

2018

Datacall FAQ



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Datacall FAQs

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General FAQ

1. Where can I find the Datacall User Guide?

You can download the User Guide from:

- a) The top left hand corner of the Datacall main page
- b) the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority’s (the Authority) website: rpra.ca/datacall/

2. What is the Short Form Datacall?

The Short Form Datacall is a streamlined version of the standard (regular length) Datacall developed for smaller municipalities. The Short Form Datacall has Section 3.3 and all of Section 5 removed. This means that eligible municipalities do not have to report any Non-Blue Box information. The Short Form Datacall still collects the necessary data for calculating the municipal program’s Blue Box funding (i.e. if a municipal program elects to complete the Short Form, their Blue Box funding will not be affected). Since Non-Blue Box sections are removed, the Authority will **not** calculate a diversion rate for municipal programs who report into the Short Form Datacall. If a municipal program would still like to receive a diversion rate, then they must report into the standard Datacall.

Through consultation with municipal programs and the Municipal Industry Program Committee (MIPC), a committee of the Authority’s, it was determined that municipal programs with populations of 30,000 or less may be eligible for the Short Form Datacall.

3. Why am I getting a server error?

There could be a number of reasons why you are experiencing a server error in the Datacall. The best way to help us correct is to email a screenshot of the error and details of what occurred to datacall@rpra.ca. We will let you know when the error has been fixed, which is usually within the same day.

4. Why won’t my data save?

The minimum browser requirements are:

- Macintosh: Netscape 6.0+, FireFox 1.0+, Mozilla 1.0+, Opera 8.5+
- Windows: Internet Explorer 6.0+, FireFox 1.0+, Netscape 6.0+, Mozilla 1.0+, Opera 8.5+
- Linux: Netscape 6.0+, FireFox 1.0+, Mozilla 1.0+
- JavaScript and Session Cookies must be turned on

Please note that **Firefox** is the preferred browser for use with the Datacall, and that some users have identified compatibility issues with Google Chrome. Please avoid using Google Chrome, as the view will have missing components.

If this does not fix the problem, please email datacall@rpra.ca.

5. Is a PDF feature available for the Datacall?

Yes! A PDF feature is available on the Datacall main page. This feature is offered throughout the entire Datacall submission period, including after the Datacall deadline. You are able to go back to access previous Datacall years and download the PDF's. If there are many users downloading PDFs at the same time, your PDF copy will be emailed to you as soon as possible, typically by end of day. Select the sections you would like sent and enter an email address to receive the PDF files.

6. For which materials do we automatically get diversion credits in the Datacall?

The Datacall automatically calculates a diversion credit for the following:

- The Ontario Deposit Return Program (5.51 kg/capita)
- Used Passenger and Light Truck (PLT) tires (currently 7.1 kg/capita)
- Backyard Composting (100 kg diversion credit for all backyard composters distributed to date) and
- Depending on the implementation of waste reduction policies, for example implementing garbage bag limits and banning grass clippings at curbside, a percentage of total reported leaf and yard waste tonnage will be used as a credit for grasscycling

7. My program was audited. Will I see the corrections to the Datacall when I'm working on the Datacall?

Yes. The Authority changes the Datacall record according to audit results, where applicable. All efforts are made to ensure these changes are reflected in the reporting year's Datacall. Municipalities who were audited will receive a copy of their final audit report prior to the next Datacall reporting deadline. If you have any questions regarding your previous year's data, please contact datacall@rpra.ca.

8. Do we have to answer every question to complete a page?

The Datacall form only marks a page as "incomplete" if there is a mandatory question that has been left unanswered. These questions are marked as "Required". You must complete these questions prior to moving on to another section.

9. Is there a way to cut and paste basic info such as contact details from 2016 to 2017?

Your 2016 data is visible in sections 2, 3, 4, and 7. Otherwise, you can access your 2016 data by logging into your previous Datacall, using the following link: <https://rpradatacall.ca/datacall2016/>. User login information will be the same as what is used for the current year Datacall (2017).

10. How is the amount of Blue Box funding allocated to municipalities determined?

First the Steward Obligation, InKind and Continuous Improvement (CIF) amounts are determined and then, the funding is allocated for each municipal program in the MFAM (Municipal Funding Allocation Model). The MFAM uses three factors to determine the funding amount for each municipal Blue Box program. They are:

1. **Best Practices** score from Section 2.4 (accounts for 15% of funding)
2. **Recovered Tonnage** of Blue Box materials marketed (accounts for 35% of funding)
3. **Net Cost** of Blue Box program (accounts for 50% of funding)

11. How long should I keep my Datacall information?

Please retain information reported in the Datacall for at least five years. Even if a municipality has been audited before, they may be required to show supporting documentation for costs reported in past Datacalls. Information regarding amortized costs must be kept for the entire amortization period.

Section 1

12. Why can't I assign a new primary contact?

The system will default to the contact(s) we have in our records for your program. Please contact the Authority at datacall@rpra.ca to update the primary and secondary contacts.

Section 2.1

13. How do I report multi-family households served privately in Section 2.1 ("Populations and Households Served")?

In Question 1, a multi-family household is any unit or apartment in a residential building with six units or more that is served by your municipality or private contractor. Please report the total number of multi-family **units** and not the number of buildings in your municipality. Example: If your municipality has 4 buildings with 6 units in each building then report 24 multi-family households.

In Question 2, enter the total number of multi-family households (units) that **receive municipal curbside service** for each waste stream listed. For question 2, do not include any multi-family households that do not receive curbside collection from your program.

In Question 3, report the multi-family and/or single-family households that receive only depot collection.

14. What source should I use to acquire household and population information?

The recommended sources are:

- Statistics Canada
- Canada Post
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- Municipal Clerks Department
- Municipal Finance Department
- Municipal Planning Department
- Municipal Property Assessment Corporation
- The Ontario Municipal Directory

If you use another source, please specify the source in the comment section at the bottom of the page in Section 2.1. To keep data consistent, it is recommended that the same data source used in 2016 also be used in 2017.

15. Is there any way to carry over Household numbers served from previous sections? Most of our programs and contracts apply to all households and the number is the same for all sections.

Yes. Users are able to carry over the number of households from Section 2.1 Populations and Households to various contracts in Section 3. In 'Section 3 there will be a question (In the Blue Box Tonnes tab and the Materials Collected sub-tab) asking if all of the households in your program receive the same level of service under this contract. If **YES** is selected, the numbers from Section 2.1 are automatically imported. If the answer is **NO** then household data is not imported and this section will have to be completed manually.

Section 2.2

16. What is the definition of a garbage set-out limit?

The 2017 Datacall User Guide defines a set out limit as no additional bags/bins/carts being allowed beyond the limit, even if there is a bag tag program or additional garbage fees for extra bags.

Section 2.3

17. What may I include under P&E (Promotional and Educational) costs for my Blue Box program?

You may report expenditures for any of the Blue Box P&E materials that are listed in Section 2.3 of the Datacall. Remember to apply a percentage that accurately represents the portion of the materials related to the residential Blue Box program. Do not report any InKind advertising linage.

Note that administration staff cost is for the administration of the P&E materials only, and not for the entire Blue Box program. It is important to keep good records on how the P&E allocations were determined in case of an audit, or if the Authority should request it.

18. How would you calculate P&E admin staff costs?

To calculate Blue Box P&E admin staff costs there are several steps:

- First determine total admin costs (salary, benefits etc.) for promotion and education related to waste management. Enter this cost in the first column.
 - Determine this cost based on the number of hours spent on P&E not the total number of total hours for this position.
- Determine the ratio of the number of hours of Blue Box specific P&E activities versus total number of hours of P&E for waste management.
 - Convert this ratio of hours to a percent. Enter this percent in the second column.

Section 2.4

19. How will the Best Practice Questions be assessed?

Each year, RPRA reviews and grades the responses to the Best Practice questions. Municipalities will receive a Best Practice score (out of 100%) that contributes to 15% of their Blue Box funding. The 2017 relative weights of each Best Practice objective towards the final score is as follows:

- Objective #1- Program Performance Projections and Analysis (16.7% of Best Practice Score towards Blue Box funding)
- Objective #2- Blue Box Efficiency Assessments (8.3% of Best Practice Score towards Blue Box funding)
- Objective #3- Blue Box System Optimization Initiatives (8.3% of Best Practice Score towards Blue Box funding)
- Objective #4- Program Performance Outcomes (33.3% of Best Practice Score towards Blue Box funding)
- Objective #5- Training of Key Program Staff in Core Competencies (11.3% of Best Practice Score towards Blue Box funding)
- Objective #6- Blue Box Promotion and Education Achievements and Initiatives (11.3% of Best Practice Score towards Blue Box funding)
- Objective #7- Development of Effective Policies that Promote Waste Diversion (11.3% of Best Practice Score towards Blue Box funding)

Section 3 (General)

20. Do we include CIF funding we may have received, when calculating Blue Box costs to be included in our Datacall submission?

Do not include any CIF funding in your operating cost calculations however, CIF funding that is used for capital costs should be subtracted off of the total cost reported.

21. How do I add a Blue Box contract in Section 3?

To add a new Blue Box contract, click on one of the existing Blue Box contracts from the list in the Section 3 menu screen/first landing page. This will take you to the contract tab of that particular contract. Create a new contract either by selecting a municipality, or by entering the name of a private contractor and clicking **Add**.

22. What if I no longer need to enter data in a Blue Box contract?

If a Blue Box contract has expired and there are no data to enter, check the **deactivated** checkbox in the Section 3 main menu screen/first landing page that lists all Blue Box contracts. This will automatically complete all of the tabs in that contract. Only delete contracts after one full year of not entering data. However, it is recommended for historical tracking purposes that you do not delete old contracts and instead deactivate them.

23. What sources are considered Blue Box residential and what is considered IC&I?

Please refer to page 9 of the 2017 Datacall User Guide.

24. How do I calculate Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (IC&I) and Non-Blue Box allocations?

Only residential Blue Box costs and tonnes are eligible for industry funding. Therefore, the portion of tonnes and costs from IC&I must be accounted for. There are different ways to calculate these allocations, including those listed below.

For collection, IC&I allocations may be determined by dividing the number of IC&I stops on a collection route by the total number of stops. The number of IC&I stops as a ratio of total stops is a good indicator of costs for collection activities. This allocation may then be applied to all costs and/or tonnes reported in that contract.

For Non-Blue Box allocations (e.g., if a truck co-collects Blue Box material and organics), costs must be apportioned to account for the collection of an additional waste stream.

Allocations for processing costs may be based on tonnes. For instance, if a municipality owns a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) that processes Blue Box material from another municipality, the tonnes and costs related to that processing would have to be removed from the reported tonnes and costs.

Depot costs may be handled in a similar manner, using the proportion of IC&I tonnes to remove ineligible costs. Alternatively, costs could be deducted according to the time that depot staff spend on Non-Blue Box materials, or the percentage of space at the depot allotted to Non-Blue Box materials.

If you are still having trouble allocating IC&I and Non-Blue Box percentages, then contact the Authority at datacall@rpra.ca for assistance.

25. What are acceptable forms of marketing glass?

Marketed glass may be used for the manufacturing of new containers or used for any beneficial application, such as fibreglass, sand blasting, drainage, filter media and construction projects outside of a landfill.

Alternatively, aggregate that meets Ontario Ministry of Transportation Standards may include glass marketed or used as an aggregate replacement (including aggregate in a landfill road) where the glass is no more than 15% of the aggregate mix as outlined in Ministry of Transportation specifications.

26. Where do I report #3 Plastics?

As a collected Blue Box material, #3 Plastics are reported under Other Bottles and Containers (#3, 4, 5, 7). As a marketed material, #3 Plastics are reported under Mixed Plastics #1-#7, or Commingled Materials.

27. If I report both collected and marketed tonnes, do I answer “No” to both of the questions pertaining to the table in Section 3 (Blue Box Tonnes tab and Tonnes and Material Revenue sub-tab)?

You answer **NO** if all the collected and marketed tonnes are reported in the same table.

28. What is a depot?

A depot is any of the following:

- Drop-off site
- Transfer station
- Landfill
- Community collection site
- Special event day site

Depot collection involves residents bringing their materials to a specified location, whereas a curbside program collecting collects materials directly from residential addresses.

29. Is my depot a single stream collection or multi-stream collection?

Single stream collection is defined as a collection system where all materials are collected in a commingled mixture and there is no pre-sorting. A multi-stream collection system has at least two or more separate bins for different materials (e.g. a bin for containers and plastics, and another bin for paper/fibers).

30. Where do I report market tip fees?

You report market tip fees in Section 3, in the Blue Box Tonnes tab and Tonnes and Material Revenue sub-tab. Scroll to the right of the table and input the tip fee next to the appropriate Blue Box material. Market tip fees are mostly applicable to glass.

The Datacall treats market tip fees as a processing cost, so do not deduct market tip fees from revenues.

31. Are bulky rigid plastics considered a blue box material (i.e. broken blue boxes/garbage cans, plastic lawn furniture etc.)?

No. A complete list of Blue Box materials is included in the Datacall User Guide Appendix F. Remember Blue Box materials are Printed Paper and Packaging (PPP). Report bulky rigid plastics as Other Recyclables in Section 3.3 Non-Blue Box Services.

Section 3.1

32. How do I report revenue-sharing agreements?

Indicate if you share revenue by selecting **YES** or **NO** in the drop-down menu under **Revenue**. If you are a municipality that retains all Blue Box revenue for this contract, answer **NO** for this question.

If you select **YES**, enter the percentage of revenue kept by your contractor and the form will automatically calculate the percentage received by your municipality.

If your revenue-sharing agreement is based on an arrangement other than, or in addition to, a percent revenue share, please describe your revenue-sharing agreement in the comment box provided.

33. I have several Blue Box contracts, but all include the same level of service. Do I have to report separately?

Yes. For Blue Box material, the Authority requires the information to be submitted for each individual contract or service provider.

34. We do not have a formal contract with a company to collect recyclables. Do I still need to enter this information in the Datacall?

Yes. Please enter information separately for each service provider, including any informal agreements with service providers for collection and/or processing of Blue Box materials.

Section 3.2

35. Do I have to report in the Datacall on behalf of other municipalities if I process their Blue Box material?

If you process material for another municipality that reports in the Datacall, please do not include tonnage and financial data for that municipality in your Datacall submission. Instead, please report this material as IC&I in your Datacall.

36. Do I need to update the IC&I and Non-Blue Box percentages for capital expenditures that were purchased in previous years?

Yes. For all capital purchases (even those reported in previous years), the IC&I and Non-Blue Box percentages must be updated to the current year's amounts. The Net Residential Blue Box Cost (grey box on the right) must reflect the portion of the item that was used solely for Blue Box purposes in the current reporting year.

Example: A Depot/Transfer Building was purchased in 2016 for \$100,000. Twenty percent of the building was used for garbage and 20 percent was used for IC&I, totaling a Net Residential Blue Box Cost of \$64,000. In 2017, 20 percent of the building was still used for garbage, but only 10 percent of it was used for IC&I material. To reflect this change in the 2017 Datacall, the 2016 Depot /Transfer Building line item must be updated to 10 percent IC&I, and 20 percent Non-Blue Box. The Datacall automatically calculates the Net Residential Blue Box Cost to equal \$72,000.00.

Section 3.3

Note: This section is not applicable to Short Form Datacall users.

37. Do I still have to report the tonnes of Non-Blue Box materials (e.g. other recyclable material collected in the Blue Box, i.e. scrap metal) by each contract?

Municipalities no longer need to report Non-Blue Box data by municipal or private contract service type. Instead, this information is to be consolidated and reported as services provided by both private contractors and services provided by municipal staff.

38. Where do I report white goods?

White goods, including small appliances, are to be reported in the WEEE tab of the Non-Blue Box Contracts/Services Section (Section 3.3). Scrap metal, not including white goods, are to be reported in the Non-Blue Box Services tab - Other Recyclables sub-tab.

39. Will municipalities be given a per-capita credit for the diversion of WEEE?

No. Municipalities are still required to report the tonnes of WEEE collected. Eighty percent of the material reported counts toward diversion. A 20 percent residue rate is assumed for all municipal programs, regardless of whether they receive a different residue rate from their processor.

40. If WEEE is collected by a retailer or non-municipal organization can this count towards our program's diversion rate?

This depends on the specifics of the arrangement. Please contact the Authority for further information and clarification. In general, only residential WEEE collected by municipal efforts is reported in the Datacall.

41. Where do we report shingles in the Datacall?

Household shingles generated by your residents can be reported in Section 3.3: Non-Blue Box. However, if the shingles are from a business or commercial source (including a private contractor, construction companies, etc.) they must be reported as IC&I because the material is being collected by a business and being brought to a depot/transfer station/landfill as an IC&I material.

42. If we do not weigh drywall & brick and concrete separately, can we add the commingled tonnage in Other C&D recyclables or Other instead?

Yes. If the items are commingled and there is no way to report the tonnes separately, you can report them under Other C&D material.

Section 4

43. What is the purpose of Section 4?

Section 4 does not require any information to be entered, and therefore does not require a completion checkmark. It is a summary of data already entered in Section 3. It is good practice to review Section 4 to check for accuracy and completeness.

Section 5

Note: This section is not applicable to Short Form Datacall users.

44. Can Municipal Hazardous Special Waste (MHSW) still be reported in the Datacall?

Yes. The total MHSW tonnage collected may be reported in Section 5 GAP, question k). The percentage recycled and reused may be reported in question m).

45. Where do I report material diverted through reuse facilities?

Question c) in Section 5 GAP asks for *tonnes distributed for reuse through facilities operated directly by municipality*. Full credit is given for reported tonnes in this question.

Additionally, the Datacall asks for *tonnes distributed for reuse through facilities to which municipality provides no-charge disposal of residual waste*. Ten percent of any tonnage reported in this field will be counted toward diversion.

46. What section do we report tires in?

Each program is assigned an automatic credit of 7.1kg/cap in the GAP Section 5, GAP questions j). Do not report tire tonnes in any section of the Datacall form.

47. Is the diversion rate calculated at the end of the Datacall (GAP Summary) accurate?

The diversion rate calculated in the GAP summary is unverified. Do not publish your GAP diversion rate until Datacall verification and analysis has been completed and the diversion rates have been published by the Authority.

48. Can small quantity IC&I collected along a residential route (e.g. a business improvement area be included as a residential tonnage)?

As per page 10 of the User Guide, all IC&I tonnes must be removed from reported tonnages and from reported costs. Page 10 of the User Guide specifies that business improvement areas (BIA), are to be reported as IC&I; however, apartments above these businesses can be included as residential. Please keep a record of how the allocation was calculated. If you would like additional assistance with calculating the IC&I rate on your BIA, please contact datacall@rpra.ca.

49. Can a park or open space collected along a residential route be included?

As per page 10 of the User Guide, public space recycling containers that are comingled with residential Blue Box materials (e.g. bins in public parks) collected along a residential route, are eligible for Blue box funding. The bins do not have to be permanently placed, so long as they are not special event or temporary bins, they are eligible for funding.

50. Can a school collected along a residential route be included as residential material?

As per page 9 of the User Guide, public and secondary schools collected along a residential route, concurrently with residential tonnes are eligible for funding. If a separate or dedicated collection run is made, it is no longer eligible for funding.

51. Is there an appeal process if a municipality disagrees with being selected for a datacall audit? If not, will RPRA consider such an option?

If you have a concern about your audit selection, please contact RPRA.

52. A number of municipalities would benefit from an earlier release date for the datacall. Is RPRA willing to consider opening up the process earlier and if so, what is a reasonable release date for future years?

This year, we moved the launch date forward by 2 weeks.

53. Have you got any updated guidance related to accounting for non-obligated materials? E.g., some municipalities collect pots and pans and horticultural plastics in their program.

Please continue to report all Blue Box tonnes into the Datacall.

54. Is there a checklist of the information needed prior to beginning the Datacall form?

We currently do not provide a checklist because each program is different and has a different method of organizing their records. However, before beginning the Datacall, it would be helpful to have the following information: an invoice for all the year's Blue Box contracted services, a copy of all the tonnes collected/marketed for the year, updated numbers for municipal population and households, the number of households who received waste management services, any Blue Box promotion and education costs, a list of Blue Box capital purchases and a list of any additional costs incurred for operating the Blue Box program.