



## ***Materials Management Advisory Committee***

### **Education & Outreach Subcommittee**

#### **Meeting Minutes (meeting conducted virtually)**

**September 3, 2020 10:00am - 11:00am**

**MMAC Members:** Don Buis (IEPA); Kay McKeen (SCARCE); John Pausma (Homewood Disposal); Marta Keane (Will County); Sunil Suthar (IEPA); Walter Willis (SWALCO); Donovan Griffith (IMA); Jessica Miller (IEPA); Karen Raithel (Peoria County)

**Also in attendance:** Andi Diedrich (DuPage County); Joy Hinz (DuPage County); Rose Naseef (SCARCE); Emily Freeman (MI EGLE); Elizabeth Browne (MI EGLE); Paloma Campillo (IEC)

#### 1. Introductions

Kay called the meeting to order and welcomed participants and guest speakers.

#### 2. Presentation by Emily Freeman and Elizabeth Browne from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE) on Michigan's 2019 Know It Before You Throw It campaign, a state-wide effort to increase recycling participation and reduce recycling contamination.

Overview The campaign was the result of multi-year meetings with businesses, local government agencies, compost facilities, and materials recovery facilities. All participants agreed that improved guidelines and regulations were needed.

Marketing Firm The state sought out marketing professionals who conducted interviews and became experts on the topic. They helped narrow down the issues and conducted a statewide survey which drove decision making.

Key Survey Findings The amount recycled is not related to demographics, as most people understand the need for recycling. Convenience is important. Based on research, the decision was made to focus on a quality campaign that encourages better recycling.

Recycling Raccoons There was some risk in taking a humorous, playful approach, but the recycling raccoons were chosen because they are memorable. Each raccoon corresponds with a different waste stream (glass, paper, plastic, cardboard, metal, other). There is a dedicated website ([recyclingraccoons.org](http://recyclingraccoons.org)) that includes recycling FAQs and resources.

Media Plan Multiple avenues were pursued, including advertisements on billboards, buses, TV, radio, websites, facebook, Pandora. The plan also included content marketing, partnerships/sponsorships (PGA tour in Detroit, U of M and MSU football games), a mascot, and press events. The popularity of the campaign resulted in earned media coverage ("free advertising" generated organically by fans, followers, customers) worth approximately \$2.6M.



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Local Messaging The marketing firm also developed local messages to address specific issues (ie. Hey Lansing, cardboard is recyclable; Grand Rapids, remember no plastic bags in curbside bins). Hyperlocal campaigns allowed communities that were not ready for expansion to tailor messages to the needs of the community. Some communities initially were hesitant about working with a marketing firm.

#### **3. Q&A for Guest Speakers**

What marketing firm was used? Gud Marketing conducted the campaign. \$5M was the maximum amount allocated for the campaign and \$3M has been spent to date. Activities had slowed down due to COVID-19.

How was the campaign funded? The campaign was part of the Renew Michigan initiative, created by former Governor Snyder and a Republican-led legislature. The initiative is funded by an online sales tax, rather than increased landfill fees as originally proposed. The Michigan Recycling Coalition (Kerrin O'Brien) helped secure the funding.

How did the word get out? There were press conferences to announce grants awarded to local communities. A mascot attended events. Legislators were eager to get involved with the campaign.

Was composting addressed? There is not a robust composting mechanism in Michigan, so the focus was on residential recycling.

#### **4. Review of Scope of Work**

Attendees identified household batteries, solar panels, and mattresses as additional items to consider targeting for diversion.

Attendees agreed to continue to analyze existing programs in Illinois and to reach out to leaders in other states to learn more about their waste reduction efforts.

#### **5. Next meeting is Thursday, October 1, 2020 at 10:00am.**