

Illinois Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 12, 2026, 12:00 pm CT

WebEx Webinar

1. Welcome: Roll Call

- a.** Attendees: John Pausma, Tomas Vujovic, Aaron Harmon, Lisa Disbrow, Joshua Connell, Mark Weintraub, Mike DiMucci, Brad Cole, Christina Seibert, Cole Stollard, Andrea Densham, Seema Keshav, Frank Pettis, Donovan Griffith, Elizabeth Sheaffer, Madeline Norris, Carol Patterson, Machele Henderson, Patricia Bonaguro
- b.** Not in attendance: Nicole Willett, Becky Tracy, Marta Keane, Kevin Schnoes, Alec Laird, Darnell Tingle, Taylor Loeber
- c.** A quorum was present.
- d.** Illinois EPA staff attending: Vishnu Srinivasaraghavan, Cassandra Clark
- e.** Guest presenters attending: Kaitlin Reese (Eunomia); John Manilla and Jim Ansberry (Crowe LLP)
- f.** Open seats on the Advisory Council include one representative of each a MRF outside of the Chicago metro area and a retailer and two representatives of a municipality with a population less than one million.

2. Meeting Minutes

- a.** November 10 meeting minutes were reviewed. Motion by Mark Weintraub, second by Brad Cole; all in favor, minutes were approved.

3. Illinois EPA Updates

- a.** Agency staff encouraged recyclers and haulers to review and execute their NDAs to continue the data collection process
- b.** Members were thanked for completing mandatory state trainings.
- c.** Vacant seats are continuing to be filled.

4. Needs Assessment Updates

- a.** Municipal survey updates were provided by Kaitlin Reese (Eunomia).
 - i.** Municipal survey responses by IEPA region and representative proportion of households were reviewed. Statewide, some information has been provided from areas that represent 76% of households, and 50% include fully usable data. This represents some level of response from 362 municipalities (28%) in total.
 - ii.** Responses vary by question type; service provision, how services are delivered, and how services are configured for single-family residences have been greater than data on multi-family residences, tonnages, and costs.

- b. Hauler and facility survey updates were provided by Jim Ansberry (Crowe).
 - i. A total of 69 entities have been contacted to execute NDAs in advance of providing required data. Of these, 7 have closed, 30 have not responded, 20 have completed the NDA and survey, and 12 have only completed the NDA. Of the companies contacted, 57 are waste haulers (with 18 providing data to date) and 27 are recycling facilities (with 6 providing data to date).
- c. Efforts to message survey availability and boost survey engagement were reviewed.
 - i. For the municipality survey, monthly outreach steps from September through December with municipalities, counties, waste agencies, and IRF were reviewed. Most recent engagement has included shortened survey questions and one-on-one outreach to municipalities and counties that resulted in a large increase in responses.
 - ii. Eunomia asked the Advisory Council if they had any suggestions to continue to drive engagement with local governments. Advisory Council members suggested contacting regional councils of government, regional planning agencies, Go Green Illinois and local Go Green groups, and continued connection with IML.
 - iii. For the hauler and MRF survey, weekly engagement and reminders were reviewed.
- d. An updated research and data gathering timeline was shared with data collection continuing into January. Data analysis is starting while data collection is completed to meet the overall project schedule.
- e. Questions and comments from Advisory Council members included the following, with Eunomia responses shown in italics.
 - i. Concerns about the lack of data from small municipalities and the complexity of the survey as a challenge for smaller communities to respond were shared. *Eunomia has worked on an abbreviated survey that has had more success.*
 - ii. Will a list of responding communities be provided? This will be valuable for confirming the data is representative for the state. *Eunomia will confirm what will be shared and provide additional information.*
 - iii. Will survey responses still be accepted? *Yes, Eunomia is still accepting data that is submitted.*
 - iv. What is the threshold for data to be considered complete or relevant to move forward with the analysis? Is there a minimum threshold of responses that are needed to have the data be useful? *Eunomia indicated that it will depend on what the Advisory Council views as a complete assessment, and they will provide more information on what they have received to obtain that feedback. It will also be dependent on the full scope of the data that is received.*
 - v. Is there anything that can be learned from other states, such as Colorado, about data collection? *Eunomia used a similar process in Colorado as they are using in Illinois, and secondary data was available through web searches and sources. They can look to data in other states to validate assumptions*

where there are data gaps of certain types or look at proportional information. Use of data from other states will be a last resort. Advisory Council members expressed concern about the use of data from other states and having that be applicable for Illinois.

- vi. Clarity and transparency in the sources of data and assumptions will be critical in the report when it is provided to the Advisory Council for review.
- vii. Municipality survey and hauler and MRF survey questionnaires were requested to be provided for review by the members. *Eunomia indicated these could be provided.*

5. Questions and Comments from Council Members

- a. The Advisory Council discussed potential topics and presentations of interest at future meetings. One suggestion was to consider incorporation of reuse in packaging EPR legislation, including looking at the Minnesota law. Members can send Christina other suggestions if they have them.

6. Public Comment Period

- a. Public comment was solicited from attendees; no comments were received.

7. Next Meeting

- a. February 9, 12-1:30 pm CT via WebEx.
- b. Meetings will continue to be planned monthly.

8. Adjournment

- a. The meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm CT; motion by Joshua Connell, second by Machele Henderson.