



BANK OF CANADA
BANQUE DU CANADA

Polymer Notes— A Green News Story

It's the new year, Canadians have new polymer bank notes, and the future is looking greener for our currency.

Thanks to a base material that is resistant to wear, polymer bank notes are very durable. With this durability comes staying power. Polymer notes will circulate at least 2.5 times longer than our existing cotton-paper notes. For instance, our current cotton-paper \$20 note has a three-year lifespan. Under normal conditions, the polymer equivalent will go the distance and circulate for at least 7.5 years!

This longer note life means that there will be cost savings, since fewer replacement notes will need to be produced to swap out their worn counterparts.

You can do your part to ensure polymer notes have a longer life. Don't be harsh with or misuse your notes; treat them carefully. After all, bank notes are something we all share and they're symbols of our cultural heritage.

Better for the Environment

A longer life also means a significant reduction in environmental impact because far fewer bank notes will be manufactured and distributed over the life of the *Polymer* series.

The Bank of Canada commissioned an independent study to examine the impacts of both cotton paper and polymer bank notes on our environment. The results show that polymer has a smaller impact and by switching to this new material Canadian bank notes will be greener.

The study looked at contributions to air and water pollution, climate change and ozone depletion. For all factors—like the energy used to produce raw materials, processing resources, printing and distribution—polymer showed significant benefits over cotton-paper notes.

(see over)

From the Lab to Your Wallet

Visit www.bankofcanada.ca/banknotes and watch the *A Greener Life* video. It's the last in a five-part series called *The Life of a Bank Note: From the Lab to Your Wallet*.

The study cited a 32 per cent reduction in global warming potential and a 30 per cent reduction in primary energy demands.

The environmental benefits of using polymer are largely linked to the distribution of bank notes across the country. A longer note life means a longer circulation period before financial institutions need to ship them back to the Bank of Canada in exchange for newer notes. That means significant savings in terms of energy and emissions—especially in a country as big as ours.

A First for Canadian Bank Notes

Recycling will only add to the environmental benefits of the *Polymer* series.

Once these notes become too damaged or soiled, they'll make their way back to the Bank of Canada. After they are removed from circulation, they will be shredded and converted into small pellets ready for recycling.

These pellets will be the raw material for producing new made-in-Canada products like compost bins, ice scrapers, flowerpots, shipping pallets and garden furniture.

Thanks to a longer note life this won't happen for a few years yet, but it will be exciting to see our bank notes embark on their second life.

For more information and free training tools:
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For story ideas or to get more information on Canadian bank notes, please contact media relations at 613 782-8782 or email communications@bankofcanada.ca