

WASHINGTON STATE RECYCLING DEVELOPMENT CENTER ADVISORY BOARD CHARTER

Background

For many years, Washington State relied on China to take much of the recyclable paper and plastics generated by residents and businesses. In January 2018, China implemented their “National Sword” policy that banned the import of certain plastic and paper materials and set a stringent contaminant limit for recyclables (0.5 percent by weight). This disrupted global recycling systems, including Washington’s, by eliminating a key market for these materials. Recently, other international markets, such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam, have followed with similar bans or strict contamination limits.

Alternative export and domestic markets for mixed paper and mixed plastics are extremely limited. Collection, sorting, and processing costs have increased. In response, communities across Washington are changing their recycling programs by ~~suspending recycling programs~~, removing items from programs, or ~~suspending recycling programs and~~ disposing of recyclables. Washington needs to find new markets for recyclable materials to sustain the state’s recycling programs.

Recycling Development Center

In 2019, state law¹ established the Recycling Development Center (Center) ~~at the~~within Washington State’s Department of Ecology to help address the loss of overseas recycling markets. The Center’s goal is to further the development of domestic processing and markets for recycled commodities. The Center’s activities will be guided by this advisory board.

The Center will develop an annual work plan. Reports will be submitted to the legislature in December of even numbered years. ~~The work plan and~~ legislative report will document Center efforts to:

- Recommend actions to develop recycling markets, focusing first on mixed waste paper and plastics.
- Identify significant materials in the waste stream with potential for use as an industrial or commercial feedstock. Recommend actions to develop markets for these materials.
- Recommend state policies that may ~~affect~~influence markets for recyclable materials, including cost and benefit analyses, impacts on solid waste utility ratepayers, prices of consumer goods, and postconsumer material recycling.
- Work with manufacturers of packaging and materials to increase product recyclability, use of recycled content, and product reuse.
- Conduct studies on market development for recyclable materials (examples, applied research, technology transfer, life-cycle analysis, and pilot demonstration projects).
- ~~Obtain and share recyclable material data.~~
- Fund development or revitalization of recycling markets.
- Provide business and marketing assistance to public and private sector entities.
- Partner with Oregon and British Columbia to establish a regional recycling development council to support efforts that cross state and provincial borders.

Commented [KE1]: Not sure if people are not informed about China’s green ban or they are tired of hearing it as an excuse, I would be of the latter. I think we use this as a catalyst for change and that we cannot rely on Asia to solve our problems and potentially take away a new and innovative industry.

Commented [KE2]: I think quite a bit of this work plan is going to be related to operating budget, personnel of the center. I saw there was a hiring plan for 2 folks, will there be more or other resources to pull from? The positions we hire should then fit a skill set needed for all these efforts.

Commented [KE3]: Web-based and open to public? Or through DOE?

¹ Chapter 70.370 Revised Code of Washington, <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=70.370&full=true>

- Track Center activity impacts on state recycling rates or rates of utilization of postconsumer materials in manufactured products.

Ecology, Commerce, and UTC responsibilities

Ecology is responsible for the work of the Center in partnership with material recovery facility operators, public and private sector recycling and solid waste industries, packaging manufacturers and retailers, local governments, environmental organizations, interested colleges and universities, and state agencies.

The Washington Department of Commerce (Commerce) supports the Center by providing business, marketing, and technical assistance for the public and private sector.

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) will attend board meetings, track Center activities, and provide input related to impacts on ratepayers.

Board responsibilities

The Board will advise the Center during the development of the annual work plan, be consulted while projects and tasks are underway, and provide review of results as they are compiled and reported.

Board activities and responsibilities include:

- Interpret the responsibilities assigned to the Center in the law.
- Suggest the work and priorities for the Center.
- Partner with the Center on projects and tasks and identify other partners.
- Provide information, resources and recommendations to the Center.
- Review and provide input on policy issues, proposed regulations, projects, and plans.
- Establish subcommittees as needed to delve deeper into specific issues. To study specific problems or projects and make recommendations for action
- Review and comment on Center work plan, draft output, plans and reports, recommendations and implementation plans.

Commented [KE4]: Does this mean board members can use their organization to help under contracts or is that a conflict?

Commented [KE5]: Is this considered lobbying?

Board decision making

The Board's advice to Ecology does not require members to reach consensus. All viewpoints will be considered as the work plan for the Center is developed and the results of that work is completed. Recommended actions, along with any areas of disagreement, will be presented in any reports and shared with appropriate stakeholders for further implementation.

Board Participation

All board members commit to:

- Participate in each meeting to the best of their abilities to ensure continuity through the process. Avoid substituting or alternating members whenever possible.
- Come prepared for meetings by reading materials before the meeting, thinking through questions, and developing responses and discussion ideas.
- Engage in honest, open-minded, constructive and good-faith discussions to seek understanding and optimal decisions and outcomes.
- Treat everyone and their opinions with respect.
- Comment constructively and specifically.

- Consult with their constituencies and provide input to the discussions from their perspectives.
- Do not attempt to represent the views of the Center to the public or media, unless clearly agreed upon and delegated to do so.

Board membership

The Board is comprised of 14 members appointed by the Director of Ecology in consultation with the Director of Commerce. County representatives appointed by the Washington State Association of Counties. Board representation as of November 2019:

Government – 2 year terms

- Seattle - Sego Jackson, Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle
- Skagit County - Margo Gillaspay, Skagit County Public Works Department, Mt Vernon
- Spokane County - Deb Geiger, Spokane County Solid Waste, Spokane

Research institution – 2 year terms

- Pacific Northwest National Laboratory - Corinne Drennan, Richland
- Washington State University - Dr. Karl Englund, Pullman
- Evergreen State College - Scott Morgan, Olympia

Public interest group – 2 year terms

- Zero Waste Washington - Heather Trim, Seattle

Private sector recycling materials system – 2 or 3 year terms

- American Chemistry Council – Tim Shestek, Sacramento, CA – 2 years
- Ameripen - Kyla Fisher, Phoenix, AZ – 2 years
- North Pacific Paper Company - Jay Simmons, Longview – 3 years
- Recology - Derek Ruckman, Seattle – 2 years
- Returnit - Allen Langdon, Encorp Pacific, Burnaby, BC – 2 years
- Sustainable Packaging Coalition - Nina Goodrich, Olympia – 3 years
- Waste Management - Mindy Rostami, Kirkland – 3 years

The chair of the advisory board will be elected from among the members by a simple majority vote. Additional temporary appointments may be made by the chair of the Board, with agreement among the members, where specific expertise is needed. Board members may substitute an alternate to attend meetings on their behalf.

Meeting schedule

The Board will meet beginning in January 2020. For the first year meetings will occur..... Ecology will facilitate board meetings, handle meeting logistics, and finalize the meeting schedule. Board meetings will be hosted by Ecology, scheduled to occur All meetings will be offered with a call-in or webinar option. Meetings will be open to all interested parties.

TO DO ADD board meeting dates/times/locations to the board website – to be set via email discussion with the board.

Record Keeping

Ecology will record and post meeting notes and keep the board website updated:

https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1962/37596/recycling_development_center_advisory_board.aspx

Board records, such as formal documents, discussion drafts, meeting summaries and exhibits are public records. Committee communications are not confidential and may be disclosed. However, the private documents of individual committee members generally are not considered public records if Ecology or another public body does not use or retain copies.

Alternative format

To request reasonable accommodation, including materials in a format for the visually impaired or in a language other than English, call Ecology at 360-407-7285. Persons with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. Persons with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341. Or visit Ecology's Accessibility Webpage: <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Accountability-transparency/Accessibility/Request-for-reasonable-accommodation>

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