Plastic Bags Will Destroy Our Civilization !
(Again)

January, 2018, Halifax, Nova Scotia

<u>Subject:</u>

Giant trash grocery bag headache for Nova Scotia has caused our leaders and residents to lose their minds.

Have you watched the Nova Scotia news lately about the giant, earth shattering, climate killing, election loosing, sky is falling, plastic film problem in Nova Scotia ? The Chinese have decided that plastic film scrap is not worth collecting or handling on their side of the world anymore. They have lot's of their own grocery bag trash now, thank you. This has caused near heart attack levels of 'garbage phobia' in Halifax Regional Municipality, yet again. And now the Province is complicit in this 'Tempest in a tea pot' madness.

All reason has escaped every single comment I have seen posted on the problem. The latest call for action ?... ban shopping bags..or rather, tax them ! Yes sir, now there is a solution to this desperate problem. And it must be a desperate problem…. or is it ?

It's time for a quick look at the problem.

<u>Bubble bursting, common sense, back of envelope, analysis:</u>

- A Polyethylene (PE) grocery bag (known in the trade as a 'T-Shirt' bag) weighs about 6-8 grams. Let's use average of 7 grams

- PE density in blown film form is .925 g/ CM^3 (centimeter cubed) (grocery bags are made by the blown film process)

- Therefore 1 bag represents approximately 7.56 CM^3 of PE.

- There are around 1 Million (10^6) people in Nova Scotia (wildly optimistic estimate)

- Let's say each person uses 3 shopping bags per week and tosses them (they don't) but that's 3 million bags per week.

- In one year, that's 3*52*10^6 = 1.56 * 10^7 bags,

- Which in PE form is 1.56*7.56 * 10^7 CM^3 = 1.18 * 10^8 CM^3 = 1.18* 10^2 = 118 <u>cubic meters</u> of PE.

- Now, after use, you can't quite compact a plastic bag into this dense form of PE, but after bailing let's say it is 4 times less dense. Actually bailing machines likely do better than this, but again, I am going for really poor performance and inflated amounts.

- That means our 118 cubic meters of PE might be 472 cubic meters of bailed and compressed film, for the entire province.

- How much is that, **FOR THE ENTIRE PROVINCE ?**

- It would be 94 <u>small</u> dump trucks (6 yard trucks)

- Or 47 larger medium sized trucks. (12 yard trucks)

- Or, about 7 tractor-trailer loads

- Or, if you buried it, it would need a hole 3 M deep, 10 M wide and 16 meters long.

- This is an estimate of the waste grocery bag problem for the

ENTIRE PROVINCE !

There is no environmental issue here, just a golden opportunity for our politicians to take even more money out of the economy with flim (film ?) flammery which is being demanded by a few climate nutcakes that don't own calculators or common sense.

How much money ? Let's say they add a pollution charge of 5 cents.

That would raise $1.56 * 10^7 * .05 \$ = \$ 7.8 * 10^5 = \$ 780,000$ (Canadian dollars, at that)

Do you think you could dig a couple of holes around the province and get rid of the PE for that ?   Well, actually, no, because you would have to use the most expensive form of hole digging in the province, the kind called "Land fill waste disposal cells", right ? These things are designed to prevent any form of leachate from the decomposing buried garbage reaching a water table. They are typically lined with clay and , wait for it, PE agricultural films !   Wait , PE doesn't decompose in a land fill.....so, why do we need to put it in landfills again ? Oh, right, there is no reason, it's to make the fools that panic about environmental issues feel relieved, and politicians look good.

I fully expect that 5 cents a bag under the above scenario would be rejected, because it does not significantly address this

GIANT HORRIBLE PLASTIC FILM PROBLEM !

No, the revenue tax potential demands something more significant to make this a sheep appeasing and vote getting issue... let's face it, if there aren't millions of $ involved, it isn't worth doing.   Let's raise that bag cost to 20 cents. That should make it work for those politicians which have your very survival at interest, if they don't do something about this horrible, desperate nasty plastic film issue. Now we are talking about $ 3.12 Million. Not much more than chump change for politicians, but more money out of your pocket for something that you are already paying for in your garbage fees.   (The garbage assessment for my property in HRM is about $700 per year, apparently.)

Notice I have only talked about the PE problem.   That is not all the plastic film being collected by the trash system. It probably accounts for about 65% to 75% of the total collected film problem, by various estimates. So... we could increase those 'burial sites' by 25 to 35% to take care of that problem too, at almost no differential cost.

Please circulate this note around to your friends, or anyone you believe might have even a little   common sense.

If you have a calculator , you could even try your own estimation of this earth shattering , life shortening problem and entertain yourself with the results.

Jeff Smith
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