

Township of  
**Langley**



Est. 1873

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR RELEASE: July 20, 2020**

### **SAVE YOUR STRATA THOUSANDS BY BECOMING A RECYCLING AMBASSADOR**

When Mel Matychuk was growing up in the prairies, living “green” was not exactly top of mind. Back then, he says, it was commonplace to throw litter on the ground or out the window of a car. Fast forward a few decades, however, and Matychuk has become a champion for reducing, reusing, and recycling.

Shortly after moving into his Willoughby condominium a year and a half ago, Matychuk spotted an opportunity to help the environment and save the newly-formed strata council on operating costs. The building was receiving private garbage, organics, and recycling pickup, but a quick call to the Township of Langley’s Solid Waste team confirmed that private recycling pickup was unnecessary, as all multi-family residences in the Township are eligible for municipal recycling collection. Matychuk arranged recycling pickup with the Township and swiftly cancelled the private recycling collection. Those two simple changes, Matychuk says, saved the strata council \$10,000 in its first year.

Matychuk admits sorting waste into several streams – organics, containers, paper, glass, garbage – was a learning curve for some of his fellow residents. Some were familiar with sorting their waste, while others did not know how or see the value in doing so – yet. Undeterred, Matychuk reached out to the Township’s Solid Waste team, who enrolled him in the Recycling Ambassador program. The team gave him a crash-course in setting up a multi-family recycling area, shared signage resources, and even provided him tote bags to distribute to each unit to help residents carry their recyclables downstairs.

Matychuk’s persistence paid off: in only one year, he and his volunteers sorted 34,577 refundable recycling items from the building’s bins, dropped them off at the recycling depot, and received nearly \$3,000 in returns. The windfall was put into the condominium’s social fund, and has supported décor items, get-togethers, and future projects such as a bike room.

These days, about 85% of the building's waste is sorted correctly, Matychuk estimates, and with time the number is only getting better. The amount of actual garbage has dwindled so much that one garbage receptacle was deemed unnecessary and removed, saving residents even more on private collection costs.

With a little work and help from his neighbours, Matychuk turned the building's waste room into a functional recycling centre. Volunteers take turns keeping it clean and help sort items placed in the wrong bins. "It's a team effort," Matychuk says, "but it means something. After all, this is our home and we all need to do our part."

Residents who are inspired by Matychuk's success and interested in becoming a Recycling Ambassador can visit [tol.ca/ambassador](http://tol.ca/ambassador) for sign-up details.

While most multi-family buildings in the Township are utilizing municipal recycling pickup, there are still several outliers, notes the Solid Waste department. If you are unsure whether your building is receiving private recycling collection, check with your strata council. Buildings not receiving municipal recycling pickup can call 604.532.7300 for service.

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**Media Inquiries:**

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