."

The University is currently forming a Waste Reduction Advisory Committee to advise in the operation of waste reduction programmes.

Mayol said that once this committee was formed, he would welcome input from any interested group or individual.

"If recycling is to be a success," Mayol said. "It will require the co-operation of all facets of the York community."

## Fine paper makes up 50 per cent of York's waste

Mayol's first priority is the recovering and recycling of paper, which makes up 50 per cent of York's waste.

Presently, he is working on placing specially marked blue receptacles in the Ross building for the collection of recyclable fine application paper, such as computer paper, stationery and letterhead.

grant. A decision is expected in three or four months.

Mayol is also trying to get the Works Department of North York to help out by providing collection receptacles.

"We pay taxes," Mayol said. "It's not unreasonable to expect some service for that."

To date, no outside agency has committed funds to York's programme.

Despite the initial costs, recycling and waste reduction should one day save money for the university.

According to Mayol, if the university can meet its targets for waste reduction (25 per cent by 1992, 50 per cent by 2000), then the savings will be substantial.

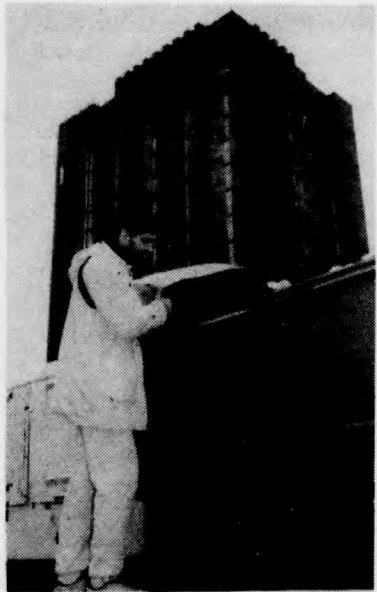
He declined, however, to give a precise dollar figure.

As York's recycling effort expands it will absorb various smaller initiatives.

"There are many small time, volunteer-based, recycling projects that need co-ordination," Mayol said. "These smaller projects have a tendency to falter after a while."

The experience of students Ed Drass and Melissa Barrett illustrate this point.

In the summer of 1989, they set up and supervised a pop can recovery system at Glendon College.



Clive Cohen photo

The main recycling depot at York is located behind the Assiniboine residence tower #6. The city of North York currently hauls the material for the university.



Chris Iler graphic

The bins for collecting tins were not emptied on a regular basis. Drass believes that the fault lay in a lack of coordination and that the students involved had other demands on their time.

Currently, tin collection bins are still in place at Glendon.

Drass, who has returned to school this fall, reported that bins in public areas, such as the cafeteria, are piling up and overflowing. He also reported that he is having

functioning.

Even with the assumption of some responsibility by the university, the attack on environmental problems will continue on other fronts.

Mitchell Blass, YFS vice president (external), said the YFS executive is "very concerned about doing something for the environment."

Blass pointed out that the YFS office uses recycled paper where-

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