

**Terrapure Environmental Response to
Modernizing Hazardous Waste Reporting in Ontario: Discussion Paper
Ministry of the Environment, Parks and Conservation
ERO Number: 019-1760**

Introduction

Terrapure Environmental is pleased to respond to the Modernizing Hazardous Waste Reporting in Ontario Discussion Paper. In general, Terrapure supports the Ontario Government's Digital Service Mandate, as there are several processes, like hazardous waste reporting, that need to be modernized. In a highly regulated industry such as Terrapure's, we are at the frontline of cumbersome and arduous processes that need to be simplified, sped up and to cost less. As more of these processes are modernized, businesses like ours will be in an even better position to support the goal of strengthening Ontario's economy while protecting the environment.

Terrapure and its Role

Terrapure Environmental is a leading Canadian provider of professional, cost-effective environmental and industrial services and recycling solutions that help address industry's environmental challenges. With an unwavering focus on environmental, health and safety excellence, the company provides services that minimize waste and maximize the recovery or recycling of valuable industrial by-products through a coast-to-coast network of facilities and on customer sites. Our presence in Ontario is significant to Terrapure nationally, with 25 locations employing over 750 people, including the only lead acid battery recycler west of Quebec, an industrial waste landfill and number of specialty material handling, recycling and disposal facilities.

The following is our position and comments of on key areas of the discussion paper with some suggestions for ensuring a smooth transition to a modern hazardous waste reporting system.

1. We strongly support the move away from paper manifests and waste reporting, for a few of the following reasons:

- The internal organization of paper manifests is tedious, space and time-consuming, and an additional expense (e.g., cost of person-hours related to scanning/emailing/filing/etc. that could be put towards more useful tasks) to our business.
- Given the current pandemic, the transfer of paper manifests from generator to carrier to receiver only increases the possibility of spreading viruses; an effective/user-friendly electronic manifesting and waste reporting system would have a positive impact on the health and safety of our staff and customers.
- As part of the waste management industry, we should be leading the way by example and doing everything possible to reduce our environmental footprint at every opportunity.

2. One overarching impact of eliminating paper manifests and waste reporting will be the learning curve and normalization processes associated with electronic manifesting. It will be crucial to:

- Ensure multiple opportunities (e.g., training webinars, instruction manuals, etc.) are made available by RPRA or the MECP for staff to be effectively trained on how to use e-manifesting and other digital reporting services.
- Manifesting staff do not have the bandwidth to interpret regulation, so we believe a live support phone line would be beneficial, in order to ask questions and troubleshoot.
 - This support line would need to be more robust than the current HWIN Help Desk, as it has proven to be vague in their responses and often simply points to regulation instead of providing clear answers.

3. We believe strongly that there should be financial incentive (e.g., cheaper manifest fees compared to current paper-based fees) provided to switch over to e-manifesting

- This suggestion and its implementation would recognize that this transition will come at a cost of sector stakeholder to upgrade technology and train staff.

4. Furthermore, consideration should be given to requiring all stakeholders to switch to e-manifesting in order to reduce complexity across the system. This would only be feasible by reducing manifest fees particularly at present where the different parts of the economy have seen a downturn in 2020. If not, complications could arise in several scenarios, such as:

- If all three parties (i.e., generator, carrier, and receiver) in a shipment are different companies and if all three are not participating in the e-manifesting process, this creates a degree of complexity,
 - Each party must agree to participate electronically, but if one party does not agree to participate, will the process be forced to resort to paper-based manifesting?
 - We do not believe it is fair to be penalized for other parties' decisions (e.g., higher tonnage/manifest fees associated with paper-based manifesting once e-manifesting is introduced).
 - Is there another solution, other than mandating e-manifesting and offsetting the upgrade costs with reduced manifest fees?

5. We support the removal of the annual registration renewal requirement, as it is burdensome and time-consuming for our staff. We also support the idea of registering when reporting first activity, but another complication arises if a facility does not participate in e-manifesting.

- How will reporting on first activity be completed if first activity is paper based?
- This another situation where mandating e-manifesting for reduced fees would simplify matters rather than just encouraging it?

6. We support the move to provide authority to waste management companies to register/report on behalf of generators for a several reasons, such as:

- We constantly receive requests to help generators maneuver the current HWIN system (e.g., register their waste classes); as it is often a point of confusion for generators and simply not the way they want to spend their time.

- Conducting digital reporting on a generator's behalf would allow them to focus on their priorities (i.e., their business) while ensuring their subject waste is taken care of by waste management professionals.
 - In order to help facilitate this, a standardized template could be developed or approved, that permits waste management companies to register their customers for their waste streams. Several waste management stakeholders would welcome providing this additional service as it would eliminate the troubleshooting role we have taken on.

7. To ensure generators are aware of their regulatory obligations, a guidebook, potentially an amendment to the Registration Guidance Manual for Generators of Liquid Industrial and Hazardous Waste, would be the best approach to describe the obligations.

- This should be done in addition to providing various memos and webinars to ensure stakeholders are aware of these changes.

8. We support the electronic storage of all records and eliminating the need for paper records. This support of course comes with the requirement that records will be stored and backed-up properly and privately. E-storage will enable the ability to search/look-up an e-manifest. Some suggestions/cautions include:

- Ensuring RPRA or the MECP conduct all necessary discussions with Transport Canada to guarantee no negative backlash associated with e-manifesting and storing records electronically.
- Ensure that all completed e-manifests are accessible and downloadable for reference and company use. This will assist with our various internal annual reporting requirements.
- The number of years that stakeholders will be able to look-up 'archived' manifests/documents in the digital reporting service is key. Will stakeholders be able to access all records going forward?
- We suggest that an awareness/training session be provided on all requirements related to short-term storage and onsite waste management requirements.

10. The new program should have the capability to push electronic notifications to multiple contacts, so it brings it to the attention to multiple facets of our company, such as Operations, Environmental Affairs, Transport, etc. Furthermore, capability to assign different user rights should be built in. This should extend to within the stakeholder's organization with different user permissions in terms of access and visibility. For example:

- A transporter/service provider may be granted the rights to set up an e-manifest, but we do not want them to have visibility into how much waste is generated or the other service providers we partner with.

11. We suggest including a function that prompts, when completing an e-manifest, whether a carrier or receiver is not approved to transport or receive that waste class (tied in with their ECAs)

12. Furthermore, to ensure timely approvals, when e-manifests are corrected it should determine who has the authority to approve the change. This will need to be clarified for example if it is the person that signed the manifest or the company owner/administrator on the reporting system.

13. We want to ensure there are no duplications and that the new digital reporting system aligns with other provincial and federal regulatory requirements (e.g., TDGA, EIHWHRMR,

etc.). There will be no cost/time savings or efficiencies gained if we must still submit another set of paperwork to meet TDGA or EIHWHRMR's requirements.

14. Consideration will need to be given to ensure ease of use and accessibility for users that are not technically savvy or are always on-the-move (e.g., drivers). One of our biggest challenges with HWIN is how difficult it is for drivers to sign an e-manifest. Drivers do not always have access to a computer at a customer site, and the phone alternative is not a good option, as drivers do not use the system frequently enough to remember the required passwords. The flexibility of allowing mobile, tablet and desktop access for this digital reporting system is critical, along with offline entry capability for remote locations that do not have reliable internet connection.

15. Terrapure feels that priority needs to be given to compatibility with current in-house systems. The digital reporting system must have the functionality to set up templates for repeat use and prepare e-manifests in advance. Currently, to minimize time on-site and drive efficiency and accuracy, the paper manifest allows us to prepare manifests in advance with much of the information completed before actual pickup. On the new system, users should have the ability to save progress at various stages as they prepare the e-manifest before final submission.

16. To further reduce duplication, all reporting to RPRA (for batteries, tires, etc.) should be tied the same system, or linked to the RPRA Registry, therefore eliminating most paper reporting.

17. Terrapure would like to clarify how the digital reporting system will handle successive carriers. Often, this is the reason why we continue to use paper manifests.

18. Since information will be electronic and not paper-based, Terrapure would want to ensure there is an understanding from emergency responders/enforcement officers that when retrieving shipment information, that there will be a reasonable amount of time given to provide the information.

19. We would like to see a "comment/additional information" field built into the e-manifest. We often identify what "07" means on the manifest in box 9 (e.g., whether it is a tote or pail) – this same need must be accommodated for in the digital reporting program.

20. We want to ensure all generator information (e.g., address, contact details, registered waste classes, etc.) is transferred over from the current HWIN system to the new program. We do not have the bandwidth, in addition to increased cost and time, required to re-register all our generator sites in preparation of a new system.

21. Terrapure suggests considering building in various other capabilities within the new online platform to make it more of a "one-stop shop" for waste management reporting, filing and tracking. Some of these additional elements could include:

- A standardized template for submitting financial assurance re-evaluations.
- The ability to track progress of submitted ECA applications/amendments using this program.

Conclusion

Terrapure appreciates the opportunity to offer comment on the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks' discussion paper on Modernizing Hazardous Waste Reporting. Terrapure feels its depth of experience in this space is valuable in providing support and suggestions regarding this facet of waste sector and what will help it run more efficiently.

Terrapure looks forward to working with the Province and participating in consultations to develop regulations for Modernizing Hazardous Waste Reporting in Ontario.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with various members of the MECP and government to discuss these suggestions and comments further.