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Waste Reduction Can Extend Landfill Life

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To The Editor:

At RCBC we disagree with Jon Kingsbury's assertion that the current landfill site's lifespan cannot be extended.

Figures from a 2004 GVRD solid waste audit indicate that more than half the garbage now going to landfill could be diverted through recycling and diversion programs, some of which are already in place. More than six percent of GVRD solid waste is recyclable paper and cardboard, and another four percent are plastics. By utilizing current programs and enforcing bans now in place, the life of existing landfills will be drastically increased.

Next, an electronics waste program, promised by the B.C. government in 2004, would not only eliminate as much as five percent of solid waste, but keep hazardous materials, such as lead, mercury, and pcbd fire retardants out of the environment. GVRD support and endorsement of such a program could have tremendous impact.

And finally compostable organics account for a whopping 45 percent of the GVRD's solid waste stream. Investigation of ways to address this waste, potentially such as several Kootenay regional districts currently initiating organics diversion programs, is worth review.

These are some of the alternatives that need to be incorporated into the GVRD's solid waste management before dumping it somewhere else.

**Natalie Zigarlick, CAE
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