



Montréal 



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**Leveraging the full potential of household waste:  
Inauguration of the Research Chair in Waste Recovery**

**Montréal, June 15, 2017** – Viewing waste as a resource with true economic value is the key focus of the Research Chair in Waste Recovery at Polytechnique Montréal, inaugurated today in the presence of its partners: founding partner Ville de Montréal as well as the Ville de Laval and RECYC-QUÉBEC. The aim of the researchers is to identify strategies for treating household waste that will put as much of it as possible into “recovery loops,” in order to reduce landfill and one day achieve a final waste product that will account for less than 5% of weekly garbage.

**Seeking solutions with industry**

Robert Legros, holder of the chair and a professor in Polytechnique Montréal’s Department of Chemical Engineering, along with chair co-holder Réjean Samson, regard waste as a resource and seek to leverage its full potential.

“For example, we have already had notable success in converting table waste into compost, in recycling plastics and in converting aluminum into car parts,” Professor Samson says. Professor Legros adds: “We want to identify solutions for processing all waste and to work closely with industry in developing products they can use and bring to market, enabling us truly to contribute to a circular economy with sustainable development in mind.”

**Waste processing centres as laboratories**

In addition to \$1.25 million in funding over five years, the researchers will benefit from outstanding sites for conducting their work, with access to the partner cities’ waste treatment centres, including the Ville de Montréal’s future pilot centre for pre-treatment of household waste.

“This collaboration with Polytechnique is a matter of pride for Montréal, which seeks to reduce waste landfill to a minimum through the 4R approach (reduce at source, reuse, recycle and recover),” states Réal Ménard, responsible for sustainable development, environment, large parks and green spaces at the Ville de Montréal and Mayor of Mercier–Hochelaga-Maisonneuve borough. “The City is also maintaining its ambition of positioning itself as a world leader in the environment and climate change.”

**Partners guided in their waste management**

The researchers will help the Ville de Montréal and the Ville de Laval support their waste-management choices.

“The Ville de Laval wants to take waste management further, and this partnership will enable us to innovate in this area and to be an even greener city,” says Virginie Dufour, Executive Committee member in charge of environmental matters at the Ville de Laval and municipal councillor for Sainte-Rose district.

From this standpoint, the Chair and RECYC-QUÉBEC will work together to develop knowledge, analyses and decision-making tools that will be used to guide future actions related to the *Politique québécoise de gestion des matières résiduelles* (Québec waste-management policy).

“RECYC-QUÉBEC wishes to develop the best waste-management strategies, with technical, environmental, economic and social aspects taken into consideration throughout the entire product life cycle,” states Sonia Gagné, Vice-President, Operational Performance, Development and Business Intelligence, RECYC-QUÉBEC. “The circular-economy perspective is also an essential aspect for us, because it drives us to find innovative solutions so that one person’s waste becomes another’s resources. This partnership with the research chair will give us the means to achieve this.”

#### **Varied environmental expertise**

“The Research Chair in Waste Recovery project was initiated by the environment department of the Ville de Montréal, which approached Polytechnique Montréal because of our renowned environmental expertise,” notes Polytechnique Montréal Chief Executive Officer Christophe Guy. An agreement between the City and Polytechnique Montréal was signed in October 2015 and has included the Ville de Laval and RECYC-QUÉBEC since 2017.

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#### **Available for interviews:**

- **Robert Legros**, professor and holder of the Research Chair in Waste Recovery;
- **Réjean Samson**, professor and co-holder of the Research Chair in Waste Recovery;
- **Réal Ménard**, in charge of sustainable development, environment, large parks and green spaces at the Ville de Montréal and Mayor of Mercier–Hochelaga-Maisonneuve borough;
- **Virginie Dufour**, Executive Committee member in charge of environmental matters at the Ville de Laval and municipal councillor for Sainte-Rose district.

#### **Interview and information requests:**

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