

Bolton students working to keep wrappers out of dumps

Students at St. John the Baptist Elementary School in Bolton have been collecting cookie and cracker wrappers, among other items, for recycling, and their numbers are pretty impressive.

The material is being sent to TerraCycle, and they recently reported the students are very close to recycling their 20,000th item. The amount that's been collected so far, if lined up in a row, would stretch right across Albion Hills conservation Area.

Teacher Betty de Groot said that in addition to the wrappers, pens and markers are being collected for recycling, as well as lunchtime containers and drink pouches. There are also corporate sponsors for the various category of items, such as Christies, Schneiders and Kool-aid.

This also makes St. John the Baptist one of TerraCycle's top collecting schools in Canada.

"Our Eco Team has been very dedicated to the cause of cleaning up the environment," de Groot said. "In the school, we collect not only cookie and cracker wrappers but also used drink pouches and lunch kit packaging. Thanks to these programs, we've been able to keep the community clean, plant trees, a butterfly garden and more. The students have learned that much of our waste actually holds value."

Instead of going to landfill, TerraCycle pointed out these wrappers will be upcycled into tote bags or recycled into picnic tables and other useful products. As well, with the funds raised through this program, the school is hoping to invest in a new water filtration system "all the more reason for local residents to help St. John the Baptist, by donating as much waste as possible to their collection."

"We're so proud of this accomplishment, and can't thank these teachers and students enough for their dedication to recycling with us," TerraCycle Canada General Manager Leslie Tan said.



Teacher Betty de Groot and members of the Eco Team at St. John the Baptist Elementary School show off some of the many items they have collected from recycling. Photo by Bill Rea