

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Clean Up Peterborough Launches 2nd Annual Writing Instrument Challenge (WIC2)

Community-wide initiative encourages participation across Peterborough County and beyond to help keep writing instruments out of landfill

Peterborough County, ON — After diverting more than 45,000 used writing instruments from landfill since October 2024, **Clean Up Peterborough (CUP)** is launching the 2nd Annual **Writing Instrument Challenge (WIC2)** — a free recycling initiative encouraging residents, schools, businesses, municipalities, libraries, workplaces, and community groups to collect used pens, markers, highlighters, mechanical pencils, and other plastic-based writing instruments throughout the month of June.

Last year's inaugural challenge resulted in more than 26,000 writing instruments collected in June alone through a growing network of schools, businesses, municipalities, and community partners.

Now entering its second year, the initiative is focused on expanding participation, increasing accessibility, and building stronger community involvement across both urban and rural communities.

“We’ve already proven that small everyday items can be diverted from landfill when a community works together,” says Steve Paul, Founder of CUP. “This year is about making participation even easier — whether it’s a family, classroom, library, office, church, township, or workplace.”

How the Challenge Works

Participation is free and open to everyone. Residents and organizations are encouraged to collect:

- Pens
- Markers
- Highlighters
- Mechanical pencils
- Other plastic-based writing instruments

Wooden pencils, pencil crayons, and crayons are not accepted. Writing instruments containing metal components are accepted and will be separated during processing.

Participants can:

- Start their own collection box or station
- Join an existing drop-off location
- Organize a workplace, classroom, or community collection
- Follow the live collection map to find participating locations

A public Google Map featuring participating collection locations throughout Peterborough County and area will once again be updated throughout the campaign.

Some locations will serve as public drop-off points, while others will participate internally through schools, workplaces, businesses, or organizations.

Organizations interested in becoming a collection point are encouraged to contact CUP through social media or email to be added to the live community map. Participants can choose to operate as either a public drop-off location or a private internal collection point.

Expanding Community Participation

In 2025, the challenge grew to include more than 90 collection points, with participation from schools, municipalities, businesses, libraries, and community organizations.

This year, CUP hopes to further expand involvement across the region while encouraging participation from libraries, charities, non-profits, faith groups, sports organizations, families, workplaces, and local businesses.

“There’s no cost to participate and no special equipment required,” says Paul. “All someone needs is a container or box to start collecting. It’s one of the simplest ways people can take direct environmental action together.”

Collected items are recycled through the **TerraCycle Writing Instrument Recycling Program**, helping divert hard-to-recycle plastics from landfill and repurpose them into new materials and products.

Participants are also encouraged to help amplify the initiative by sharing the campaign poster, collection progress, and hashtags across social media while encouraging friends, family, neighbours, coworkers, and community members to get involved.

Participation Beyond the Region

While the initiative is centred in Peterborough County, CUP also welcomes participation from outside the region.

Individuals, schools, and organizations across Canada can still participate by collecting writing instruments locally and dropping them off at participating Staples locations through the TerraCycle program.

Those wishing to contribute toward the WIC2 totals are encouraged to contact CUP with their collection totals, photos, and location information before recycling their items locally.

“We’d love to see this inspire participation well beyond our region,” says Paul. “If a classroom in North Bay or Nova Scotia wants to join the movement, that’s an incredible outcome.”


Follow the Challenge

Residents can follow collection progress, participating locations, community highlights, and campaign updates throughout June by following CUP on Facebook and Instagram.


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 #WritingInstrumentChallengePTBO #WIC2