

Illinois Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 13, 2026, 12:00 pm CT

WebEx Webinar

1. Welcome: Roll Call

- a.** Attendees: John Pausma, Tomas Vujovic, Aaron Harmon, Pete Varney, Lisa Disbrow, Nicole Willett, Joshua Connell, Mark Weintraub, Adam Spaulding, Teresa Kernc, Mercy Davison, Christina Seibert, Alec Laird, Lisa Linnell, Andrea Densham, Seema Keshav, Frank Pettis, Donovan Griffith, Elizabeth Sheaffer, Madeline Norris, Carol Patterson, Machele Henderson, Patricia Bonaguro
- b.** Not in attendance: Mike DiMucci, Becky Tracy, Brad Cole, Cole Stollard, Darnell Tingle, Taylor Loeber
- c.** A quorum was present.
- d.** Illinois EPA staff attending: Cassandra Clark
- e.** Open seats on the Advisory Council include one representative of each: a county with a population of 50,000-1,000,000.

2. Meeting Minutes

- a.** July 1 meeting minutes were reviewed. Motion by Lisa Disbrow, second by Mark Weintraub; all in favor, minutes were approved.

3. Illinois EPA Updates

- a.** Mandatory state trainings are required to be completed by October 31 by all Advisory Council Members; notice was emailed by Cassandra Clark on March 20.

4. Needs Assessment Report Discussion

- a.** Christina will send out a shared file for all Advisory Council members to insert their comments within with attribution to the commenter and ease of consolidation.
- b.** Advisory Council members discussed high-level comments and questions regarding the draft report, including the following:
 - i.** How does the needs assessment distinguish between current contracted curbside and drop-off access provided under subscription service and unserved gaps?
 - ii.** The waste characterization accounts for landfill disposal outside of Illinois, but not MRF use outside of the state – why?
 - iii.** How have other states handled concerns about the availability of local data and regionalization of waste / recycling generally? This was identified as something that the Advisory Council should look into as it would be beyond the consultant's scope to provide.
 - iv.** There are concerns about how representative the data utilized is of the state; for example, multi-family data was based on Niles and Champaign only, non-residential was based on City of Chicago Park District, and

drop-offs are based on limited municipalities and use an average from modeling in Maryland and Washington. More information is needed to have confidence that this report is relevant for Illinois; these are weaknesses that opponents can exploit.

- v. It is encouraging that other states have focused on impacts on economic development by increasing recycling, not just environmental impacts.
- vi. A strong report with complete data is important for future policy decisions; a lot of amber color for incomplete data and use of modeled data from other states does not make this a strong report.
- vii. Data in Section 3 should be segregated to discuss residential composition separate from industrial/commercial/institutional (ICI) to align with the covered entities in statute.
- viii. End markets are not comprehensive as they are described, and the consultant didn't reach out to ReMA. Current gaps may be overstated, and more thorough analysis of metals rates is needed.
- ix. The number of paper mills is high – what do these include? Was the Fiber and Boxboard Association (FBA) consulted?
- x. The waste characterization is from a single season – is that representative?
- xi. Is there time to get answers to our questions from Eunomia before our comments are due?
- xii. End market data from Foodservice Packaging Institute is not currently reflected; Eunomia should connect with Carol Patterson on this.
- xiii. How do we proceed with providing comments on the report, given that there is a lot of additional information that is needed or that is missing, and that a more complete or revised report is going to be a whole new report when finished? Discussion was that we should comment on the methodology and approach, modeling assumptions, and concerns about the inputs. We can't have an honest discussion about policy recommendations without good data.
- xiv. The consultant owes a response addressing our comments as part of their finalization of the report; given the timing of finalizing the needs assessment and the recommendations of the Advisory Council, is there time for us to have more information from Eunomia? This needs to be considered with IEPA.
- xv. How were other states confident to move ahead with their needs assessment and EPR policy with limits in the availability of data? Those states passed EPR policy with the needs assessment as an implementation element to inform development of their program plans, or they had political will to pass policy ahead of data completeness.
- xvi. Methodology and data that was used to reach findings are unclear, making it difficult to understand how they analyzed the data and used it in their modeling.
- xvii. All curbside communities were assumed to have increased service to weekly recycling collection, was that consistent with hauler input and is there materially better performance, or is that mostly a cost increase? Haulers on the Advisory Council indicated that it costs more to collect

weekly and you don't necessarily collect more material; larger containers collected every-other-week are preferred. We should be realistic in costs to provide service to communities who have no service currently.

- xviii. The appendices shared are poorly organized Excel spreadsheets that are difficult to interpret or use. There is no list of municipalities in Illinois with current status of recycling access.
- c. The link to this meeting should be sent to Eunomia immediately and they should be asked to review it, in lieu of providing written feedback to them on this initial feedback. It should be clear that this is not complete feedback at this time.

5. Questions and Comments from Council Members

- a. None

6. Public Comment Period

- a. Peter Bierbaum (One World Resource – Colorado consultancy) – reach out to CAA again to get updated experience from Oregon and Colorado implementation, in addition to working in California. Costs for Illinois align fairly well with Colorado's budget for their medium scenario.
- b. Walter Willis (Solid Waste Agency of Lake County) – Section 3 should only focus on residential composition. It may benefit IEPA to have a shared document for public comments. Eunomia should be on the calls to hear from the Advisory Council directly.

7. Next Meeting

- a. July 27, 12-1:30pm CT via WebEx

8. Adjournment

- a. The meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm CT; motion by Donovan Griffith, second by Mark Weintraub.