

Recycling Development Center Advisory Board Special Topics Meeting: *Extended Producer Responsibility Policy Framework and Implementation Model* June 22, 2020



This Special Topics meeting of the Advisory Board for the Washington Recycling Development Center (Center) was held on June 22, 2020 via webinar. The Presentation was provided by guests Lisa Sepanski of King County Solid Waste Division and McKenna Morrigan of Cascadia Consulting.

The webinar provided details of an extended producer responsibility (EPR) policy framework and implementation model for packaging and printed paper that was developed for Washington State. It illustrates how an EPR policy can create a circular recycling “system” by shifting recycling from the current fragmented, local government-run programs to a fully funded statewide recycling system. This model demonstrates how an EPR system can decrease contamination, improve recycling rates, improve markets for recycled materials, and provide a sustainable funding source to alleviate risks from fluctuating market prices for recyclable materials. Shifting to a legislated, statewide EPR system will incentivize investments in the domestic recycling infrastructure, can take advantage of economies of scale, can lead to reductions in greenhouse gasses and create a circular economy for recycled materials.

Twelve of the 14 advisory board members were in attendance for this webinar. Additional interested parties joined and were offered an opportunity to ask questions of the presenters.

Presentation Details

[PowerPoint slides](#) from this presentation are available in PDF format on the [Board EZview Website](#).

You may find the full report here: [Extended Producer Responsibility Policy Framework and Implementation Model: Residential Recycling of Packaging and Paper Products in Washington State](#)

Q&A Session

The following questions were posted during the webinar:

- "Total system costs" include paying for existing curbside collection as well as any expanded curbside required by the new program?
- Why not require manufacturers to buy back their materials after going through the state's MRF's, at the same proportions they put material into the "front end"?
- How are economies of scale expected to be achieved when MRF equipment is largely modular - so scale up means numbering up?
- Have the full impacts of "alternate systems" for collection been evaluated - i.e., people driving across town in a 3,000lb car to drop off a couple pounds of film, polystyrene, even glass? Traffic, noise, storm water pollution, air pollution, lost productivity, etc.

- Required access for all MF residents: WAC 51.50.009 has been around for close to 30 years; why aren't ALL jurisdictions following it? Ignoring it for decades has led to the MF access issues that you seek to solve. If permit centers allow occupancy without adequate space for recycling, much less compost collection, how will it happen? Who pays to retrofit thousands of complexes who were built without adequate space?
- Where is this picture from? (slide 20)
- Can you explain how BC has structured its funding for PRO collectors who are farther away from MRFs or remanufacturers versus those who are closer? Is it a standard rate or is there some sort of distance/transportation factored into a payment for a collector?
- Did B.C. residents experience an overall decrease in their garbage rates after implementation of the PRO?
- What were some of the assumptions around recycle content for categories where it's not really possible today (Films and flexibles, PP and PE)
- How can it be verified that the PRO's actually internalize all EPR costs vs. passing the cost on to the consumer via small increases in product costs?
- Why speak of an "expansive list" of recyclables? Recyclability depends on many things, including the existence of markets for materials. If there are no markets for certain materials, they won't get recycled. Designating them as part of the program would only create more contamination, without creating disincentives for generating packaging with these valueless "recyclable" materials.
- Brunel University in the UK recently produced a report/study that established metrics that mirror a Triple Bottom Line format whereby results are measured on an economic, social and environmental basis? They refer to this as the Complex Value Optimisation for Resource Recovery (CVORR). Is this an approach that you have studied?

List of Attendees

Board Members in attendance

Corinne Drennan, Pacific NW National Laboratory
Karl Englund, Washington State University
Mike Range, Waste Management
Derek Ruckman, Recology
Tim Shestek, American Chemistry Council
Sego Jackson, Seattle Public Utilities

Allen Langdon, Return-it
Scott Morgan, Evergreen State College
Deb Geiger, Spokane County Solid Waste
Margo Gillaspay, Skagit County Public Work
Nina Goodrich, Sustainable Packaging Coalition
Heather Trim, Zero Waste Washington

Interested parties

Amanda Romero, Thurston County
Andrew Kenfick, Waste Management
Beth Vargas Duncan, ORRA
Brad Lovaas, WRRRA
Brooke Davies, Lobbyist
Catherine Holm, WA Food Industry Assn
Dave Claugus, Pioneer Recycling Services
David Stitzhal, Full Circle Environmental Inc
Domenic Calabro, United States EPA
Garth Hickle, University of New Mexico
Jeff Epstein, Carton Council

Jody Snyder, Waste Connections
Josie Cummings, American Forest & Paper Assn
Karen Hultgren, Pierce County
Kevin Ruuhela, Shohomish County
Kristin Leichner, Pride Disposal
Lauren Aguilar, Serin Haley
Lindsay Chapman, Spokane County
Marie Novak, Cascadia Consulting Group
Matt Stern, Waste Management
Michelle Ross, Pierce County resident
Natalie Caulkins, Republic Services
Nathan Wolk, Seattle University

Pete Moe, Orcas Island Exchange
Preston Peck, City of Tacoma
Resa Dimino, RRS
Rod Whittaker, WRRRA
Rodd Pemble, SSC Inc
Ted Carlson, Sanitary Service Company
Tonilee Hanson, EnviroCertified

Commerce staff

Brian Young

Ecology staff

Beth Gill
Elaine Taylor
Julie Robertson
Kara Steward
Katherine Walton
Tina Schaefer