Welcome to National Recycling Coalition

National Zero Waste Conference Webinars

National Policy Town Hall on National Recycling Legislation

November 5, 2020
Welcome to the Webinar!

- Open or Close Panel
- Muted or Unmuted
- Raise or Lower Hand
- Submit a Question

THIS WEBINAR IS BEING RECORDED

Hosting and Technical Support Provided by Bob Hollis, Mobius Intelligent Systems.
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- 9/10 – Product Policies
- 9/24 – Zero Waste on Campuses & Businesses
- 10/8 – Reduce and Reuse
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- 11/5 – National Legislation & Regulations
- 11/19 – Hard to Recycle Materials
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For more info:

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Financing and Economic Incentives
Full Cost Accounting
Best Practices
Educational Issues
PAYT
Procurement (Local, State, Federal)
Legislation
Collection Issues

Recycling, in both a narrow and broad definition of the word, is a profound shift in industrial economies compared to the consume and dispose model of the middle of the last century. Vibrant markets for recyclable materials (and all that goes with that) is key to the continued growth of recycling across North America.
Extended Producer Responsibility
Definition of Recycling
Zero Waste
Incineration
Reuse
Container Recovery Framework

More than just a catch phrase, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle is the fundamental principle espoused by the National Recycling Coalition. This hierarchy means that disposal is the option of last resort. Reducing what we generate, reusing what we can and recycling or
NRC Policy Summary
Fact Sheets

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.
Defining Recycling

Why is a Recycling Definition Important?

Recycling is defined in different ways by different states, municipalities, and industry sectors. These differences in terminology can lead to confusion when trying to measure the recycling rates of certain commodities and the success of programs. As a result, using data to effectively evaluate and communicate the performance and achievements of recycling programs can be difficult.

It is critically important that we adopt and promote a single, simple definition of recycling if we are to continue to improve recycling in this country. Preserving the quality of recyclable materials - from collection through processing to market - is vital to recycling. A standardized definition helps ensure that everyone is talking about the same recycling.
Defining Waste Diversion and Legitimate Recycling

What constitutes diversion and legitimate recycling? This may have once been a simple idea, but changes in collection and processing practices have made the definitions more complicated.

Everything that is initially diverted from the disposal waste stream is not actually recycled and made into something new. This could be, among other things, mixed broken glass cullet that cannot be salvaged or material that is not sorted properly (at either the generator or processing facility level).

What is (and what is not) “Recycling”? A broad definition of the word, is a profound shift in industrial practices.
Education Remains the Foundation of Success

Successful waste reduction and recycling require a strong and ongoing education component. It is important not only to the general consuming public, but to decision makers, manufacturers, other businesses, and institutions.

The public education should instill behavior change and focus on the nuts and bolts of reducing, reusing, and recycling.

- How to reduce what we consume
- Ways we can repair and reuse more often.
- What to recycle
- How to recycle
- Understand why some things can’t

Like so many other recycling issues, the value of education is important to the entire recycling cycle, not just the end benefits.
Transitioning from Consumption and Disposal to a Sustainable, Recycled Manufacturing Economy

Much of the second half of the 20th Century was marked by rampant consumption and corresponding increases in disposal. The throw-away society was seen as a convenience and disposal of waste increased rapidly.

Concerns over disposal capacity and the wasting of resources prompted many states to pass recycling legislation in the nineties. This brought the first fundamental change in the way we consume, reuse and recycle things in half a century.

North America finds itself in the midst of a remarkable economic transition. We now increasingly look at resource management in a sustainable way based on recovery and recycling.

Recycling, in both a narrow and broad definition of the word, is a profound shift in industrial economies compared to the consume and dispose model of the middle of the last century. Vibrant markets for recyclable materials make this viable.
Sustainable Materials Management

A Sustainable Materials Management Policy

The National Recycling Coalition believes that sustainable resource management is an important component of a truly sustainable future, both environmentally and economically, in North America.

The Hierarchy

Source reduction, reuse and recycling can conserve energy and natural resources, create jobs and conserve landfill space. Other forms of disposal, such as waste-to-energy facilities and sanitary landfilling, are less preferable in terms of resource conservation and environmental protection.

The National Recycling Coalition endorses and supports a hierarchy of waste management, as espoused by the National Recycling Coalition:

1. Source Reduction
2. Reuse
3. Recycling

More than just a catch phrase, REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE is the fundamental principle espoused by the National Recycling Coalition.
Policy and Legislation

• Extended Producer Responsibility
• Container Recovery Framework
• Definition of Recycling
• Recycling Economics – Cost of Disposal and Utilization
• Product Labeling
• Recycled Content Product Standards
Policy and Legislation

• Cost Effective Infrastructure
• Market Cooperatives
• Financing and Economic Incentives
• Education and Recycling Clearinghouse
• Incineration
• Procurement of Recycled Content Products
Anja Malawi Brandon, Ph.D.
U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley

Shane Trimmer
U.S. Representative Alan Lowenthal
Legislative Components

Senate Bill 3263
House Bill 5845

- Ban certain single-use plastic products that are not recyclable.
- Ban on single-use plastic carry-out bags and place fee on all other carry-out bags.
- Require producers of packaging, containers, and food-service products to design, manage and finance waste collection and recycling programs (for all material types).
- Create a nationwide beverage container refund program.
- Establish minimum recycled content requirements for beverage containers, packaging and food-service products.
- Spur massive investments in U.S. domestic recycling and composting infrastructure.
- Prohibit plastic waste from being shipped overseas to developing countries.
- Protect state and local governments that enact more stringent standards.
- Place a temporary pause on new plastic facilities until EPA updates and creates important regulations on those facilities.
Trifecta of Simple Plastic Laws

- Ban on Plastic Carry-Out Bags
  - 10 cent fee on all other Carry-out bags

- Ban on Foam food and drinkware (Expanded Polystyrene)

- Straws/utensils available on request
Current Linear Handling of Plastic Waste

**What happens to the 35 million tons of plastic waste we dispose of each year?**

- **26.82 million tons (75.8%)** goes to a landfill.
- **5.59 million tons (15.8%)** is incinerated.
- **2.96 million tons (8.4%)** is sorted for recycling.
- **1.84 million tons (62%)** is exported. Of that amount, 1.62 million tons (88%) goes to poor countries.
- **.88 million tons (38%)** goes to domestic recycling— in the end, this is only 2.5% of all collected plastic waste!
Push for Circular Model

- Extended Producer Responsibility
- Shifts the responsibility from local governments to the producers
- Drives end-markets for recycled material
National Container Deposit

10-cent national refund for all beverage containers
  - All materials (plastic, glass, metal)
Post-Consumer Recycled Content

Plastic beverage bottles

- 25% by 2025
- 30% by 2030
- 50% by 2035
- 80% by 2040

Coke's Message in a Bottle

By Joel Makower

The Coca-Cola Company's announcement last week that it had set a goal to recycle or reuse all the plastic bottles it uses in the U.S. is a bold, even audacious move, one sure to give the company a new green sheen. Sure enough, the announcement got the endorsement of the National Recycling Coalition, the industry-friendly group of recycling advocates.

Dive Brief:
- Coca-Cola, as part of its "World Without Waste" initiative, aims to recycle the equivalent of 100% of its packaging by 2020, the company announced. By 2030, for every bottle or can the company sells globally, it wants to take one back for recycling — including packaging from other companies.
- The company also announced a goal to manufacture bottles with an average 50% recycled content by 2035.
- Coca-Cola is partnering with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s New Plastics Economy, The Ocean Conservancy, the Trash Free Seas Alliance and World Wildlife Fund to achieve its new recycling goals. The company also announced it would partner with groups at regional and local levels to encourage packaging recycling.
Plastic Waste Exports

- Ban on export of plastic waste, scrap and pairings to developing countries.
- Export permitted to OECD countries (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development)
  - Consent
  - Non-mixed

Law, K.L. et al., Science Advances, 2020
Pause on New Plastic Facilities

- Up to three years while Federal Agencies study impacts and update regulations.
Other Provisions

- Cigarette Butts – Electronic Cigarette Cartridges
- Derelict Fishing Gear
- Protect State Action
Next Steps

■ Ask your **Representatives, Organizations, or Companies** to cosponsor/support the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act

■ Engage with us as we preparing updates and additions to the bill now for reintroduction in 2021

■ We will soon begin a dialogue with the incoming administration
THANK YOU!

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Senate Actions on Marine Debris and the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act

Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska), & Bob Menendez (D-N.J.)
Thought Process Behind the Bill

• Previous SOS bill, passed in 2018, started the conversation
  The first SOS primarily authorized continued funding for NOAA’s Marine Debris Program, a Sense of Congress on global marine debris efforts, and other measures.

• Needed to use unanimous consent process
  This legislative process requires all Senators to agree to the bill; this requires working with all offices to address specific issues in bill.

• Input from academia, environmental and business groups
• Senator Sullivan (R-AK)
• Senator Whitehouse (D-RI)
• Senator Menendez (D-NJ)
• Establish a Marine Debris Response Trust Fund
  Allows NOAA to quickly respond to marine debris events.
• Authorize a new Genius Prize
  For innovation on reduce, reuse, recycle plastic
• Create a Marine Debris Foundation
  Congressionally-chartered foundation can “fill in the cracks” in existing marine debris response.
• Conduct new studies
  • Studies on U.S. contribution to global plastic pollution: microfibers; derelict fishing gear; etc.
Global Engagement

SOS 2.0 BILL COMPONENTS

• Formalize U.S. policy on international cooperation to combat marine debris.

• Enhance international outreach of two of the agencies involved in marine debris activities, NOAA and EPA.

• Direct the executive branch to maintain international leadership on marine debris and provide enhanced support for plastic waste mitigation.

• Explore the potential for pursuing a new international agreement on marine debris and directs the executive branch to consider marine debris in future agreements.
SOS 2.0 BILL COMPONENTS

- Invest in improved domestic water and waste infrastructure through grants.
- Assess barriers to improving recycling and repurposing of plastic waste.
- Improve understanding of the plastic waste issue through studies that look at human health and explore innovative ways to recycle and reuse plastic waste.
- Provide grants to improve recycling infrastructure to better deal with this pollution.
SOS 2.0 Through Congress

• In Senate, bill was broken into 3 pieces, then reformed: three committees with a wide range of interests reviewed and amended the bill.
• Addressed all Senators’ concerns throughout the process. Passed Jan 2020.
• House passed amended version Oct 2020; now post-election push to become law.
• Lessons learned and collecting ideas for follow-on legislation.
Reduction of plastic waste
Recycling: Taxes; subsidies; mandates on recycled content; corporate pledges
Link all states to issue; not just a coastal problem
Ghost gear
Response to marine debris crisis events
More emphasis on global solutions
Evaluation of plastic waste exports/imports
Thank you!

Jill Hamilton, Jill_Hamilton@whitehouse.senate.gov
Rob Portman
U.S. Senator

Co-Chair of the International Conservation Caucus
Co-Chair of the Senate Great Lakes Task Force
Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act
Restore Our Parks Act (P.L. 116-152)
Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Act (P.L. 116-9)
Tropical Forest Conservation Act (P.L. 115-440)
Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act (P.L. 114-322)
Energy Efficiency Improvement Act (P.L. 114-11)
National Park Service Centennial Act (P.L. 114-289)
Benefits of Recycling

- Creates jobs
- Reduces emissions
- Prevents pollution
- Reduces waste sent to landfills
According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

• Recycling rate in the United States is around 35 percent.
• Nearly $9 billion worth of recyclable materials are thrown away each year.
Role of Congress - Education

Reports have indicated that consumer confusion on how to properly recycle is one of the top recycling challenges.

Congress can help by providing funding and assistance for education and outreach to help increase participation in recycling and decrease contamination in the recycling stream.
S. 2941 RECYCLE Act

Recycling Enhancements to Collection and Yield through Consumer Learning and Education Act

Senator Rob Portman and Senator Debbie Stabenow

- Authorizes $15 million/year over five years in competitive grants to educate consumers and households about their residential and community recycling programs.

- Directs EPA to develop a model recycling program toolkit for grantees.

- Requires EPA to more frequently review and revise, if appropriate, its Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines.
Supporters of the RECYCLE Act

The Recycling Partnership
National Association of Manufacturers
The U.S. Conference of Mayors
Solid Waste Association of North America
National Waste & Recycling Association
United Steelworkers
Consumer Brands Association
American Beverage Association
American Chemistry Council
Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries
Paper Recycling Coalition
American Forest & Paper Association
Can Manufacturers Institute
The Association of Plastic Recyclers

Plastics Industry Association
Glass Packaging Institute
Procter & Gamble
Owens-Illinois
Pulp & Paperworkers’ Resource Council
Reserve Management Group
Resinate Materials Group
KW Plastics
Evangelical Environmental Network
Advanced Drainage Systems
Construction and Demolition Recycling Association
Sierra Club
Natural Resources Defense Council
National Wildlife Federation
Wildlife Conservation Society
The Opportunity

According to The Recycling Partnership, there is an annual gap of 1 billion pounds of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) between current U.S. supply and projected 2025 demand for use in bottles.
Questions?

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