



## **B.C. Becomes First Province to Deploy Hybrid CNG Technology to Transport Recyclables**

*Return-It Moves to Decarbonize Its Transportation Fleet to Reduce Emissions*

**Burnaby, B.C. – September 18, 2020** – Today, Return-It is taking the next step in creating a greener beverage container recycling system in B.C. by introducing Canada’s first-of-its-kind compressed natural gas (CNG) hybrid-electric compaction truck.

In a pilot project launching this month, Return-It is beginning the decarbonization of its transportation fleet, which could reduce greenhouse gas emissions from beverage container recycling by up to 25% and reduce the number of transport vehicles on the road.

“As the province’s leading product stewardship organization, we recognize we can do more to decarbonize our transportation network in order to make an even bigger impact on greenhouse gas emissions,” said Allen Langdon, President & CEO of Return-It. “As part of Return-It’s modernization program launched earlier this year, we are piloting this new technology as a first step towards transitioning our entire fleet.”

Supplied by Hylion, a leader in electrified powertrain solutions for Class 8 commercial vehicles, the new CNG hybrid-electric drivetrain will not only release fewer emissions than existing diesel trucks, but combined with compaction technology it will help reduce the number of vehicle trips required to take beverage containers from recycling depots to processing facilities. The truck is the first of its kind to incorporate an electric axle that optimizes the vehicle’s power and efficiency. The compaction trailer unit is manufactured by a Canadian equipment solutions and services company, NexGen Municipal, who has pioneered compaction technology.

The new truck will service 16 recycling depots throughout the Lower Mainland in the pilot phase, allowing Return-It to evaluate the technology and capture data to inform the next steps in its transition. Return-It will also use the pilot phase to work with FortisBC to identify opportunities to expand access to CNG throughout the province, such as the availability of CNG filling stations to supply Return-It’s fleet in the future.

Return-It is playing a critical role in helping B.C. realize the goals established in the Province’s CleanBC Plan. Over the past 25 years, Return-It has diverted over 20 billion beverage containers from landfills and oceans. Its activities in 2019 contributed to the reduction of approximately 105,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent being released into the atmosphere, compared to 102,600 tonnes in 2018.

“Heavy duty diesel trucks are responsible for nearly a quarter of all transportation emissions in B.C.,” said Bruce Ralston, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. “Organizations like Return-It who are embracing new technologies in CNG hybrid-electric vehicles for their return-to-base fleets are helping the transition to lower and zero-emissions trucking, and helping us meet our CleanBC goals.”

“It’s great to see Return-It pilot the use of innovative technology that could reduce carbon pollution from its heavy-duty trucks. Reducing emissions from heavy-duty trucks is an important part of the climate solution. We are also excited to welcome Encorp Pacific (Return-It) as the newest member of the Catalyst Business Coalition, which brings companies together to champion the clean economy,” said Karen Tam Wu, co-chair of the Catalyst Business Coalition and Regional Director British Columbia for the Pembina Institute.

“FortisBC has set an ambitious target to reduce our customers’ greenhouse gas emissions by 30 per cent by 2030, and one of the ways we’re doing that is by investing in lower carbon vehicles and transportation infrastructure - the very infrastructure that Return-It will be utilizing to fuel its fleet,” said Sarah Smith, director, natural gas for transportation, regional LNG and Renewable Gas at FortisBC. “We appreciate Return-It’s commitment to decarbonizing its fleet with innovative technology and look forward to working together to support their transition province-wide.”

Hyllion is a leading electrified powertrain solutions provider for regional and long-haul trucks, offering hybrid electric assist for conventional CNG trucks and enabling fleets to leverage the existing natural gas refueling infrastructure. The compaction unit supplied by NexGen Municipal will enable Return-It to ship up to six times more beverage containers in a single load.

“We are continuously looking for ways to leverage our technology to transform the transportation industry’s environmental impact,” said Thomas Healy, founder and CEO of Hyllion. “Our electrified powertrains offer a unique opportunity to drive sustainable solutions in heavy-duty commercial transportation. We are excited to be working with Return-It to make recycling even more environmentally friendly.”

“We are pleased to provide our Auger Compaction Trailer technology to the Return-It team, to significantly improve logistical and operational efficiencies, while dramatically reducing GHG generation,” said Doug Vanderlinden, President of NexGen Municipal.

## **Background**

One CNG hybrid-electric collection compaction truck will:

- increase the amount of beverage containers transported in one trip by six times – from 150,000 containers to 900,000 containers per trip;
- reduce emissions by 69 metric tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> compared to a diesel truck;
- reduce Return-It’s emissions within the Lower Mainland by 5%, and province-wide by 2%.

Operating on a parallel hybrid, the new CNG hybrid truck doesn’t switch between electric and primary fuel but acts as an assist when accelerating or driving up hills.

Transportation is the largest source of GHGs in the Province’s annual GHG emission inventory, rising by 15% between 2015-2018.

**About Return-It**

Return-It is an industry owned, not-for-profit, product stewardship agency responsible for the collection and recycling of beverage containers across British Columbia. Over 25 years, Return-It has diverted over 20 billion beverage containers from landfills, and is committed to supporting a low carbon future in B.C. Return-It is a member of the Catalyst Business Coalition, which brings companies together to champion the clean economy. In 2019, Return-It made a global commitment through the Ellen MacArthur Foundation to help eliminate plastic pollution at the source. As part of this commitment, Return-it has committed to eliminate single-use plastic film from its supply chain by 2025. Return-It has also partnered with Ocean Ambassadors Canada to educate students about how plastics affect the marine environment, and empower them to become life-long ambassadors who can make a meaningful impact in their schools and communities.

[Return-It.ca](http://Return-It.ca)

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