

The Education and Outreach subcommittee conducted several well-attended virtual meetings to analyze strategies on educating the public about recycling, composting, and the proper disposal of items comprising the waste stream. The subcommittee researched waste diversion programs in multiple states and met with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to learn about its *Rethink. Reset. Recycle.* Program (Attachment A). The subcommittee also met with professionals from the U.S. EPA Region 5 to discuss local, regional, and national strategies. In addition, representatives from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) gave a presentation to the subcommittee on its highly regarded *Know It Before You Throw It* statewide campaign. Based on these activities, the Education and Outreach subcommittee offers the following recommendations for inclusion in the Materials Management Advisory Committee final report.

Utilize a consistent waste reduction message to communicate throughout Illinois. The Education and Outreach subcommittee recommends investing in a creative marketing campaign to help deliver a consistent message to all areas of the State. A marketing firm can create a waste reduction slogan, a logo, and an overall design for a website and flyers. The State should encourage material recovery facilities, haulers and local governments to use the standardized format and to follow recycling and composting guidelines.

The campaign should incorporate existing messaging created by the Illinois Task Force on Reducing Recycling Contamination and Increasing Diversion Rates for the Residential Sector. The Task Force was populated by representatives from materials recovery facilities, haulers, waste and recycling associations and organizations, and governments across the State. The Task Force developed a simple message around curbside recycling that can be expanded to further the goals and recommendations of the Materials Management Advisory Committee.

Building upon these efforts, the new campaign should:

- Emphasize the environmental, health, and financial benefits of reducing waste
- Address non-residential consumers, including businesses and schools
- Use language that encourages residents to analyze their discarded items and consider the value of these “resources”
- Provide actions people can take to reduce, reuse, recycle, compost, and locate proper disposal outlets for all unwanted materials

Illinois should seek to engage people in a statewide waste reduction effort in the same manner that the All in Illinois initiative aims to create a unified COVID-19 response.

Enhance and continue the statewide waste reduction messaging on the Illinois EPA website or on a separate website created specifically for providing waste diversion resources. This is a cost-efficient action that will provide a central location for residents, counties, and community organizations to obtain resources. People must be able to find information easily. Consideration should be given to creating a new website, distinct from the current Illinois EPA website. Several states have successfully utilized separate websites to roll out new campaigns and reduce confusion with other state agency objectives (Attachment B).

The website should include the following:

- The slogan, logo, and overall message/purpose of the waste reduction campaign
- General information on waste reduction, recycling, composting (including FAQs)
- A list of solid waste coordinators for each county
- Information on how to host one-day waste diversion events (Attachment C)
- Resources for organizations seeking to reduce waste (Attachment D)

Provide data, graphic design support, and toolkits that allow county-level waste coordinators to tailor messages for their communities. The Education and Outreach subcommittee's research indicates there is variation across the state with regard to items accepted for recycling and composting. For example, many communities allow glass bottles and jars in curbside recycling receptacles while others prohibit glass. Some recycling facilities have a new technology for sorting plastic films, but most do not. A few paper mills can recycle pizza boxes with grease, but this is not common. In addition, plastic bags, textiles, scrap metal, C&D debris, hhw, electronics, motor oil, and medical sharps waste should be diverted from landfills, yet there is not a uniform system for collecting these items.

The State should conduct a yearly survey of materials recovery facilities to obtain updated information about acceptable materials. The State should relate this information to all county coordinators and support them in modifying and distributing updated information. For example, the flyer created by the Illinois Task Force (Attachment E) allows local governments to communicate a statewide waste reduction message while addressing the needs of their residents. Going forward, the State should develop additional flyers and social media kits consistent with the brand of the waste reduction campaign yet customizable for individual communities.

Communicate regularly with county waste coordinators, as technologies, laws, and waste diversion practices continue to evolve. The State should maintain a contact list of county waste coordinators and send quarterly electronic newsletters with updates. In addition to disseminating important information, a newsletter may encourage county coordinators to report valuable information back to the State. This ongoing dialogue will be an important component of creating a uniform waste diversion effort.

Appropriate money from the Solid Waste Fund to finance education and outreach activities. The State should allocate \$1M per year for providing educational activities and materials, hiring creative talent, updating the website, and creating content for local government on an ongoing basis. Additional potential sources of funding include user-pay programs (i.e. recycling of paint, aerosol cans, TVs), grants, and fees from haulers, materials recovery facilities, and local governments.

Employ multiple strategies and forms of communication to convey the waste reduction message to diverse populations across the State.

- Target people of different ages, including school-aged children, adults, seniors
- Deliver messages using visual cues, such as clip art, to reach people who speak different languages or people who tend not to spend time reading text
- Provide text-based messages in different languages, where needed
- Offer toolkits for counties, cities, schools, businesses, and nonprofit organizations. All materials should promote a universal message but be customizable.
- Show examples of what other communities are doing, such as posters, videos, flyers (Attachment F)
- Remind organizations that printed materials are more effective for some populations, such as rural communities or senior citizens
- Keep messages clear and engaging. For example, Kane County has illustrated the volume of recyclables collected at a community event by showing the number of train cars the waste would have filled.
- Exercise caution when setting diversion goals, which can lead to “wishcycling” and increased volume of single-use “recyclable” items being purchased
- Create training materials for custodial professionals
- Require local governments/haulers to provide stickers for lids of recycling receptacles
- Ask the producers of Kraft bags to print composting instructions on yard waste bags

Attachment A

MMAC Education and Outreach Subcommittee Notes from 11-6-20 video call with Florida DEP

Florida DEP staff

- Karen Moore - Waste Reduction for over 20 years, mostly in recycling
- Chris Perry - Education and Outreach, 4 years at FL DEP; previously worked in marketing and communications in the private section
- Suzanne Boroff - Been at FL DEP just under 20 years; recycling activist; manages data for recycling rates; knowledge of recycling markets

FL recycling goal

- FL legislature had set a [statewide recycling goal of 75% by 2020](#). FL DEP had to report to the legislature on how the goal was to be reached.
- Counties have reporting requirements on recovered materials (SW, combustion)
- In 2019, the state had a diversion rate of approximately 51% (42% recycling and 9% combustion); 2020 data won't be complete until April 2021, reported in summer 2021
- Contamination of single stream recycling was identified as an impediment
- Waste haulers had reached out to FL DEP
- Formed the [Florida Recycling Partnership](#), a coalition of businesses and associations dedicated to improving Florida's recycling rates
- First phase - Back to basics, focus on core recyclables - Get recycling rate of aluminum cans from 18% to 75%; improve the rates on glass, plastic, paper, and items that have a market

Marketing campaign

- Put out RFP to design firms and conducted a review process
- Rewarded marketing contract to a Tallahassee firm
- Created logo that was distinctly identifiable, kept message simple, developed style guide
- Used WordPress; Mailchimp plug-ins
- Allow for customization to address differences across the state (i.e. glass, plastic bags).
- Partnered with MRFs and industry
- Funding (\$50,000-\$60,000) came from MRFs throughout the state (26 of them)

Next steps

- Phase 2 - Address core contaminants -- tangles, plastic bags, toys, etc.
- Phase 3 - Focus on preparation of recyclables - empty containers, no grease, etc.
- Phase 4 - Target food waste; partner with NRDC on Save the Food campaign

Ongoing education and outreach

- Applying his expertise as a graphic design professional, Chris customizes web banners, posters, information for social media, etc
- Chris provides ready-made materials to support local efforts

- Chris communicates regularly with county recycling coordinators
- Chris spends about 10-15% of his time on routine implementation of waste reduction initiatives, but it can be closer to 50% of his time when there is a new program/phase being developed.
- Conduct workshops, webinars, statewide campaigns (i.e. Food Waste week)
- Florida Recycling Partnership hosts the WordPress website and pays associated fees
- Partnerships are the key to sustaining the programs
- MRF feedback has been anecdotal, positive
- Residential curbside collection was the focus of this initiative
- There was no funding for pilot programs (new phases), so partnerships are important

Examples shown by Chris

- [Back to the Basics flyer](#)
- [Let's Break it Down](#) (cardboard)
- [Keep them Clean and Dry](#) - one community had wine bottles that weren't being emptied
- [Don't Try This at Home](#) - photo of plastic bag going into a recycling bin, along with a message to return bags to local retail stores
- [Don't Try This at Home](#) - photo of greasy pizza box, along with a message to only recycle the top of the box
- Bottles and cans shown without labels to avoid favoring brands
- Participates in [Wrap Recycling Action Plan \(W.R.A.P.\)](#) - plasticfilmrecycling.org - American Chemistry Council website for films
- Smaller and mid-sized communities (75,000-200,000 people) might need more assistance than larger communities that already have sophisticated programs

Other

- Placing the spreadsheet of county coordinator contacts on the website is very useful
- Having a separate website makes implementation easier: floridarecycles.org
- With additional funding, can do more advertising -- at the movies, on billboards, etc
- Campaign helped increase recycling, establish infrastructure
- No Precycling messages yet
- Next phase? Recycled content, procurement of sustainable materials/life cycle analysis
- New Florida workgroup started through Florida Recycling Partnership (not a legal mandate)
- Continue with a weight-based goal? There is some dissatisfaction with weight-based goals, so considering options. White paper to be submitted to the DEP.
- FL does not have a lot of curbside compost programs; has not been a lot of interest

Attachment B

Websites for state campaigns

California created CalRecycle, a department within the California Environmental Protection Agency that maintains the website calrecycle.ca.gov. It offers a wealth of resources for diverting materials from landfills. U.S. EPA Region 5 professionals suggested using California's toolkits as a model. CalRecycle's stated mission is to "inspire and challenge Californians to achieve the highest waste reduction, recycling and reuse goals in the nation."

Michigan created a website called recyclingraccoons.org as part of its *Know It Before You Throw It* campaign, which playfully utilized raccoons as recycling mascots.

Florida initiated an educational campaign called *Rethink. Reset. Recycle.* to reduce recycling contamination. It includes a separate website, floridarecycles.org, designed to educate residents about the basics of curbside recycling. The website contains a description of the problem, instructions on proper recycling, a video, and FAQs. It also invites recycling coordinators to sign up for resources, including digital and printable web banners and fact sheets and a social media kit. In addition, the website directs residents to contact their county recycling coordinators and links to a spreadsheet with contacts for each county.

Attachment C

Resources for hosting one-day waste diversion events

SCARCE just completed a toolkit for planning community recycling events --
will be available soon



[SCARCE pumpkin collection guide](#)

How to Host a Pumpkin Collection



Attachment D

Waste Reduction Resources for Business

RECYCLING WORKS: A Tool Kit for Reducing Waste in the Workplace

Commissioned and Grant Funding Provided By: **dceo** ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Prepared Under Contract To: **Illinois Recycling Association**

Prepared by: **Shaw** Shaw Environmental, Inc.

In Collaboration With: Mary S. Allen



[Presentation of the 2010 Recycling Works Toolkit](#)

Good information, but can be updated

[Surfrider Foundation Foodware Toolkit](#)

Comprehensive newly released document

The screenshot shows the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center (ISTC) website. The header includes the Illinois Prairie Research Institute logo and navigation links for Research, Technical Assistance, Publications, Events, and About. A 'MAKE a GIFT' button is visible. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column, titled 'Services', features 'Enhanced Waste Audits' (with an image of waste bins) and 'Enhanced Management Planning' (with an image of a person at a computer). The right column, titled 'Case Studies, Compliance Assistance, and Fact Sheets', lists various resources including 'Case Studies, Compliance Assistance, and Fact Sheets', 'Research Report Series', 'Technical Report Series', 'Staff Publications', 'Newsletters', 'Annual Reports', 'DNR's Critical Trends Assessment Program Documents', 'GLRPPR Archive', 'Great Lakes Environmental and Economic Data Visualization Tool', and 'Guides to Sustainability'. Below the case studies, there is a section for 'Illinois Sustainability Awards'.

[ISTC services](#)

[ISTC case studies](#)

ISTC is currently developing a DIY waste audit toolkit for business

Attachment E

Illinois Task Force flyer customized for use in different communities

Coles County

RECYCLING GUIDELINES

YES!

METAL
Steel & Aluminum Containers and Foil

GLASS
Containers: Bottles & Jars Only
Discard Lids & Caps

PLASTIC
Containers: Bottles, Tubs, Jugs, & Jars Only
Replace Lids & Caps

PAPER
Cardboard (flattened), Office Paper, Newspaper, Magazines

Put material in bin
Loose, Clean & Empty!

NO!

Not in Bags!

- No Plastic Bags or Plastic Wrap
- No Clothing (Textiles or Shoes - Donate instead)
- No Big Items (Electronics, Wood, Propane Tanks, Scrap Metal, or Styrofoam - contact CCRP&DC* for other options)
- No Cartons (Juice, Milk, Frozen Food)
- No Food, Liquid, Diapers, Batteries, or Needles
- No Tangles (Ropes, Hoses, Wire, Cords, Chains, or Hangers)
- No Shredded Paper (contact CCRP&DC* for other recycling options)
- No Styrofoam (egg cartons, cups, packing peanuts, or take-out containers)

These Guidelines represent the common items accepted in most recycling programs in Illinois. For greater detail on specific items or programmatic variations, reach out to your local authority.
*For more detail, including recycling and reuse programs beyond the bin, visit www.co.coles.il.us/CCRPS/index.html or contact CCRP&DC at 217-348-8521 or snummel@co.coles.il.us

Coles County Regional Planning & Development Commission

RECYCLING GUIDELINES

for Howard's Disposal

YES!

PAPER
Cardboard (flattened), Office Paper, Newspaper, Magazines, Shredded Paper

PLASTIC
Containers: Bottles, Tubs, Jugs, & Jars Only
Replace Lids & Caps

METAL
Steel & Aluminum Containers and Foil

Put material in bin
Loose, Clean & Empty!

NO!

Not in Bags!

- No Plastic Bags or Plastic Wrap
- No Clothing (Textiles or Shoes - Donate instead)
- No Big Items (Electronics, Wood, Propane Tanks, Scrap Metal, or Styrofoam - contact CCRP&DC* for other options)
- No Cartons (Juice, Milk, Frozen Food)
- No Food, Liquid, Diapers, Batteries, or Needles
- No Tangles (Ropes, Hoses, Wire, Cords, Chains, or Hangers)
- No Glass (Containers, Bottles, or Jars)
- No Styrofoam (egg cartons, cups, packing peanuts, or take-out containers)

These Guidelines represent the common items accepted in most recycling programs in Illinois. For greater detail on specific items or programmatic variations, reach out to your local authority.
*For more detail, including recycling and reuse programs beyond the bin, visit www.co.coles.il.us/CCRPS/index.html or contact CCRP&DC at 217-348-8521 or snummel@co.coles.il.us

Coles County Regional Planning & Development Commission

Lake County

RECYCLING GUIDELINES

YES!

METAL
Steel & aluminum containers and foil

PAPER
Cardboard (flattened), office paper, newspaper, magazines

FOOD & BEVERAGE CARTONS

GLASS
Bottles & jars only

PLASTIC
Bottles, tubs, & jugs only

Clean & Empty
LEAVE CAPS & LIDS ON

NO!

- Do Not Bag Recyclables
- No Plastic Bags or Product Wrap (Return clean to retailer)
- No Tangles (Hangers, hoses, wire, cords, ropes or chains)
- No Food, Liquid, Diapers, Batteries, or Needles
- No Big Items (Electronics, wood, propane tanks, scrap metal or styrofoam. For other options, visit swalco.org for our online "Where Do I Recycle This?" guide)
- No Clothing, Textiles or Shoes (Visit swalco.org for a list of Clothing & Textile or Reuse-A-Shoe collection drop-off sites)

To find out more about recycling in Lake County, Illinois, or what you can do with items not accepted in your recycling can (including other recycling and reuse programs), visit swalco.org or contact SWALCO at 847-377-4950.

January 2020

SWALCO

DIRECTRICES PARA EL RECICLAJE

¡SÍ!

METAL
Envases de acero/aluminio y papel de aluminio

PAPER
Cartón (aplanado), papel de oficina, periódico, revistas

ENVASES DE CARTÓN PARA ALIMENTOS Y BEBIDAS

VIDRIO
Botellas y frascos solamente

PLÁSTICO
Botellas, jarras y recipientes de plástico solamente

Limpios y vacíos DEBE LAS TAPADERAS PUESTAS

¡NO!

- No coloque los reciclables en bolsas
- No bolsas ni envolturas de plástico (Limpiar y regresar estas al comerciante donde las obtuvo. Para otras opciones de reciclaje, visite swalco.org y consulte a nuestra guía en línea "Where Do I Recycle This?" (¿Dónde reciclo esto?)
- No a los artículos que se enrollan (Ganchos, mangueras, alambres, cordones, cuerdas y cadenas)
- No comida, líquidos, pañales, baterías ni agujas/jeringas
- No artículos grandes (Electrónicos, maletas, tanques de propano, desecho médico, o un sofá)
- No artículos de ropa, textiles ni zapatos (Visite swalco.org para una lista de los sitios de colección de ropa, textiles, o sitios de colección de zapatos para reutilización)

Para conocer más acerca del reciclaje en el Condado de Lake, Illinois, o informarse sobre qué hacer con los artículos que no pueden ser depositados en su contenedor de reciclaje (incluyendo otros programas de reciclaje y de reutilización), visite a swalco.org o póngase en contacto con SWALCO al número 847-377-4950.

January 2020

SWALCO

Attachment F

Examples of educational recycling videos



[Waste Management Virtual MRF tour](#)



[Cambridge, MA contamination video](#)

References

Valentic, Stefanie. "Waste Industry Remarks on EPA's National Recycling Strategy Draft," 8 December 2020 *Waste360 Website*. Web. 15 December 2020.

https://www.waste360.com/recycling/waste-industry-remarks-epas-national-recycling-strategy-draft?NL=WST-03&Issue=WST-03_20201208_WST-03_527&sfvc4enews=42&cl=article_1&utm_campaign=EBWASTE_News_Waste360%20Daily%20Wire_News_NL_12082020_25277&utm_emailname=EBWASTE_News_Waste360%20Daily%20Wire_News_NL_12082020_25277&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Eloqua&utm_MDMContactID=cb594401-3982-424a-8256-45f923818830&utm_campaigntype=Newsletter&utm_sub=Waste%20Industry%20Remarks%20on%20EPA%27s%20National%20Recycling%20Strategy%20Draft&eM=8d48d5b321e0b0de50e12f278c20fbf17ffc81d67cb0a81162b96483092d351a&eventSeriesCode=ES_WASTE36&eventEditionCode=WST00WAT&sessionCode=S_WST360DLYWRNWLR