

Recycling Development Center Advisory Board Meeting February 10, 2021



The Washington Recycling Development Center (Center) Advisory Board met online on February 10, 2021; interested parties attended and offered comments. The meeting was hosted by Department of Ecology (Ecology) staff.

Advisory Board members:

Corinne Drennan, Pacific NW National Laboratory
Karl Englund, Washington State University
Kyla Fisher, AMERIPEN
Deb Geiger, Spokane County Solid Waste
Margo Gillaspay, Skagit County Public Works
Nina Goodrich, Sustainable Packaging Coalition
Sego Jackson, Seattle Public Utilities

Allen Langdon, Return-it
Scott Morgan, Evergreen State College
Mike Range, Waste Management
Derek Ruckman, Recology
Tim Shestek, American Chemistry Council
Jay Simmons, North Pacific Paper Company
Heather Trim, Zero Waste Washington

Meeting Agendaⁱ:

- Center updates: Board, Ecology, and Department of Commerce (Commerce).
- Washington legislative session update.
- Paper presentations:
 - Jay Simmons, North Pacific Paper Company (NORPAC).
 - Terry Webber, American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA).
- Discussion of the paper markets summary.

Materials for this meeting are available on the [Advisory Board website](#)ⁱⁱ.

Updates: Board, Ecology, Commerce

Board members shared a few links during the update discussion:

- Nina Goodrich, [Sustainable Packaging Coalition](#)ⁱⁱⁱ webinar on glass recycling on February 17th: [Watch-Where-You-Step-the-Jagged-Path-to-Better-Glass-Recycling](#)^{iv}.

Commerce: Brian Young

- Looking into hiring the Center market expert. Continue to work with business interested in opportunities in Washington.

Ecology: Kara Steward

- Center efforts have focused on current legislative work, finalizing the Center Report to the Legislature, updating the summary on paper markets, and finalizing the Center grants to local governments and public institutions. The grants are waiting management review.

Data and Outreach Subcommittee: no update for this meeting.

Washington legislative update:

- Julie Robertson, Ecology ([Slides](#)^v 12 through 16)
- Heather Trim, Zero Waste Washington ([Slides](#) 17 through 34)

Paper Presentations

- **Jay Simmons, NORPAC** ([Slides](#) 36 through 55)
- **Terry Webber, American Forest and Paper Association** ([Slides](#) 56 through 89)

Board discussion:

- **Contaminants:** Glass in the single curbside bin can get broken and pieces can come to the paper mill in the bale of paper. Because it is very abrasive, it damages the paper mill equipment. Discussed improved sorting at the MRF to remove more glass. Does Oregon have cleaner paper, as they are a bottle bill state? There are still wine bottles not in the Oregon bottle program that get into the curbside collection system.
- **Recycled content in paper:** Cartons are better than paper bags to have recycled content. Paper bags need long fibers to hold up, recycled content adds shorter fibers. Wheat straw is not a good fiber for paper bags – it is shorter fibers and contains silica (abrasive like glass).
 - Corinne Drennan shared a [study on bag regulations](#)^{vi}.
- **Recyclable materials:** Paper cups and pizza boxes.
 - **Paper cups** are a very small portion of the paper source, cups are small and get flattened and don't get through the screens to get into the paper bale.
 - **Pizza boxes** may contain food, the MRF will not open the box to make sure it's empty, composting is preferred.

Paper discussion

For reference: notes from the December 9th board meeting on paper:

- **Data:** Data gaps; metrics on contamination; price of recycled vs virgin; contamination.
- **Analysis:** Do a life cycle analysis; look at commercial sources (residential is such a small portion); look into the paper materials that are less desirable (mixed paper) for other uses.
- **Education:** Educate policy makers; bring light to the issues (example: cost to improve paper bale does not result in significant return on the capital investment).
- **Policy:** What are smart policies for end markets (examples: EPR or recycled content mandate); evaluate source separated to get cleaner materials.
- **Paper 'one pager':** Include the 'data', paper industry, trends/impacts, and end markets.

Board Discussion of the [paper summary](#)^{vii}:

- Put the recommendations at the top – some of the 'actions' discussed:
 - Actions to improve end markets.
 - Capacity, contamination removal to get to existing assets.
 - Added capacity – how can we help increase the material stream?
 - Policy alternatives:
 - Procurement policies.

- EPR to fund collection/closing the cycle.
 - Commercial/industrial streams.
 - Single stream vs source separated – are there analyses.
 - Where is capital better spent? Collection or sorting.
 - Look to Oregon Department of Environmental Quality [analyses](#)^{viii}.
- Look into the Ecology waste characterization study (2015-16), identify where the paper is coming from that is being landfilled. Residential vs commercial.
 - Contamination issues (curbside) are outside the Center responsibilities, Ecology has a contamination reduction effort underway (led by Peter Guttchen).
 - Look at the commodity, describe how it flows, why does some end up in the landfill, where is the opportunity.
 - NORPAC increasing capacity will impact the fiber recycling stream. How does that message get out to keep fiber in the curbside bin?

Attendee comments in the Chat Box:

The following comments were shared by attendees during the meeting. Some were discussed during the meeting. Some attendee comments have responses provided in *italic font*.

Suzanne Noble:

- What other materials were included in HB1145, was hemp included? Is there a concern about pesticide residue on the wheat? **Response:** *Wheat straw was included in HB1145, hemp was not included, and pesticides were not discussed.*
- Is there a system for figuring out the amount of paper waste being generated? Maybe through UPC data at point of sale. If we don't have data on the amount being generated - how do we know if we are successful? **Response:** *There is currently no reporting requirement for paper packaging or paper products sold or delivered into Washington.*
- Why are the paper figures all estimates? All the recycling rate is estimated because there is no way to know how much we are recovering. **Response:** *The paper estimates in Jay Simmons' presentation were future estimated projections (the dashed lines).*
- Why do all European and island countries have multi-stream? It is possible. **Response:** *Most of the curbside residential service across the state is single stream. In 2019, Zero Waste Washington prepared a [study of residential recycling](#)^{ix} if you are interested in more information.*

Michael Waggoner:

- Is there information on the tonnage/location of waste paper in Washington? **Response:** *Ecology provides online access to [solid waste and recycling data](#)^x.*

Preston Horne-Bryne:

- Tacoma dropped glass from their curbside bins and require that glass be brought to drop-off locations in very efficient, large 20 cubic yard drop boxes. The separated glass goes to drop off locations, delivered by citizens dropping it off on the way to the grocery store. Tacoma's approach does address Derek's collection concern; the packer trucks stay efficient.

- Work on solving the CONTAMINATION problem: it is unacceptable now and can get worse. It must get better! **Response:** *Ecology is working with local jurisdictions on [contamination reduction and outreach plans](#)^{xi}.*

McKenna Murrigan:

- Will NORPACs new facility accept and/or be able to utilize polycoated/aseptic cartons as part of mixed paper bales? **Response:** *Yes.*
- Note that newspaper (and other recyclable paper) is collected in virtually all residential recycling collection programs, but not all communities have recycling collection programs. As of the 2019 Zero Waste Washington survey, there are 186 jurisdictions that have curbside residential recycling collection programs. There are 320 local jurisdictions across the state.

Lisa Crosby:

- You mentioned regulatory barriers. Can you elaborate a bit more? **Response:** *AF&PA provides a [summary of issues](#)^{xii} on their website.*
- The bullet under Policy (slide 74) "evaluate source separated to get cleaner materials" makes a lot of sense.
- Any ideas on how to finance local recycling? Currently financed in my county from tipping fees, but as commodity value goes down this is a strain. That is, financed by commodity sale and subsidized by tipping fees. **Response:** *Ecology's analysis of solid waste financing can be found [online](#)^{xiii} – open the blue box that says: Financing solid waste for the future.*

Natalie Caulkins:

- Republic Services agrees with the other haulers. Pizza boxes need to not go in the recycling bin.
- If you do focus on glass, Strategic Materials, Owens & Illinois, and Ardagh Group are important stakeholders. I think the plant Heather Trim is referring to is in Kalama.

Henry Allen:

- For paper, is multi-stream collection with paper separate a possible help for improving the value and reducing the cost of recycling paper.
- For glass, can a speaker from Strategic Materials come?

Michelle Ross:

- Se-go had a good point... ECY could focus more on the reusable (and EPR) sector. Using industrial washing/sanitation of containers and bags is a culture shift the Center could headline? What about a push to bring back public water fountains/bottle fillers? What about more drop off separation instead of source pickup? Government grant franchise for specialty separation drop-off hub? **Response:** *We will consider these suggestions.*

Preston Peck:

- City of Tacoma is collecting tonnages on glass collected from our drop-off locations, but with the budget cuts the waste characterization sort budgeted for this year was put on hold, so we don't have data on glass in the garbage or in the commingle bin, but hopefully in the near future.

Meeting to-do items

- Next board meeting is on April 14, 2021. Materials will be posted and shared by email message. Glass materials will be the meeting topic. The paper topic will be revisited.
- Update the Paper summary document.
- Develop a Glass one-pager for the next board meeting.
- Post notes from this meeting on the [Advisory Board website^{xiv}](#).

For more information:

- Contact Center staff by [email^{xv}](#).
- Visit the Center [Advisory Board website^{xvi}](#).

List of Attendees (excluding board members)

Interested Parties

Sophia Ahn, Cascadia Consulting
Henry Allen, Spokane Valley
Sarah Bergquist, Washington State University
Domenic Calabro, US Environmental Protection Agency
Natalie Caulkins, Republic Services
Lisa Crosby, Port Townsend
Cody Cupp, Kittitas County
Jeff Epstein, Carton Council
Kelsey Hall, U.S. Navy
Preston Horne-Brine, Fluvion Enterprises
Karen Hultgren, Pierce County
Ruby Irving-Hewey, Klickitat County
Brad Lovaas, Washington Refuse and Recycling Association
Erica Luce, Kittitas County
McKenna, Morigan Cascadia
Suzanne Noble
Preston Peck, Tacoma
Jerilyn Ritzman, Washington State University
Michelle Ross

Bruce Stein, Anchor Packaging
Michael Waggoner, Corumat Inc
Terry Webber, American Forest and Paper Association
Rod Whittaker, Washington Refuse and Recycling Association

Ecology/Commerce/Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC)

Heather Church, Ecology
Peter Guttchen, Ecology
Shannon Jones, Ecology
Amanda Hathaway, UTC
Alli Kingfisher, Ecology
Ann LaRue, UTC
Kyle Murphy, UTC
Julie Robertson, Ecology
Tina Schaefer, Ecology
Kara Steward, Ecology
Katherine Walton, Ecology
Dan Weston, Ecology
Brian Young, Commerce

Washington Recycling Development Center - Advisory Board meeting notes

- ⁱ https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/rdcab/2021-Agenda-Feb-10.pdf
- ⁱⁱ www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37596/recycling_development_center_advisory_board.aspx
- ⁱⁱⁱ <https://sustainablepackaging.org/>
- ^{iv} www.bigmarker.com/spcevents/Panel-Watch-Where-You-Step-the-Jagged-Path-to-Better-Glass-Recycling?show_live_page=true
- ^v www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/rdcab/2021-02-Slides.pdf
- ^{vi} www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0095069618305291
- ^{vii} https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/rdcab/Draft-Paper-Summary.docx
- ^{viii} <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/recycling/Pages/Recycling-Steering-Committee-Resources.aspx>
- ^{ix} www.zerowastewashington.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/State-of-Residential-Recycling-and-Organics-Collection-in-WA-Nov-27-2019_Sept-8-2020-update.pdf
- ^x <https://ecology.wa.gov/Research-Data/Data-resources/Solid-waste-recycling-data>
- ^{xi} https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37664/recycling_contamination_reduction_resources.aspx
- ^{xii} <https://afandpa.org/docs/default-source/1pgrs/2019-fall-update/af-pa-on-the-issues-september-2019.pdf>
- ^{xiii} <https://ecology.wa.gov/Waste-Toxics/Solid-waste-litter/Solid-waste>
- ^{xiv} www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37596/recycling_development_center_advisory_board.aspx
- ^{xv} <mailto:recdevcenter@ecy.wa.gov>
- ^{xvi} www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37596/recycling_development_center_advisory_board.aspx