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Northern Manitoba Scrap Metal Removal Program

What to do with scrap metal including items such as construction equipment, old appliances, old aluminum, vehicles and building materials left lying around our Great White North? These rusting footprints left by big industries that have come and gone have been piling up for decades.

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These waste piles are not only public eyesores, but in some cases, they also pose serious environmental hazards.

In 2004, the North Central Community Futures Development Corporation Inc. decided to do something about it, and the Northern Manitoba Scrap Metal Removal Program was born. The Northern Manitoba Scrap Metal Removal Program was tasked with recycling tons of scrap metal from Northern Manitoba and Nunavut. The need for the program was urgent.

While other communities are normally paid for their scrap metal, the higher cost of providing service

to remote locations puts Northern communities at a distinct disadvantage. If distances are too great, recycling companies may charge a community large fees to pick up the scrap. In other words, the cost of collection and transport exceeds the value of the metal. Add to this the difficulty of getting to those communities only accessible by vehicles on winter roads, and by air during the rest of the year.

With the leadership of North Central Community Futures Development Corporation, the Northern Manitoba Scrap Metal Removal Program began in 2004 when several different communities, ➔



→ private business, government agencies and concerned individuals decided to partner in order to address the issue of the scrap piles present in their communities. The Program was designed to protect the environment while allowing for healthy, safe and attractive neighbourhoods that would reflect their northern pride.

The initiative grew out of, and was facilitated by, a memorandum of understanding signed between Nunavut and Manitoba signed in 2000. This agreement outlined a number of areas of interest including health, transportation, mining, tourism, cultural development, arts and crafts, value-added processing, resource development, energy, trade and commerce, regional and community economic development, and education.

The opportunity was created when a barge service was established between Rankin Inlet, Nunavut and Churchill, Manitoba. Barges typically transport large loads of necessities such as food and supplies to northern communities, but return empty on their way back. These empty barges provided the perfect opportunity to transport scrap metal out of these communities.

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In 2004, they were able to remove and ship over 36,000 pounds of scrap metal from Rankin Inlet to Churchill and another 1,188 tons from Gillam, Manitoba. Scrap was then transported by rail and truck to Mandak Metals in Selkirk for processing and recycling. In 2005, approximately 1,300 tons of scrap metal was cleaned up from the communities of Churchill, Rankin Inlet and Coral Harbour.

This initiative is a great example of not only innovative waste reduction and pollution prevention practices in Manitoba, but also construction and demolition waste management and pollution prevention. Some benefits of scrap metal recycling include

getting rid of some products which possess health and environmental hazards such as mercury and lead in a safe manner, building community pride and saving on energy and reducing greenhouse gases. This is also a great example of how partnerships can overcome the barriers to solutions that one single organization or community could not achieve on their own.