



## YREA winter 2019 news & views

### Watch for Bill 66 call to action coming soon

Ontario tabled Bill 66 on Dec. 6. If passed, it would allow commercial development to bypass several long-standing acts and plans established to protect the natural environment and health of residents. In a nutshell, if a development has the support of both the municipal government and the province and shows it would create 50 new jobs it could get the go ahead despite being detrimental to our air, water and soil.



This regressive act seems par for the course from a government that has torn up hundreds of contracts, resulting in job and foreign investment losses and law suits with the cancellation of cap & trade. Looks like Ontario is closed for business, certainly in the area of long-term low carbon economy, clean technology jobs.

YREA and many other groups along with thousands of residents applaud enlightened municipalities that have opposed and will not implement Bill 66 including: Aurora, Barrie, Burlington, Cambridge, Georgina, Guelph, Hamilton, Vaughan & Waterloo with more expected soon.

### Vehicle idling - the modern facts



It is now acknowledged by present day experts in the automotive industry that 30 seconds is enough for a winter warm up. If temperatures fall below -15c, plugging in a block heater helps.

Idling for over 10 seconds uses more fuel and produces more CO2 emissions than restarting your car. So save money and the environment by turning off your car while you are picking up kids at school, at the community mailbox, waiting for a train to pass or buying a lottery ticket at the convenience store.

### Our rivers & streams are as saline as the ocean - salt reduction required

With more frequent thawing & freezing cycles due to climate change, we are using a lot more salt. Said to weaken bridges, expressways and rebar in concrete, the impact on wildlife, plants, water & soil is so distressing that [Environment Canada](#) considered adding road salt to our list of toxic substances.

As salt is only effective to -18c we are better off with sand. A homeowner can also use non clumping kitty litter & de-icers that are helpful rather than harmful to gardens. Less ice is formed on a driveway if 2" of snow are left so the asphalt doesn't do its heat island thing by melting bits which then refreeze at night. [Alternatives](#) to road salt are being researched, even in schools. Now there's a green tech job!

### Recycling needs improvements & consistencies across municipalities

There are so many people that still don't recycle and for those who do, the fact that only a small percentage is actually repurposed is very discouraging. Confusion stems from the fact that there is no consistency between municipalities. A homeowner who recently moved from Toronto to York Region (YR) was puzzled as to why his green bin wasn't being picked up. In Toronto you can use plastic bags but in YR you need to line green bins with compostable bags. Added to that, YR does not accept polystyrene but Toronto does, along with stretchy plastic. You have to take stretchy plastic back to participating grocers in YR. If plastic, (such as from Chinese take-out) is black it must be put in the garbage, although these containers are handy for storage of leftovers and can be used dozens and dozens of times. But is it any wonder why so much of our recyclables are contaminated?





With all the doom and gloom lately, nothing will make us feel better than a stomp in the woods, connecting with nature. Check out these rewarding [TRCA events](#).

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