



# RECYCLING

## RECYCLING *By David Gold*

### End of the road

*Who consumes all those end of life vehicles?*

**About one** million new automobiles are produced in the world each week, and in Ontario approximately 500,000 of them are put to rest each year.

#### Processes differ

An end of life vehicle (ELV) is one which has reached the end of the road, either by way of its age or collision write-off.

The outcome is almost always the recycling of the vehicle for its scrap value, however, the processes used to achieve this differ widely. While some processes give ELVs a respectable burial (utilizing proper equipment and care for its fluid removal), others do not.

The issue of ELVs is obviously an important one and governments around the world are taking pro-active measures.

Much of the focus has been directed at automakers to make their vehicles more recyclable. The ELV directive adopted last year requires all European manufacturers to recycle or reuse 85% by weight of the metals and materials in each vehicle by 2006 and 95% by 2015.

Significant progress is being made in this area, but it does not fully solve the problem of what to do with the millions of vehicles that will eventually reach the end of the road.

The Recycling Council of Ontario Roles and Responsibilities Forum has identified five distinct groups that deal in the management of ELVs.

#### These include:

The first group are Auto dismantlers/recyclers, whose primary business is the sale of used auto parts. Material recovery is secondary. Fluid recovery is an integral part of processing each vehicle.

The second group are salvage yards. In this case, the primary business is metals recovery. The sale of used auto parts is secondary to

obtaining profits from the sale of metal. Fluids are recovered if parts are to be removed.

The third group are scrap metal dealers/junk yards, whose only business is metals recovery. Fluids are generally not recovered.

The fourth group consists of car dealers, collision facilities and tow-trucks.

The fifth group are individuals. This includes both backyard mechanics and hobbyists.

Of the five distinct groups involved in the management of ELVs, only the Auto dismantler/recycler ensures fluid recovery as an integral part of the processing of each vehicle.

Salvage yards and scrap metal dealers do not incorporate the same processes as auto dismantlers to ensure that proper fluid evacuation and disposal of these fluids takes place.

#### Proper handling

The underground economy, which acquires vehicles from the public or at salvage auctions, has a detrimental effect on the community in that parts are bought and sold for cash. The government realizes no revenue from these transactions.

This fact, coupled with the realization that many salvage vehicles are being exported out of the country accounts for the reduction of available used parts for the public and economic loss to professional collision repairers.

There is no public agency keeping accurate records of vehicle disposal in Ontario. This may help explain why pro-environmental fluid evacuation procedures have not been fully developed. You can't fix what you don't know is broken.

When you are ready to scrap a vehicle from your lot, ensure that it goes to an accredited recycler, one that has the necessary equipment and facilities to handle that ELV responsibly **CR**

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