

## REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

# Environment and Climate Change Canada Proposed “Regulations Respecting the Reduction in the Release of Methane (Waste Sector)”

**To:** Warden and Members of County Council

**From:** Acting Director of Public Works

## RECOMMENDATION

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1. That Oxford County Council receive Report PW 2024-33 entitled ‘Environment and Climate Change Canada Proposed Regulations Respecting the Reduction in the Release of Methane (Waste Sector)’, as information.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- Staff have submitted comments in response to Environment and Climate Change Canada’s (ECCC) proposed regulations for reducing the release of methane gas from Canada’s landfills, published in the Canada Gazette, Part I, Volume 158, Number 26 on June 29, 2024, within a 60-day comment period.
- Staff have participated in previous stakeholder consultation opportunities associated with development of regulatory framework by ECCC and provided updates to County Council.
- Under the proposed regulations, Oxford County’s Waste Management Facility (OCWMF) will be required to submit a Methane Generation Assessment Report in 2025, followed by an annual landfill gas system implementation and compliance report starting in 2027.
- The County is well-positioned to comply with the proposed Regulations within the implementation timeline. However, regulatory compliance will require additional monitoring and any associated corrective actions, as well as annual reporting to ECCC.

## IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

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Staff submitted comments to ECCC on August 28, 2024. Following County Council’s receipt of this report, a copy of the resolution will be submitted to ECCC.

Staff will also continue to monitor information published by ECCC concerning the proposed Regulations. The final Regulations are expected to be legislated in 2025.

### Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts for the 2024 budget year as a result of adopting the recommendation contained in this report.

The Waste Management Operations budget for 2025 and 2026 will incorporate costs associated with regulatory compliance.

### Communications

Report PW 2024-33 will be circulated to Area Municipalities for information, and to the Zero Waste Oxford and Smart Energy Oxford advisory committees.




### 2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

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Oxford County Council approved the [2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#) on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council’s vision of “Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future.” These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendation in this report supports the following strategic goals.

#### Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
<b>Promoting community vitality</b>	<b>Enhancing environmental sustainability</b>	<b>Fostering progressive government</b>
	Goal 2.1 – Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Goal 3.5 – Advocate for Oxford County

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

## DISCUSSION

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### Background

On June 29, 2024, ECCC published the proposed '*Regulations Respecting the Reduction in the Release of Methane (Waste Sector)*' for a 60-day public comment period. The regulation made under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA) is intended to reduce methane emissions from landfills by 50% to meet Canada's international climate change commitments by 2030.

Staff have participated in stakeholder consultation opportunities throughout the development of the regulatory framework by ECCC and provided updates to County Council accordingly. Oxford County comments were submitted to ECCC on May 15, 2023 (Report [PW 2023-31](#)) in response to the proposed regulatory framework, and on April 13, 2022 (Report [PW 2022-23](#)) in response to the discussion paper titled '*Reducing Methane Emissions from Canada's Municipal Solid Waste Landfills*'.

As previously reported to Council, the open landfill at the Oxford County Waste Management Facility (OCWMF) meets the applicability threshold and therefore would be subject to regulatory requirements, whereas the eight closed landfill sites owned by the County would be exempt from regulatory compliance.

Methane emissions are currently controlled at the OCWMF through a Landfill Gas Collection and Flaring System (LGCFS) that operates under an Environmental Compliance Approval issued by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and includes conditions for regular system monitoring and annual reporting to the MECP. The County's LFGCS is scheduled for upgrades in 2025 and 2026 that will include well field expansion as well as replacement of equipment that is reaching the end of its service life.

Staff have generally been supportive of the proposed regulatory framework developed by ECCC. Previous comments submitted by Oxford County identified concerns with implementation timelines, funding, and prescriptive use of drone technology for surface monitoring. Anticipated changes to the County's current monitoring program to comply with Federal regulatory requirements would include increased monitoring and associated corrective action, and annual reporting to ECCC.

### Comments

Staff have reviewed the proposed regulations and submitted additional comments (Attachment 1) with regards to annual monitoring frequency, which would require three surface monitoring events per year with a minimum of 90 days per monitoring event. Staff are concerned with the practicality of this requirement since monitoring during winter months will not provide valid results as well as challenges during other times of the year associated with vegetation growth and wet conditions.

Compliance timelines and optional use of drone technology have now been identified in the proposed regulation, addressing some of the previous comments submitted by Oxford County.

### Methane Generation Assessment

An initial Methane Generation Assessment report will be required for submission to ECCC within 90 days of the regulations coming into force, with subsequent reports being required by June 1 of each year. The initial methane generation assessment is expected to take place in 2025 (for the 2024 operating year). Landfill sites, such as at the OCWMF that meet applicability thresholds, will be required to calculate annual methane generation using ECCC's Landfill Methane Modeling Tool.

Landfill sites with a methane generation of  $\geq 1,000$  tonnes per year and have an existing landfill gas system in place will be required to comply with regulatory requirements. Methane generation at the OCWMF is estimated at 3,900 tonnes annually and therefore will be subject to regulatory compliance starting in 2027.

## CONCLUSIONS

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Staff support the objective of the proposed regulations and have provided minor comments to ECCC regarding annual monitoring frequency.

ECCC's proposed Regulations will implement a standardized approach to the management of landfill methane emissions across Canada, identifying reporting thresholds, timelines, and monitoring practices which will impact many landfills including the OCWMF.

## SIGNATURES

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### Report author:

Original signed by

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Pamela Antonio, BES, MPA  
Supervisor of Waste Management

### Departmental approval:

Original signed by

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Frank Gross, C.Tech  
Acting Director of Public Works

**Approved for submission:**

Original signed by

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Benjamin R. Addley  
Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENT**

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Attachment 1 Oxford County Submission Comments: ECCC Proposed Regulations on Reducing Landfill Methane Emissions