

# Meeting Notes

## Recycling Stakeholders

July 19, 2018

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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Please send corrections, edits, or additions to [alli.kingfisher@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:alli.kingfisher@ecy.wa.gov)

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### Meeting Objectives

- To share information about the impacts of National Sword/Blue Sky on stakeholders across Washington
- Share next steps that groups are taking

### Access Meeting Notes

- **Sign up for the [ListServ](#)** to continue to receive information about future meetings and work. Alli will keep an interested parties list as well as the ListServ.
- **Access** meeting notes and presentations [here](#).

### General Notes from the Discussion

#### ***WA Department of Ecology Update:***

- Ecology will conduct research with Oregon Dept of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The agencies will form a Scope of Work (SOW), followed by a Request for Proposal (RFP).
- Ecology will create a SOW to conduct a statewide education methods campaign on recycling and recycling contamination.
- A Stakeholder Steering Committee will guide planning issues. The first meeting will be July 25, 2018. The committee includes local government, industry, non-profit groups and others.
- The [Best Management Practices](#) (BMP) for residential commingled collection for local cities and jurisdictions is complete.

#### ***King County – Responsible Recycling Right Task Force (RRTF), Lisa Sepanski***

- The Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) and the Municipal Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee (MSWMAC) asked that the Task Force be created.
- Short-term goals – Identify near/med/long term actions in response to China Blue Sky

- Long-term goals - show commitment across the region to responsible recycling and domestic sorting and processing of curbside materials.
- Outcomes – report to the King County advisory committees (SWAC and MSWMAC) with actionable items and recommendations. Develop interim communication tools as appropriate, or for other topics that become more immediate.
- Impacts from Blue Sky on King County – rough estimates – 137,000 tons of materials have been impacted by the policies.
- Responsible Recycling Task Force focus areas: quality vs quantity, harmonized messaging, domestic processing and markets, demand for recycled feedstock, measure real recycling, and responsible recycling is not free.
  - *Quality vs quantity* – collect materials that have stable markets, not those that damage other valuable commodities. Use municipal recycling contracts to utilize this effort (i.e. Contracts should have documented real markets for those materials collected, contracts should be flexible with shifting markets and allow removal or addition of materials)
  - *Harmonize Messaging* – reduce confusion by the public. Create a priority list of priority materials. Communicate with elected officials about quality vs. quantity.
  - *Create Demand* – examples include local buying ordinance (California SB 168), Support national efforts (SPC efforts, APR Recycling Demand Champion Campaign)
  - *Responsible Recycling Is Not Free.*
    - It costs money to gain the environmental benefits of recycling - Replace virgin feedstocks with recycled content.
  - *Measure Real Recycling.*
    - Measure downstream market sales as feedstock for new products (This should be goal, not diversion)
  - *How the Region (NW WA) is Responding Now*
    - Looking for alternative markets in India and elsewhere for paper
    - MRFs are making adjustments (slowing down sorting, etc.)
    - Costs are higher and prices for materials are lower than were built into collection contracts.
    - UTC approved temporary surcharges – Unincorporated areas and noncontract cities (for Waste Management and Republic) \$0.41 to \$1.01 a month for customers
- Some jurisdictions are granting temporary waivers to contracts with recycling requirements to allow landfilling of unmarketable recyclables – this should be the last resort. Recommended actions for local governments include ensuring that actions are taking place per their contract to reduce contamination and that MRFs are meeting requirements for residual levels specified in contracts.
- Other recommendations are that signed waivers for disposal should specify: start and stop dates with consideration for month to month; identify criteria that needs to

be met before approval for disposal; reporting to the contracting city or county what and how much of materials are disposed of and where is their final destination.

- There was a focus on cleaning up curbside contamination: we need to reduce wishful recycling and confusion. Need to promote empty, clean and dry and blue bin consistency to reduce contamination.
- MRFs – mixed bales are not marketable, too much of wrong materials, stored materials need protection from weather, problematic materials need to be kept out (plastic bags, food).
- A Communications Consortium made up of King County cities, the city of Seattle and King County staff, is creating a *Communications Tool Kit* for jurisdictions by mid-August. This will include key message and talking points for cities, downloadable social media, YouTube channel for recycling videos.
- The Recommendations Report will be passed to the Advisory Committees and decision makers It will include recommendations for addressing the Responsible Recycling framework.
- Upcoming Dates & Topics
  - August – markets and creating demand
  - September - systems approaches and financing
  - October – policy and legislation
  - November – report recommendations
- Questions:
  - Have they made their decision on glass? In the short term, the group focused on removing some of the items in the red column of the table (plastic bags and film, shredded paper, ) because they're straightforward and already prohibited in less than 40% of King County jurisdictions. They don't have the capacity to look at glass right now, especially since it's accepted in 100% of King County jurisdictions.
- **BMP Document**
  - Completed by Ecology end of last week. Available at: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/documents/1807014.pdf>
  - General guide for local governments on issues and what to consider on what they should/should not include in their commingled cart/acceptable list. The document includes a caution section of items that need thoughtful analysis on based on what the MRF can handle, manage, and find markets for.
  - The document also includes information on how to handle materials if they shouldn't be part of a commingled system. Includes items for discussion with your local MRF depending on what is available locally. The guide is not meant to be a static list as markets change and technology develops.
  - Questions:
    - Why was glass put in the “Use Caution” column instead of the “No” column? Because locals (especially on the Westside) were not ready

to put it in the No column due to availability of Strategic Materials (in Seattle) to process it.

### **173.350 Update - Solid Waste Determination - Dawn Marie Maurer, ECOLOGY**

*Overview of how current rule works and how the proposed changes would impact the management of material*

- all recyclable materials have always been solid waste under statute and rule.
  - All materials that were transported/collected/sorted at MRFs continued to be solid waste until they were made into something new
  - Those materials with value (such as scrap metal) were still considered solid waste
  - Most materials coming out of MRFs needed to go to a 3rd party for processing or an end user to become a final product
- The new determination tool should clearly define that some items may never become solid waste, and that materials may leave the solid waste regulatory world before being remanufactured into a final product.
  - Those recyclable materials that have been processed into a commodity with a positive value may leave solid waste regulatory oversight. Other materials with a negative value will simply remain a recyclable solid waste, just as they are today.
- The new determination tool should have no impact on Blue Sky material management issues.

### **General Discussion**

- Paper prices – have stabilized. All markets going domestic or internationally are more expensive than China. Depends on the specs, contracts with the mill, or playing the market. Still on occasion paying the mills to take the product.
- Zero Waste Washington – Working on legislation for next session – statewide plastic bag ban.
- Walla Walla – Has anyone gone to an ‘Acceptable Recyclables List’ that includes only those items that have value? Is anyone taking mixed residential? Does anyone currently apply a surcharge to cover the cost of recyclables?
- Pend Oreille – only takes materials they can sell for recyclables. They do not charge a fee for recyclables. They collect paper, aluminum cans, cardboard, metal, e-cycle (NO PLASTICS).
- San Juan County – rate changes on their commingled at their Orcas and San Juan Transfer Stations. They have stopped mixed plastic collection at a drop box due to changes in markets.
- Pullman – planning a town hall to get stakeholder input to ban plastics in area (just recently stopped accepting glass).
- Pullman Disposal – Is putting shredded paper in a secure paper bag still a work around to allow for its collection?

- Take to shred events or banks to be handled as a separate item rather than contaminate other materials
- Check with local MRFs to understand how they can process and manage materials
- Shredded paper fibers may hold little value.
- Aluminum cans - Crushed cans be missorted into paper bales and become a contaminate. MRFs sorted materials by shape. Keep things in the original shape.
- Ecology is working to track jurisdictional changes – will work to collaborate with other groups doing similar investigative efforts
- Having trouble finding markets. To get cleaner bales, MRFS are slowing down sort lines and taking longer to process materials. Result is that stockpiles backup.
- Many facilities have short-term and long-term problems with the amount of material – (material kept outside due to space constraints, can't sort material quickly, food soiled material, or blowing litter).
- Some facilities have contingency plans to reduce stockpiles and practice drainage methods
- Facilities are working to be flexible. Some materials can affect the environment and public health. These impacts include risks to surface water and storm water.
- Not just about money and trying to move material.
- How can the system continue to operate effectively within our current structure?
- **Future Meetings and Topics**
  - Continue to meet monthly
  - Invite Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs), waste brokers
  - Ask for topic ideas via Survey Monkey
  - Ask for updates on 'acceptable materials lists' and disposal cost data via Survey Monkey
  - Continue updates from King County Responsible Task Force
- **Next Meeting:**
  - Wednesday August 15: 1:00-3:00 p.m.