

News Release

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CVRD calls on Province of BC to include mattresses in Extended Producer Responsibility program

DUNCAN, BC — The Cowichan Valley Regional District has joined other regional districts in the province in formally expressing frustration with the Province of BC decision to exclude residential mattresses from its Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Five-Year Action Plan. Adding mattresses to the Recycling Regulation would ensure that producers take full responsibility for the lifecycle of their products by shifting the end-of-life responsibility from local governments and taxpayers to the producers and consumers of the products.

“The Ministry of Environment and Parks plan states that a formalized provincewide EPR program will help British Columbians by eliminating the barriers that are preventing many from being able to recycle their used mattresses,” said Kate Segall, Chair of the CVRD Board of Directors. “It’s disappointing to see this change in direction, as the cost of recycling mattresses continues to increase and that true cost is being shared by local taxpayers, rather than exclusively by the producers and end users.”

In August 2025, the province issued a notice stating that mattresses had been removed from the list of new product categories that will come under the Recycling Regulation, citing concerns about consumer affordability. This decision has come as an unpleasant surprise to local governments who have been anticipating relief from the financial and operational burden of managing these costly items. The expense for mattress processing, which requires manual labour to maximize waste diversion, has increased by 50% over five years, from \$597/tonne in 2020 to \$886/tonne in 2025. To keep mattress recycling affordable for residents, and to avoid high landfill costs, the CVRD subsidizes the recycling cost through tax requisition.

“If mattresses were added to the provincial Recycling Regulation, the CVRD could reduce requisition in its Solid Waste Management budget by \$100,000 annually and eliminate the mattress tipping fee at the CVRD Recycling Centers,” said Ilse Sarady, Senior Manager of Recycling and Solid Waste Management. “The Extended Producer Responsibility program is critical to ensuring the end-of-life costs of products like mattresses are appropriately accounted for and don’t become an undue burden for local governments and their residents.”

The CVRD has sent a formal letter to the Ministry of Environment and Parks urging the Ministry to fulfill its commitment to a mattress Extended Producer Responsibility program and proceed without delay. In response to this news, the CVRD Board has approved an increase to the mattress tipping fee from \$18 to \$32 per unit for the 2026 budget year, which will put more cost on the end user and decrease the tax requisition shared by taxpayers across the region.

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