



How NRC Policies and Principles Support Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) Recyclers Guide to Understanding SMM, Part IV

"Support for SMM in Current Policies and Principles"
April 29, 2015

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Mission:

The Mission of the National Recycling Coalition is to partner with and facilitate activities between and among non-profit organizations (NGO's), businesses, trade associations, individuals and government to maintain a prosperous and productive American recycling system that is committed to the conservation of natural resources.



NRC Policy Areas

Economics

Education & Outreach

Financing

Legislation and Regulation

Market Development



Guiding Principles (2012)

In conjunction with source reduction, reuse, and composting, the recycling of valuable materials is essential to a sustainable environmental, energy, and economic future.

Recycling is a value-added activity to our communities, states, and country that creates green, well-paying jobs boosting a domestic economy committed to sustainability.



Guiding Principles

Materials recovery (primary vs tertiary recycling) is the preferred management option for all residential, commercial, and industrial discards.

Recycling is resource management, not waste management.



Guiding Principles

Sustainable Materials Management is a critical strategic shift away from the past strategy of waste management toward a holistic resource management system that strives to use less materials overall, reduce toxins, recover more used materials, create new jobs, and foster economic development.



Guiding Principles

Recycling is not disposal.

Thermal combustion is not recycling.

Recycling programs must be designed to minimize contamination in consideration of the needs of upstream users.



Guiding Principles

Recyclables are substitutes for virgin materials.

Recycling is a shared responsibility and requires citizen engagement.



Guiding Principles

Recycling requires the participation and collaboration of all stakeholders – citizens and consumers, providers and consumers of raw materials, product manufacturers, product distributors and retailers, providers of recycling infrastructure, and all levels of government.



Guiding Principles

Recycling programs must be accessible and convenient for all residential, business and institutional settings.

Recycling goals must be clear, achievable, and measurable.

The foundation of successful recycling policy and programs is accurate and unbiased information.



Guiding Principles

Stakeholders should develop a uniform system for measuring discards, recycling, and composting, and waste disposal.

Customized and achievable recovery goals should be established.

Stakeholders should work to expand uses of their products, which commonly include recycled content.



Guiding Principles

Recycling stakeholders should support development and dissemination of sound, scientifically based, and balanced educational material that informs citizens on the need for recycling and engages consumers in the recycling process.



Guiding Principles

Products and packaging should be designed to take into account and address environmental impacts.

Products should be designed, manufactured, packaged, distributed, managed, and used to optimize the continuing value and recovery of the used materials and minimize the environmental and climate impact throughout the life-cycle of the product.



Guiding Principles

Manufacturers should develop and support programs that optimize the recovery of recyclable materials.

Product and package environmental claims and labeling programs should be standardized, accurate, enforceable, and useful for consumers.



Guiding Principles

Successful recycling requires sustainable and equitable economic policies.

The cost and value of recycling, in comparison to alternative management options and waste disposal, must be transparent to consumers and policymakers and recognize sustainable development measures for resource depreciation (land and natural resources), energy savings, and environmental impact.



Guiding Principles

Government policies and programs must not favor virgin materials use and waste disposal over materials management by source reduction, re-use, recycling, and composting.

Government tax policies must provide direct and in-direct incentives for recycled materials utilization, new recycling technologies, and infrastructure development.



Guiding Principles

Recovered materials (discarded materials and byproducts that have been recovered or diverted from solid waste, including recyclables, reusable products and products that may be refurbished) must have access to global markets.

Think globally, act locally.



Guiding Principles

Taking into account regional and local differences, state and local collection policies and programs should utilize practices that optimize participation rates, cost-effectiveness, direct incentives, and energy efficiency.

Local governments should have the necessary authority, sufficient means and tools, to implement successful residential, commercial, and institutional recycling programs.



Recycling Definition

“Recycling is a series of activities by which material that has reached the end of its current use is processed into material utilized in the production of new products.”

NRC Board, September 2014