

Recycling Reform Advisory Council

Meeting Agenda

April 29, 2026, 10-1:30pm PT

[Meeting Slide Deck Link](#)

- Welcome (5 minutes)
 - Review agenda
 - Attendance

Name	Organization	Attended?
Alissa Campbell	Recology	In-person
Amanda Dalton	Northwest Grocery Retail Association	Virtual
Becci Piepel	Douglas County Solid Waste	Virtual
Casey Bouchard	Methow Recycles	In-person
Danielle Waterfield	AMERIPEN	In-person
Grant Williams	Tribal Solid Waste Advisory Network	Virtual
Jay Blazey	Cedar Grove	In-person
Jeff Zillich	WM	Virtual
Jocelyn Quarrell Delegate: Heather Watkins	Bold Reuse	Virtual
Julie Gilbertson	Circular Action Alliance (Non-voting)	In-person
Karen Hultgren	Pierce County	In-person
McKenna Morigan	Seattle Public Utilities	In-person
Megan Daum	American Beverage Association	Virtual
Michael Liptack	Friday Harbor	In-person
Ming-Ming Tung-Edelman	Refugee Artisan Initiative	In-person
Moji Igun	Zero Waste Washington	In-person
Peter Lyon	Washington State Department of Ecology (Non-voting)	In-person
Rick Vahl	Waste Connections	In-person
Trace Bradburn	City of Spokane	Virtual

- Call for disclosure of conflicts of interest
 - Casey Bouchard flagged that in addition to Methow Recycles, he owns and operates WasteWise Methow, a local hauling service
- Feedback Agenda Items (5 minutes)
 - Discussion questions in advance
 - The Council will aim to share specific discussion questions in advance and note in agenda, if available
 - Tech Issues with Verbal Public Comment
 - If joining by phone (dial-in), you can raise your hand to indicate interest in public comment by hitting *9 on keypad
 - Subcommittee voting

- Subcommittees will not be voting on actions. Subcommittee members may send delegates to represent members in discussions, but there will be no voting.
 - Open questions surrounding statewide lists re: collection and covered materials
 - These questions will be discussed during Ecology updates and Statewide List Subcommittee Discussion, respectively. Members are free to raise these concerns again if they feel their questions aren't addressed.
- Ecology Updates – Lauren DiRe, Ecology (20 minutes)
 - Progress Report
 - Needs Assessment
 - Distinction between “preliminary” and “full” needs assessment
 - Preliminary assesses the current state of recycling and composting services in Washington Full is system design recommendations and proposed targets for reuse, recycling, composting. and plastic source reduction rates by material
 - Clarification about needs assessment for reuse and whether it will just be about covered materials (e.g., glass bottles)
 - Question: Does it address textiles? No, it only addresses covered materials under RRA
 - Reuse conversation will be delved into further in future meetings
 - Statewide Lists
 - Clarification that there will be four statewide lists to identify materials suitable for curbside (commingled and separate), drop off, public place, and alternative
 - Ecology noted that the formatting of the list is still being discussed
 - The eventual lists will include public-facing content for education purposes
 - Yes, Ecology anticipates that there is going to be a need to differentiate between curbside and drop-off materials within statewide lists. Also, may differentiate between commingled vs. separate collection
 - Also note that, under RCW 70A.205.045, beginning Jan 1, 2030, residential recycling programs statewide must “include materials on the statewide collection list designated for residential collection” by Ecology
 - Recycling Refund/DRS Study
 - Link to Recycling Refunds survey: https://erg.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eDQUfsgZFhcM2I6
 - Survey closes May 22
 - Legislative report is due January 2027, Public comment in June/July and Advisory Council review in September
 - Rule update started, first rule committee in late May, open to the public
- Subcommittee Updates (10 minutes)
 - Needs assessment sub-committee – status update
 - First meeting: 5/20, 10-11:30am
 - Equity Subcommittee – status update
 - First meeting: 5/4, 10-11:00am
 - Statewide Lists Subcommittee – brief status update
 - Met on 4/14

- Will share more on subcommittee meeting discussion in Statewide Lists Discussion portion of agenda
- Producer Organization Updates (35 minutes)
 - [Julie Gilbertson, Circular Action Alliance: CAA's Role as the PRO in Washington](#)
 - Q&A and Discussion
 - Clarification that CAA will not discuss listed topics in compliance with federal, state, and international antitrust and competition laws
 - What is CAA and its mission?
 - See here: [About – Circular Action Alliance](#)
 - How many producers are registered with CCA WA?
 - Initial process of registering has just under 2,400 producers in WA so far.
 - Is that similar to other states?
 - CAA notes the challenge of comparing states due to varying scopes of covered materials and obligations across states
 - What is the expectation for how many people will be on the Washington team for CAA – compared to Oregon, Colorado, and California?
 - Not sure yet. The team is growing and will be right-sized to serve the needs of the program in each state.
 - [David Lawes, Interchange 360: Petroleum and Automotive Packaging EPR](#)
 - Q&A and Discussion
 - Clarification on the scope of the work and that they would only focus on packaging in Washington (as opposed to packaging and product, as is being done in some other places)
 - Is commercial packaging and collection considered compared to consumer packaging and collection? Is there an expansion of commercial collection at the same time as residential?
 - Interchange goes as far as directed for each state in terms of the commercial side, but in some programs, it is inclusive of all (i.e., British Columbia Canada), and in other programs it's only residential
- Statewide Lists Development (35 minutes)
 - Ecology summary of [Candidate Materials List](#) and [Evaluation Criteria](#)
 - Summary of development and current status
 - Summary of [Ecology's proposed approach](#) to addressing exempt and non-covered materials
 - Advisory Council Discussion
 - [Feedback sought on Evaluation Criteria:](#)
 - Are there any criteria from the legislation not sufficiently represented?
 - Are there any criteria not included you would like us to consider?
 - Approach to scoring - conservative or expansive?
 - Clarification on the definition of conservative or expansive (e.g. conservative is a high percentage of collection statewide versus expansive is a lower acceptance rate)
 - Evaluation Scale
 - Strong = Meets most or all rating factors with high confidence and strong supporting data.

- Moderate = Meets some or most factors with moderate confidence and some supporting data.
 - Concerning = Meets some or few factors with low confidence or supporting data.
 - Challenging = Meets few or no factors with high confidence and supporting data.
- A note on the Statewide Collection Access criterion: it has 3 criteria rating factors, not just 80% access/service. The other factors include whether their collection programs in all four regions of the state (so not just central Puget Sound) and if it could be added to programs without negatively impacting collection of other material categories
 - Consideration that with a 60% threshold, the most populous counties in Western Washington could reach that threshold, but no one else in State may
- [Companion document](#) helps with understanding what the evaluation process looks like and how we're going to look at each material and how they fit into the schema of operational efficiencies and customer communications
- Any other thoughts or input on Evaluation Criteria for Ecology to consider?
 - Main concern is making sure candidate materials are evaluated through the lens of practical implementation across all regions of the state, especially rural systems where transportation, volume, and market access fundamentally shape feasibility
 - Response: Yes, geographic considerations, transportation volume, and market access play into a number of the criteria
- Feedback sought on Candidate Materials List and approach to inclusion of exempt and non-covered materials:
 - Thoughts or input on Ecology's proposed approach to exempt and noncovered materials?
 - If we don't evaluate them now and jurisdictions have choice but without any information about what the implications on their program are (i.e., contamination potential), we could end up with disharmony across programs and put jurisdictions in an awkward position of trying to make judgment calls about whether to include materials or not include materials
 - Efficiency: The more you combine into a single path, the more efficient it is for implementation
 - Language in law carved out for reimbursement rates and exemptions and there are valid concerns about one path versus the other about what it mean for costs
 - CAA drafting comments in writing to submit to Ecology and will share with Advisory Council
 - Agrees with interpretation #1, that "covered materials" is implied in the statute under Section 90, but want to make sure the interpretation that CAA has as the PRO aligns with the interpretation the department is taking in this regard
 - Any other thoughts or input on Candidate Materials List?

- [Changes made since Statewide Lists Subcommittee meeting and review](#)
- Clarification on ferrous and non-ferrous metals and other “non-covered” materials – Concerns about materials being added being a burden on rural counties to collect
- Candidate list = materials we are evaluating. Just because it's a candidate doesn't mean it will be recommended for inclusion
 - Maybe an opportunity to consolidate definition or rework the understanding of materials collected
- Ecology wanted to provide more guidance to try to harmonize what is collected in the State and how information is presented in existing Designated Recyclables Lists (DRLs) so all programs could use the same list of materials or a similar list of materials with guidance on which materials Ecology thinks should be included in a program
- Is there still time to offer comments/questions on candidate materials list?
 - Material descriptions to candidate materials list will not disrupt the next steps of process, but adding new materials or categories will be challenging at this point.
- Once you decide on candidates to include in the program, how do you distinguish composting versus recycling and overlaps?
 - Composting is an option in contract to recycling or in addition to recycling
 - Not every material will be evaluated for compost and recycling, but when appropriate (i.e., a compostable item), it will be evaluated on both pathways
 - It would be best for education purposes if the public has an awareness of which bin to put their materials in even if it's personal preference of pathway
- Do other states have a list of items suitable for composting or are they just focused on recycling?
 - Colorado and Minnesota will
 - Every state's regulation is different because the covered materials are different
 - Consideration for reimbursement rate that would make a difference between if a material ended up on a recycling list versus composting list specifically
- Consideration for discussion the overlap between the public residential list and public space in relation to fee setting
 - RCW related to producer fees: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=70A.208.160>
 - Council members requesting more time (possibly a week) in advance to review meeting materials for adequate time to share meaningful comments for meetings
 - Would like links included in the agenda to more easily navigate documents and discussions from subcommittees
- Lunch (45 minutes)

- Resume Statewide List Discussion (20 minutes)
- Public Comment (10 minutes)
 - Heather Trim (Zero Waste Washington):
 - Because there are so many of us who are going to be attending or wanting to pay attention to this, who are not here at the table, but are being represented by someone else, it would be very helpful if there was an email that went out to interested parties that included the same info like the agenda, materials that are going to be reviewed, discussion questions, etc. to avoid the burden of AC members constantly forwarding things.
 - Agree that there is a need to get materials in advance (maybe 5 days) so there is time to communicate among ourselves and whoever is representing our organization on the AC.
 - In terms of content, food waste and yard waste is not a covered product. Clean wood is also under the organics law (i.e., food waste, yard waste, anything wood), but they're not in this other category like newsprint, which is excluded, so I believe that those should be called something different. Food and yard waste is only going to be mandated in certain parts of the state. There should be another category of things that are mandated. We want that going in the compost bin so to not create confusion to the public and all the people dealing with this. There should be another category of these things that are mandated because organics material will be mandated by the time the program starts.
 - Tim Buwalda (Circular Matters on behalf of the Carton Council):
 - Nationally, 63% of households have access to carton recycling, but that includes in the denominator those households that don't have any recycling programs at all. If you were to focus on programs accessible to homeowners and only look at that population, then 86% of people who have a recycling program can put their cartons in it. Accepting cartons in recycling programs is the norm nationally.
 - Would like to express support of the additional criterion to harmonize with other EPR states. All producers like harmonization. Cartons are accepted in Oregon, Maine, and Colorado lists and hopefully, California.
 - When it comes to proposed rating scale, Carton Council appreciates evaluation by measurable data to inform how you rate materials across criterion but concerned about 80% threshold of access in order to get good rating for computability with the existing recycling infrastructure.
 - There is a similar measurement threshold for MRFs serving 80% of Washington's population as well and it seems like those thresholds are simply too high and inconsistent with the 60% numbers you see in the FTC Green Guides and even California's SB 343, which have to do with recycling labeling. We hope we don't have a mismatch between packaging in Washington labeled as recyclable but not being on the collection list in the state.
 - We believe the intent of the RRA is to improve and expand recycling in the state and would be hesitant to recommend moving backward and only collecting the lowest common denominator materials, understanding that producers will be paying for the improvements to the system going forward.
 - When it comes to the categories, it seems like for cartons, we have like 6 different categories. A carton is a carton and when programs accept cartons, they just simply say cartons. They're not distinguishing among them. MRFs don't

sort them into different commodity grades. They go into the same bale and then the same end markets and are recycled. From a list perspective, there's not a need to go through all these separations.

- I do think if when it comes to the needs assessment and you're trying to estimate tons that might be collected through the DRS infrastructure, that it might be important just to kind of divide the list that way. But from a list perspective, I don't think it's necessary.
- Nia Alexander: Background: PSE produces >95k circulation paper billing + marketing materials. Unclear on EPR obligations under "paper products" category.
 - Key Constraints:
 - WAC 480-100-179 & WAC 480-90-178 mandate printed billing options
 - Cannot default customers to electronic-only communication
 - Issue: Current EPR materials (RFI, surveys, assessments) don't align with utility operations scope for paper products.
 - Question: What are PSE's specific EPR obligations given:
 - Regulatory requirement to provide paper billing
 - 95k circulation volume
 - Limited paper product scope vs. core utility operations with billing and marketing
 - Need: Clarification on utility-specific EPR requirements and potential exemptions for mandated communications.
- Preview of Next Meeting Content (10 minutes)
 - Input on future hybrid meeting locations
 - July 3 is the first draft of the 4 acceptance lists; July 31 the second draft; October 1 the final draft
 - Next meeting: June 11 (Virtual)
- Adjourn (5 minutes)