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Polystyrene recycling plant reopens

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A Malton processing plant that closed in December will re-open later this year under new ownership, allowing Peel and other municipalities to continue sending polystyrene products to the recycling facility.

The former Canadian Polystyrene Recycling Association (CPRA), located on Tranmere Dr., was the only location in Ontario where Peel and other municipalities could send their polystyrene products.

Sam Alavy, owner of a group of businesses in Port Hope dedicated to the recovery and re-manufacturing of polystyrene into picture frames and other construction mouldings, confirmed to *The News* this morning that his company has purchased the former Malton plant.

The new company, to be called the Canadian Polystyrene Recycling Alliance, will open as soon as possible, said Alavy. When he learned how the CPRA was winding down its business and that Ontario municipalities might be left with nowhere to recycle meat trays and other packaging products they collect in their blue boxes, he approached the association.

"This is the future," said Alavy, whose company recycles foam packaging into several products, primarily picture frames. "We have no choice but to recycle."

The purchase of the Mississauga facility will double his capacity.

"The government has really washed their hands of it," Alavy said. "It's a pity no one is interested in tackling this problem. But we are a company that is already recycling Styrofoam."

Opened in 1991, the CPRA was funded by a number of resin producers, product manufacturers and end-users of polystyrene. It announced in December that, despite the fact the City of Toronto had decided to add polystyrene to its blue box collection in 2008 and it had made \$300,000 in changes to accommodate that additional collection, it was being forced to close.



The former Canadian Polystyrene Recycling Association in Malton is reopening under a new name.

The plant has been badly hurt by the healthier Canadian dollar and the fact many municipalities don't allow residents to include polystyrene in blue boxes for recycling.

Plastics recycling is a North American market trading in U.S. dollars. The weaker currency south of the border resulted in a 30 per cent decline in revenue for CPRA.

Alavy said he hopes to resume operations shortly. In the long term, he said, he doesn't know if he'll continue to run two plants or if they'll be merged in Mississauga or Port Hope.

Andy Pollock, the Region of Peel's director of waste management, said, "this is good news for Peel because the CPRA is the only market for polystyrene. If they were closed, it is questionable what we could have done. They are the only market in this part of the country."

Peel had shipped a load of polystyrene to CPRA just before it closed. It takes several months to collect enough material to send another. By the time the new plant opens, the timing will be perfect to ship a new load, Pollock said.

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