

Waste Audit Services Project Final Summary Report





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ISO 9001 Registered Company

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FOREWORD BY RESOURCE RECOVERY FUND BOARD, INC. (NOVA SCOTIA)

Resource Recovery Fund Board, Inc. (Nova Scotia), better known by its familiar acronym RRFB, is tasked with five core mandates – all of which have been integral in the Province achieving its goals identified in the Nova Scotia Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy (1995).

In 2007, the Province renewed its commitment to provide residents with a cleaner and sustainable environment through the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act which sets out twenty-one broader and more aggressive goals, including a significant reduction in the amount of waste Nova Scotians send to landfill.

This project marks the implementation of a key component of RRFB's strategic plan and melds its mandate to "develop and implement industry stewardship programs" with the Province's goal of achieving a disposal rate of no more than 300 kilograms per person per year by 2015. The findings provide a wealth of information, guidance and insight for stakeholders which can serve many purposes: facilitating performance measurement, revealing best practices, targeting education and awareness efforts and much more.

Results from this project and planned successive waste audits will provide baseline data regarding types and volumes of materials entering our provincial landfills and balefills. This project is a first step in improving on Nova Scotia's already impressive performance in solid-waste diversion and recycling. It is intended as a tool for improvement and to guide further work, helping RRFB, in partnership with municipalities and Nova Scotia Environment (NSE), to effectively focus on materials which are appropriate for diversion.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Successful planning and monitoring of waste management practices in the Province of Nova Scotia, Canada, requires the ability to accurately measure the composition and amounts of various materials disposed at the province's municipal solid waste landfills. Those materials represent the residue left after the "3 R's" of reduction, reuse and recycling efforts have diminished the amount sent to landfills. The cost and potential environmental burden which those residues present to Nova Scotians are important, and accurate statistical information assists in the planning of future initiatives to do better. Resource Recovery Fund Board, Inc. commissioned the 2011 waste audit as a key component of its strategic plan.

Detailed, professionally conducted waste audits can provide the accurate statistical information needed to identify and quantify materials which currently are being directed to final disposal, but which may have potential for diversion. In addition to carrying out the first province-wide, standardized waste audit in 2011, a procedures manual was developed to guide future audits.

The 2011 waste audit was carried out during late March through end of June, 2011, by collecting and analyzing a total of 84 representative samples from the province's seven municipal landfill service areas. The samples were sorted into 169 categories, which can be grouped under broader headings as follows:

• Fibre

- Glass
- Organics

Plastic

- Metal
- Dairy Containers
- Non-dairy Containers
 Textiles
 - Construction and Demolition (C&D)
- Disposable cups
- Bulky Items

- Special Care Waste
- Redeemable Containers
- Municipal Hazardous and Special Waste (MHSW) Regulated Paint
 - Regulated Tires
 - Off-road Tires
 - Regulated Electronics

Sampling was carried out separately for two sectors representing sources of waste materials, i.e. Residential and Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) sources. An equal number of Residential and ICI samples were taken from each of the seven landfill service areas over a fourteen-week period.

When the statistics on waste composition resulting from the 2011 audit were analyzed and applied to the tonnages going to the seven municipal landfills in the fiscal reporting year 2009-2010, the results for the major groupings of materials, province wide, on a tonnage basis, are shown in these two pie charts (the top six groups are shown, with the remainder lumped as "other"):





CHAPTER 1 **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the 2011 waste audit is related to the mandate of the Resource Recovery Fund Board, Inc. (RRFB), as legislated by the Province of Nova Scotia, Canada. RRFB is a not-for-profit corporation established by but operating at arm's length from the government, delegated to administer several programs including:

- Beverage Container Program
- Used Tire Management Program
- Consumer Paint Product Stewardship Program

RRFB works in close concert with the seven solid waste-resource management regions in the province and Nova Scotia Environment (NSE) to seek out additional opportunities to divert materials from landfills. This challenge has been made even more important by recent provincial government legislation which demands reduction of landfill disposal to an average of no more than 300 kg per capita annually, by the year 2015. Maximizing diversion of waste to beneficial uses represents a clear environmental benefit and as well an economic development opportunity.

One purpose of this project, resulting in this report, was that of conducting a first province-wide waste audit on a standardized basis in Nova Scotia. The other purpose was the development of a waste audit manual tailored to RRFB's specific requirements and procedures. Both were carried out.

A particular challenge for RRFB is to carry out future waste audits so that a reasonably frequent gathering of comparable, credible information is economically achieved. This will, in future, be facilitated by the use of a highly standardized manual of practice, as it will provide the objectivity and statistical continuity desired, and also for economical and efficiently conducted audits.

CHAPTER 2 WASTE AUDIT METHOD

The sampling schedule for each landfill's service area was designed to maximize the time between samples within a prescribed fourteen week period, for both residential and ICI sampling. Sampling was scheduled to occur on every day of the week, Monday through Friday. The actual schedule is attached as Appendix A.

Sampling was accomplished by sending a covered truck and trained personnel to the landfill/transfer station sites to collect samples. Random sample selection and handling at the sites was as per the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment 1999 manual prepared SENES¹. The sorting of the samples was carried out in an industrial building, at a location fairly central to the sample collection locations, to optimize the cost of transportation involved in collection. The sorting station provided for comfortable, efficient sorting. Personnel were trained and equipped with suitable personal protective equipment. The categories into which samples were sorted were dictated by RRFB.

Selection of samples at each site was carried out by drawing materials from different points in the dumped sample load. Each sample was a minimum of 135 kilograms for residential and 200 kilograms for ICI. The sample was loaded into the collection truck, and kept identifiable and separate from other samples on the same load, through the use of dividers and labelling in the truck compartment. The technician then started a standard chain of custody form, such as would be used to track lab samples, as each sample was loaded. Place, category of sample, time of sampling, site conditions, waste haulage vehicle characteristics (and tare and loaded weights if available, or observation of weight otherwise), sample weight as recorded on site, and any unusual matters were recorded on a data form.

The samples were then trucked to the central sorting station, and placed in individual bunkers built for this purpose. Each bunker was labelled as to identity of the sample. The sorting of a sample would begin by moving the sample out of its bunker onto the floor. The materials were then sorted directly from the floor or on sorting tables, according to personnel preference, into the prescribed categories. Staff methodically sorted the items into clear bags and buckets, aided by a master categorization chart and labelling on bag racks so as to consistently observe the categorization required. When the sorting and weighing of a sample was completed, the next sample was processed.

¹ Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. 1999. *Recommended Waste Characterization Methodology for Direct Waste Analysis Studies in Canada.* See Bibliography. This manual is regarded as an exemplary practice manual, and was selected by RRFB as the methodological guide for this project.

The table of groups, categories and subcategories is shown in Appendix B.

The full list of the 169 subcategories was divided into 18 major groups as follows:

- Fibre;
- Organics;
- Dairy containers;
- Non-dairy containers;
- Plastic;
- Disposable cups;
- Glass;
- Metal;
- Municipal Hazardous and Special Waste (MHSW);
- Textiles;
- Construction and Demolition (C&D);
- Bulky items;
- Special Care Waste;
- Redeemable containers;
- Regulated paint;
- Regulated tires;
- Off-road tires; and
- Regulated electronics.

The statistical results are described and illustrated in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3 **RESULTS**

The sampling plan provided for an equal number of samples to be taken from the materials destined for disposal at the seven regional landfill sites in Nova Scotia (for clarity, the landfill in Colchester County is sometimes called the "balefill"). The locations of the landfills are illustrated on the following map. Some landfills receive their materials via transfer stations and, in those cases, the number of samples taken at these sites was calculated on the proportion of tonnage received at the transfer stations versus that received at the landfill to which the waste would be sent).



Figure 1: Solid Waste Disposal Locations

An important lesson learned in the work was that a schedule for waste audit sampling needs to be prepared with extremely detailed consultation with site operators as was done in this waste audit, concerning municipal collection schedules and traffic patterns, so that schedule changes are minimized.

Analysis of the data was carried out, testing and validating statistical accuracy, for each of the 169 materials in the detailed categorization prescribed by RRFB. In addition, summary calculations were carried out on each material category "group". For example, the organics "group" includes the five organics "categories" of food waste, tissue, yard waste, fibre and other. The combined "category" weights represent a total for the "group" – these totals are presented in Appendix C.

The results of the grouping, calculated for the whole province on a tonnage basis for the fiscal reporting year 2009-2010, are presented in Appendix C in the form of tables, and below in the form of pie charts:



The proportions of broad categories of waste are generally not greatly different from region to region. Certainly, local authorities will note the minor differences amongst themselves, and all will be able to use the data to analyze and consider improvements to their respective waste reduction and diversion programs.

The scope of work related to the research and production of this report does not include an interpretation of the data for planning or policy development, for example, whether the percentage occurrence of a particular category or group seems to be unusually low or high. The data, once in the hands of RRFB, may be used for further analyses of interest.

CHAPTER 4 **CONCLUSIONS**

At the conclusion of the project, the waste audit data from the 2011 audit had been properly compiled and presented, and as well, the characteristics of Nova Scotia's landfill services had been understood in the context of designing future waste audits. The process of developing the Waste Audit Manual in a template form for use in future waste audits resulted in a Manual template which is sensitive to the way in which this province's waste management system is operated.

Conclusions are included in this report to assist the reader in understanding and using the 2011 waste audit data and the Manual template.

4.1 2011 Waste Audit Data

The 2011 waste audit data was produced and compiled substantially as was originally planned. Changes to the planned operation of the audit were related to unforeseen circumstances including:

- Early in the audit schedule, winter snow deteriorated road conditions so as to prevent sample collection schedule on one day, and mechanical trouble with the collection truck similarly prevented the intended sample collection on one other day. In each case, missed samples were collected very soon afterward.
- At some collection sites, the service traffic is quite sparse. This prevented the intended collection of samples at all hours at all of the collection sites, and alternative arrangements were made with site operators in those cases to set aside samples before waste audit staff arrived on site.
- Municipal collection schedules in some municipalities did not coincide on a small number of days
 with sample collection, in that some areas feature alternating bi-weekly collection of organics and
 residue waste, and the original schedule called for collection of residue samples on the off week.
 Some rescheduling was needed to ensure suitable samples were taken as close to the intended
 schedule as possible.

The above departures from schedule, or any other matter, did not materially affect the value of the data. The processes of transporting, sorting and data recording were carried out as originally planned, with no unusual circumstances which would affect data quality.

The 2011 waste audit data was compiled as intended and no significant issues arose in the calculation or presentation of the results. The resulting data are not markedly different from the results which were

expected, i.e. there were no great departures from data similarly produced from other surveys of solid waste residue generated in Nova Scotia.

It may also be said that organics and plastics together constitute at least half of the residue waste in most locations, and that organics constitute the largest component of the residue waste stream in all cases, both residential and ICI in origin. Indeed, organics alone comprise between a quarter and a third of the residue stream in this province, in round figures.

Fibre generally constitutes about a tenth to a fifth of the waste stream, and it is seen that textiles constitute almost as much. The textiles category includes not only clothing but also bedding and footwear, but excludes carpeting.

Since the 2011 waste audit was the first comprehensive, province wide waste audit carried out in accordance with a standardized methodology, it was possible to generate some interesting data which consolidated data from the seven survey locations to produce a "whole province" estimate of weight. This required indexing of the percentage compositions of categories of waste to the different volumes of waste annually generated in each area. A calculation was carried out to reveal the approximate composition of the residue waste generated in Nova Scotia as a whole, on a weight basis.

Users of the data from the 2011 audit must always remember that it was gathered during the March – June period. As such, it should be considered to be representative of late spring and early summer times. The waste stream does vary seasonally. Future audits should be conducted such that all seasons are eventually encompassed, perhaps considering two other periods: summer and early fall (July through October) to bracket the gardening and tourism season when green yard waste production and operation of seasonal tourist facilities and summer homes are at their most intense, and a late fall and winter (November through March) when warm weather activities are curtailed and seasonal high levels of consumption of goods over the Christmas period occur. It is beyond the scope of this project to better define seasonal factors as they would relate to waste audits, so this is left as a suggested analysis to be considered by the RRFB.

The relative proportions of broad categories of waste are generally not greatly different from region to region. Certainly, local authorities will note the minor differences amongst themselves, and all will be able to use the data to consider improvements to their respective waste reduction and diversion programs.

4.2 The Manual

The research related to preparation of the Manual in template form included review of other Canadian and American jurisdictions. There were few manuals found which would be considered as standard operational guides.

Almost all documents which were found were related to specific waste audits which did not appear to be related to an ongoing documentary reference. It is not surprising that some of the persons contacted

were keen to see the result of RRFB's work in this regard, as they recognized the value of a standardized practice manual in enhancing the quality and usefulness of ongoing waste audit programs.

Reviewing the documentary materials drawn from other jurisdictions also revealed that there is a wide variety of systems of categorization of waste materials. This makes it difficult to compare data across jurisdictions, as there is no common categorization except at the level of very broad categories of material

RRFB 2011 Waste Audit Actual Schedule

RRFB 2011 Waste Audit Actual Schedule

WEEK	Date Range (Mon. – Fri.)	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	21 – 25 March				Colchester	Kaizer Meadow (at Lunenburg transfer station) & Otter Lake
2	28 March – 1 April				Guysborough (at Antigonish transfer station)	West Hants (at landfill)
3	4 - 8 April		Queens (at Clare transfer station)		Otter Lake	
4	11- 15 April				West Hants (at East Hants transfer station)	Guysborough (at Sydney transfer station)
5	18 - 22 April			Queens (at Yarmouth transfer station) & Kaizer Meadow (at Kentville transfer station)	Cumberland & Colchester	Good Friday
6	25 - 29 April	Easter Monday		Otter Lake & Queens (at landfill)	Kaizer Meadow (at Lawrencetown transfer station)	Cumberland & Colchester
7	2 - 5 May			Queens (at Clare transfer station) & West Hants (at landfill)	Guysborough (at Inverness transfer station)	
8	9 - 13 May		West Hants (at East Hants transfer station)	Cumberland Colchester		
9	16 - 20 May		Queens (at Yarmouth transfer station) & Kaizer Meadow residential only (at landfill)	Guysborough (at landfill)	Kaizer Meadow ICI only (at landfill)	
10	23 - 27 May	Victoria Day	Cumberland & Colchester	Otter Lake		
11	30 May – 3 June	Guysborough (at Sydney transfer station)	West Hants (at West Hants landfill, residential only – vehicle from Town of Windsor collection) & Kaizer Meadow (at Lunenburg transfer station)			
12	6 - 10 June	Queens (at landfill) & Otter Lake	Cumberland & West Hants (at West Hants landfill, ICI only)			Queens (at Clare transfer station)
13	13 - 17 June	Colchester & Kaizer Meadow (at Kentville transfer station)	Guysborough (at Pictou transfer station)			
14	20 - 24 June	Cumberland & West Hants at East Hants transfer station	Otter Lake			

2011 Waste Audit Categorization

2011 Waste Audit Categorization

MATERIAL

GROUP	CATEGORY		SUB-CATEGORIES
FIBRE	Uncoated Paper - newsprint	1	Dailies
	quality	2	Weeklies
		3	Magazines - uncoated
		4	Flyers/inserts - uncoated
		5	Telephone Books/Yellow Pages
	Coated Paper - catalogue	6	Magazines - glossy
	quality	7	Catalogues/Calendars
		8	Flyers/inserts - glossy
	Books	9	Hard cover
		10	Soft cover
	Mixed Fines	11	None
	Other	12	Specialized purpose
	Packaging	13	Boxboard cardboard - single layer
		14	Corrugated cardboard - multi layer - dry
		15	Waxed corrugated cardboard - multi-layer
		16	Fast-food boxboard
		17	Fast-food wrap
		18	Moulded Pulp
		19	Kraft paper bags/wrap
		20	Laminated paper bags/boxboard
ORGANICS	Food Waste	21	Home/ICI food waste not in containers (see 24)
	Tissue	22	Facial tissue and gift wrapping paper tissue
	Yard Waste	23	Home/ICI gardening, brush, leaves
	Other	24	Food in containers, including weight of containers
	Fibre	25	Wet paper and cardboard
DAIRY	Beverage - Dairy milk only	26	Polycoat (gable top) - 1 litre and greater
		27	Polycoat (gable top) - less than 1 litre
		28	Plastic jug (HDPE - Number 2) - 1 litre and greater
		29	Plastic jug (HDPE - Number 2) - less than 1 litre
		30	Tetra pak
		31	Plastic bag (LDPE film - Number 4)
	Ice Cream	32	Plastic container (HDPE - Number 2)
		33	Boxboard container (with lining)
	Other Dairy	34	Plastic container (HDPE - #2, PP - #5, PS - #6)
		35	Plastic container (other than 2, 5 and 6)
		36	Tetra pak

MATERIAL			
GROUP	CATEGORY		SUB-CATEGORIES
	Non-fluid Milk Product	37	Plastic film
NON-DAIRY	Beverage - Non-Dairy	38	Polycoat (gable top)
	alternatives	39	Plastic container
		40	Tetra pak
	Foodstuffs	41	Tetra pak
PLASTIC	Food and other container	42	PET - Number 1
	packaging	43	HDPE - Number 2
		44	PVC - Number 3
		45	LDPE - Number 4
		46	PP - Number 5
		47	PS - Number 6
		48	Other - Number 7
		49	Non-numbered containers
	Composite packaging	50	
	Plastic Bags/Film	51	LDPE - Number 4
		52	LDPE - Number 4 - not suitable for recovery
		53	LDPE - Number 4 - Other bags, film packaging, wrap
		54	PP - Number 5 - Agriculture
	Non-packaging End-of-Life	55	Crates, pails and tubs
	Products	56	Consumer goods
		57	Non-program electronic products/components
		58	Non-program paint products
		59	Non-Municipal Hazardous and Special Waste
DISPOSABLE	Fibre	60	Disposable cups - branded - hot
CUPS		61	Disposable cups - branded - cold
		62	Disposable cups - other
	Plastic	63	Single use - branded
		64	Single use - non-branded
GLASS	Food and Consumer Goods	65	Clear - food containers
	Packaging	66	Coloured - food containers
		67	Clear - non-food containers
		68	Coloured - non-food containers
	Automotive	69	
	Other Products	70	
METAL	Food and Consumer Goods	71	Aluminum food containers
	Packaging	72	Aluminum - other

MATERIAL			
GROUP	CATEGORY		SUB-CATEGORIES
		73	Steel food containers
		74	Steel composite containers
		75	Steel - other
	Non-Paint Program	76	Aluminum
	Pressurized Containers	77	Steel
	Non-Electronics Program	78	Appliances - small
	items	79	Appliances - large
		80	Electronics - small
		81	Electronics - large
	Other	82	Extension cords and wire of uncertain materials
Municipal	Pressurized gas containers	83	Non-refillable
Hazardous		84	Refillable
and Special	Marine flares	85	by symbol or container type
Waste	Mercury containing	86	
(MHSW)	products		by symbol or container type
	Batteries	87	Non-rechargeable
		88	Rechargeable
		89	Lithium-ion
	Sharps and Pharmaceuticals	90	None
	Pesticides and their	91	PCA regulated products
	containers	92	Non-PCA regulated products
	Automotive fluid containers	93	HDPE - Number 2
		94	PP - Number 5
		95	Other
	Other fluids, fuel, lubricants	96	HDPE - Number 2
	& containers	97	Other
	Solvents and containers	98	
	Corrosives and containers	99	
	(Crankshaft) oil filters	100	
	Oily rags	101	
TEXTILES	Fabric	102	Clothing
		103	Household use
	Footwear	104	
	Other	105	
C&D	Wood	106	dimensional - clean
		107	dimensional - coated
		108	engineered/composite - clean
		109	engineered/composite - coated

MATERIAL			
GROUP	CATEGORY		SUB-CATEGORIES
		110	pressure-treated
	Wallboard and coverings	111	drywall - clean
		112	drywall - coated
	Shingles	113	asphalt
		114	other
	Flooring	115	carpet
		116	other
	Insulation	117	fibreglass
		118	foam (PS)
		119	other
	Glass	120	window/door
		121	decorative
	Countertops	122	laminate
		123	slate/marble
	Ceiling Tile	124	None
BULKY ITEMS	Furniture	125	mattresses - coil
		126	mattresses - foam
		127	mattresses - futon
		128	box spring
		129	upholstered - seating
		130	solid wood
		131	engineered/laminate wood
		132	other (non-plastic)
SPECIAL	Diapers	133	
CARE WASTE	Other	134	Medical gloves, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics
REDEEMABLE	Beverage	135	Sort 1 - Aluminum cans
CONTAINERS		136	Sort 2 - Glass - clear
		137	Sort 3 - PET - clear
		138	Sort 4 - Glass -coloured
		139	Sort 5 - PET - green
		140	Sort 6 - Other plastic (3, 5, 6 &7)
		141	Sort 8 - Steel cans
		142	Sort 9 - Gable top
		143	Sort 10 - Tetra pak
		144	Sort 11 - HDPE - translucent
		145	Sort 13 - PET - blue
		146	Sort 21 - Glass - clear (over 500 ml)
		147	Sort 22 - Glass - coloured (over 500 ml)

MATERIAL			
GROUP	CATEGORY		SUB-CATEGORIES
		148	Sort 23 - Liquor PET - clear and coloured (over 500 ml)
		149	Sort 24 - Liquor PET - clear and coloured
		150	Sort 25 - Liquor - other
		151	Sort 26 - Liquor - other (over 500 ml)
REGULATED	Empty plastic	152	
PAINT	Empty metal	153	
	Empty aerosols	154	
REGULATED	Passenger and Light Truck	155	
TIRES	Tractor Trailer	156	
OFF-ROAD	Non-Tire Program items	157	Small
TIRES		158	Large
REGULATED	Computers	159	Desktop
ELECTRONICS		160	Portable
	Computer Peripherals	161	
	Desktop Printers	162	
	Display Devices	163	
	Personal/Portable A/V	164	
	Systems		
	Vehicle A/V Systems	165	
	Home Theatre in a Box	166	
	Home Audio/Video Systems	167	
	Non-cellular telephones	168	
	Cellular telephones	169	

APPENDIX C Statistical Analysis – Grouped Categories

	Metric Tonnes		
Tonnages	ICI	Residential	
Colchester	15,103	6,810	
Cumberland	4,249	5,494	
Guysborough	39,120	28,095	
Kaizer Meadow	16,780	17,991	
Otter Lake	84 <i>,</i> 573	55,987	
Queens	9,426	9,858	
West Hants	6,397	6,762	
Sum	175,648	130,997	

Landfill Amounts Disposed During April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

Tonnages for each of the groups of materials disposed province-wide are estimated using total waste arriving at respective landfills as shown above, from the respective ICI or Residential sector, and the percentages of occurrence from this study.

ICI	Tonnes	% of total
FIBRE	31,789	18.1
ORGANICS	46,451	26.4
DAIRY	669	0.4
NON-DAIRY	8	0.0
PLAST IC	35,885	20.4
DISPOSABLE CUPS	6,034	3.4
GLASS	1,050	0.6
METAL	3,763	2.1
MUNICIPAL HAZARDOUS AND SPECIAL WASTE (MHSW)	549	0.3
TEXTILES	17,318	9.9
C&D	7,929	4.5
BULKY ITEMS	1,588	0.9
SPECIAL CARE WASTE	18,548	10.6
REDEEMABLE CONTAINERS	2,706	1.5
REGULATED PAINT	377	0.2
REGULATED TIRES	407	0.2
OFF-ROAD TIRES	123	0.1
REGULATED ELECTRONICS	451	0.3
	175,645	99.9

Residential	Tonnes	% of total
FIBRE	15172	11.6
ORGANICS	44395	33.9
DAIRY	757	0.6
NON-DAIRY	22	0.0
PLASTIC	26968	20.6
DISPOSABLE CUPS	1457	1.1
GLASS	1691	1.3
METAL	6018	4.6
MUNICIPAL HAZARDOUS AND SPECIAL WASTE (MHSW)	821	0.6
TEXTILES	12142	9.3
C&D	8288	6.3
BULKY ITEMS	592	0.5
SPECIAL CARE WASTE	9473	7.2
REDEEMABLE CONTAINERS	1711	1.3
REGULATED PAINT	118	0.1
REGULATED TIRES	33	0.0
OFF-ROAD TIRES	106	0.1
REGULATED ELECTRONICS	1236	0.9
	131,000	100