



## **Markham Leads Ontario Revolutionizing Polystyrene Foam Recycling** Launch of breakthrough green technology facilitates diversion of polystyrene foam from landfill into new products

**Markham, ON ~ October 15, 2011** - Mayor Frank Scarpitti and Members of Markham Council were joined by Hon. John McCallum, M.P. Markham-Unionville and representatives from Waste Diversion Ontario Continuous Improvement Fund and the Canadian Plastics Industry Association to unveil an exciting new green densification technology that is going to revolutionize the recycling of polystyrene foam packaging in Markham.

Markham has been an environmental leader in polystyrene foam recycling for over 15 years diverting over 600 tonnes from going into landfill.

"Markham is proud of our long history of promoting environmentally responsible initiatives," said Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti. "We are recognized leaders in waste diversion with two platinum level Recycling Council of Ontario awards for our high municipal diversion rate of 72%. I am proud to announce that Markham is now at the helm of another exciting initiative. We are the first municipality in Ontario to incorporate our new polystyrene foam densifier machine, demonstrating improvement to both the bottom line and our recycling program."

Once collected from Markham's four community recycling depots, the densification system compresses the material to remove the air and reduce the volume by 90 percent, creating solid, stackable bricks of plastic that make transportation easy and convenient. Now only one seventh of the trucks are required to ship polystyrene foam to market.

The recycled foam goes to a facility that employs 120 people to turn the compressed bricks into new consumer goods including picture frames, office supplies and decorative mouldings – right here in Ontario.

Made possible by a unique partnership with Waste Diversion Ontario Continuous Improvement Fund and the Canadian Plastics Industry Association, Markham is the first municipality in Ontario to utilize this technology breakthrough. It will enable Markham to double the annual amount of polystyrene foam food and protective packaging it currently diverts from landfill.

"We are proud to be a partner and fund the Markham polystyrene foam densifier project." said Andrew Campbell, Director Waste Diversion Ontario Continuous Improvement Fund. "The WDO CIF encourages other municipalities to learn from Markham's experience to recycle more polystyrene foam as efficiently as possible."

"This is an example of the Canadian Plastics Industry Association's work with governments, industry, communities and others to expand the recycling of plastics", said Greg Wilkinson, President & CEO of the Canadian Plastics Industry Association. "It is model partnerships like these that result in the use of technologies to continuously improve and make plastics recycling more efficient."



**Photo caption:** (left to right) Waste Diversion Ontario Continuous Improvement Fund Director Andrew Campbell and Canadian Plastics Industry Association President & CEO Greg Wilkinson join Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti in a demonstration of Markham's new polystyrene foam densifier system at the official launch event on October 13, 2011.

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## FACT SHEET

### **About Markham's Polystyrene Foam Densifier**

The Matrix Polymax 2500 cold densifier was installed in Markham in April 2011 and has been funded in partnership with Markham, Waste Diversion Ontario Continuous Improvement Fund and the Canadian Plastics Industry Association.

The stackable densified polystyrene foam bricks can vary in size – 7 inches to 4 feet in length – dependent on the end user needs for reprocessing. In the case of Markham, the bricks will be half a kilogram in weight. With 40 tonnes of recovered material, it is anticipated that each metric tonne will contain 1814 bricks that are 0.22 metres long by 0.09 metres wide x 0.1 metres high.

The new densifier technology offers a range of environmental and cost benefits to the city including:

- An 84% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
- A significant reduction in the number of truckloads used to transport the material for recycling – down from 65 truckloads per year to 9, resulting in significant cost savings.
- Overall program net cost savings.
- Saves valuable landfill space as polystyrene foam does not compact well.

### **About Markham**

Markham, a municipality of more than 310,000 residents centrally located in the Greater Toronto area, is Canada's most diverse community and home to many of Canada's leading life science and technology businesses. Recipient of a 2010 *Canada Award for Excellence – Silver* for outstanding achievements in quality, customer service, and a healthy workplace, Markham is renowned for its rich heritage, vibrant neighbourhoods and leadership on the environment and urban design.

### **About Waste Diversion Ontario Continuous Improvement Fund**

The Continuous Improvement Fund (CIF) was established by Waste Diversion Ontario, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Stewardship Ontario and the City of Toronto Ontario in January 2008. The Continuous Improvement Fund (CIF) provides grants and loans to municipalities to execute projects that will increase the efficiency of municipal Blue Box recycling and help boost system effectiveness.

### **About Canadian Plastics Industry Association (CPIA)**

The Canadian Plastics Industry Association is the national voice of Canada's plastics industry, representing the interests of processors, material suppliers, equipment manufacturers, brand owners and recyclers across the country. CPIA is committed to increasing the amount of plastic and the different types of plastic waste being diverted from landfill through the use of innovative technology and the intelligent application of various waste management options, such as reuse, recycle and energy recovery by working with its municipal and other stakeholder partners.