



More Ontario municipalities need to embrace asphalt and concrete recycling

July 20, 2020, Vaughan, Ont. – Every year in Ontario, millions of tonnes of asphalt and concrete are removed from construction sites. Much of the material could be cleaned, screened and recycled, but a lot of it still ends up being trucked to landfills where it's stockpiled in mountains of rubble.

The reason why this is happening was discussed in a half-hour podcast, aptly entitled [Aggregate Reuse and Recycling](#), that was released today by the [Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario \(RCCAO\)](#). It is the fourth installment in a nine-part, thought-provoking series, called Conversations About Construction, that is aimed at raising awareness about issues affecting the industry.

Rob Bradford, executive director of the [Toronto and Area Road Builders Association](#) (TARBA), and Kyle Martin, project manager at [Fermar Paving](#), talked about the issue with Dave Trafford, host of the Weekend Morning Show on Newstalk 1010 in Toronto. Despite myriad benefits to recycling aggregates, they note that many engineers are still choosing to use virgin material. TARBA commissioned [independent research](#) to examine the aggregate recycling policies and practices and ranked the municipalities based on whether they are leaders or laggards in supporting aggregate recycling.

“It’s easier to go with the virgin aggregate option than to, in their minds, take a chance and use a recycled aggregate,” says Bradford.

An independent research study commissioned by TARBA and released in 2018 showed some municipalities used virtually no recycled aggregate and therefore were throwing away perfectly good renewable resources into the garbage via their landfills.

“That’s unacceptable in this green world where you and I sit and pick banana peels out of our blue bin to put in our green bin,” says Bradford. “We’ve got millions and millions of tonnes of stones going to landfill as garbage. That doesn’t speak to any nature of environmental commitment by the municipalities, in my opinion.”

According to Martin, recycled aggregate is being used by the Ministry of Transportation and on some of the biggest stages, but some smaller municipalities have still been reluctant to use the material.

That sort of culture probably won't change until a new approach is adopted that advocates for a more sustainable way of doing things, he says.

"If you had to tell them that they had to find a spot or a home for 100,000 tonnes of recycled asphalt coming off the road they would certainly promote trying to get some of that going back into it as well and that's what hasn't happened yet on the contract side."

The podcasts cover a variety of topics related to the residential and civil construction sectors. Five more podcasts are scheduled to be released on Mondays over the coming weeks.

RCCAO is a unique alliance of construction labour and management groups whose members build the homes, transportation and water systems that are of critical importance to Ontario residents and businesses.

To listen to the podcasts, [click here](#) or go to www.rccao.com.

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