

Illinois Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 10, 2026, 12:00 pm CT

WebEx Webinar

1. Welcome: Roll Call

- a. Attendees: John Pausma, Aaron Harmon, Pete Varney, Joshua Connell, Mark Weintraub, Mike DiMucci, Adam Spaulding, Teresa Kernc, Mercy Davison, Brad Cole, Christina Seibert, Cole Stollard, Alec Laird, Lisa Linnell, Andrea Densham, Seema Keshav, Frank Pettis, Donovan Griffith, Madeline Norris, Taylor Loeber, Carol Patterson, Patricia Bonaguro
- b. Not in attendance: Tomas Vujovic, Lisa Disbrow, Nicole Willett, Becky Tracy, Darnell Tingle, Elizabeth Sheaffer, Machele Henderson
- c. A quorum was present.
- d. Illinois EPA staff attending: Jacki Cooperider, Vishnu Srinivasaraghavan, Cassandra Clark
- e. Eunomia staff attending: Winn Cowman, John Carhart
- f. 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 27 meeting minutes were reviewed. Motion by Brad Cole, second by Frank Pettis; all in favor, minutes were approved.

3. Illinois EPA Updates

- a. Agency review of the packaging portion of the report is ongoing, and non-packaging report sections are due this week
- b. Advisory Council state-required trainings are due in October; contact Cassandra if you need more information.

4. Needs Assessment Report Discussion – Q&A with Eunomia

Q1. When will all primary and secondary data be provided in an organized, comprehensive, and cited manner? Without a usable compilation of the data that was derived from multiple sources, the analysis and findings of the report are difficult to evaluate and find credible.

- a. Data collected outside of the survey tool was not included. The data is being cleaned up and will be provided to IEPA, who will forward it to the Advisory Council when available. The timeline is not known.
- b. Data collected outside the survey (e.g., SWANCC and SWALCO) was provided in spreadsheet or other forms and was combined with survey response data. Clarity on the geographic source of this data was not able to be provided, though much of it was believed to be from the metro Chicago area.

- Q2. Briefly explain how the Red-Amber-Green coding was determined and its usefulness considering that “some” data (Amber) covers a very broad range of completeness. More information on the level of completeness would be beneficial.
- Amber is not very informative; Eunomia was requested to qualify the data, so that was how it was done. Details were included to explain why the rankings were assigned. If there are suggestions, they are open to those.
 - There is no centralized data reporting, which results in the Amber coloring. There are degrees of incompleteness.
- Q3. Please provide the whole number data on which all percentage calculations have been made (both numerator and denominator values) for all report tables for review and comprehension of the calculated values.
- Eunomia needs to look at the scale of this to respond. If there are specific tables or inputs needed, the Advisory Council should identify those.
 - The Advisory Council needs the whole number values to assess validity and confidence in the data.
- Q4. What were the counts of total facilities and haulers surveyed, and how many responded? How is it determined whether the data is sufficient or statistically significant?
- Information from Crowe indicated 52 haulers were surveyed with 23 respondents, and 27 facilities were surveyed with 13 respondents.
 - Statistical significance of the data was not part of the scope for Crowe, only to collect, anonymize, and report it.
 - Eunomia can make a statement in the report about the expected statewide values to indicate how much the survey responses represented the state in total.
 - MRFs / NWRA were encouraged to provide data in some manner if they haven’t already.
 - The Advisory Council had additional input: How can assumptions be made if data is anonymized and unknown which entities are included / not included? The list of facilities surveyed, how identified, and the services they provide should be included in the report.
- Q5. When will the list of current access to recycling service by municipality be provided?
- This is by county, not by municipality per what they were asked to do in the contract. More information and explanation will be provided in the technical appendix.
 - There are 375 municipalities with population greater than 1,500 for which access data was estimated/modeled. Per data from IML, there are 542 municipalities with population greater than 1,500, so 69% are estimated.
- Q6. How is access to existing subscription (individually contracted) service distinguished from genuinely unserved gaps?
- More information will be provided.
- Q7. How does regression modeling estimate service access for communities not included in survey responses?
- Rurality, population size, density, and region were all considerations to determine probability that service is available.
- Q8. Provide a list of all drop-off centers considered.
- This will be provided.

- Q9. Based on the data presented, an estimated 83% of residents have curbside recycling access and an estimated 81% of residents have access to drop off centers. What percent of residents have no reasonable access to either? How many communities with over 1,500 population have no curbside programs, and where are they located?
- This will be provided.
 - A map of these locations would be helpful.
- Q10. MRFs are not permitted, and therefore there is no “permitted” capacity; how was the statewide capacity determined, and does it include only current operating shifts or additional capacity that would be available if an additional processing shift was added?
- Secondary research was done to make this determination; these sources will be reviewed and provided.
 - Cook County facilities must be permitted, so that data should be available.
- Q11. Why does Table 4-11 show Region 2 as having more than 50% available capacity but the text says those facilities operate near capacity?
- This will be corrected; the data in the table is accurate, but the text is incorrect.
 - The Advisory Council advised that Cook County requires permits for facilities, so there should be a permitted capacity available for those facilities. There needs to be clarity on what is included in the permitted capacity also (shifts/hours, rates, etc.). Eunomia encountered the most refusal on this question in the survey.
- Q12. Has the Recycled Materials Association (ReMA) been consulted to provide recycling system inputs and data, including markets for various materials? Not including their data may result in omitting recycling activity going directly to processors / end markets (e.g., aluminum and steel cans going to metal recyclers / scrap yards).
- Additional research on end markets is being completed.
- Q13. MRF operators indicate that a 0% recycling rate for glass in regions 3-7 is not accurate and a portion of glass from at least 3 of the regions does not go to ADC. Why is 0% glass recycling assumed?
- The assumption was based on proximity to end markets; if additional information is available, Eunomia would review that.
- Q14. Where is composting rate data?
- The initial analysis did not find any facilities processing compostable packaging. Subsequent research shows two facilities that may be managing compostable packaging, and this will be updated.
- Q15. How do the sold into state estimates for Illinois compare to producer data reported under packaging EPR programs in Oregon and Colorado on a per capita basis?
- Sources and comparisons will be explained.
- Q16. For plastics, how do the sold into state values totaling about 627,000 tons make sense considering the waste characterization study calculated about 795,000 tons of plastics (almost all of which were characterized as packaging) are disposed in the state from residential sources alone?
- This has been consistent in other states, and the belief is that the material in the waste characterization is contaminated with other materials, making it weigh more than the actual packaging material.
- Q17. When will the logistics model be provided?
- Eunomia is discussing this with IEPA.
 - The Advisory Council has developed a suggestion of an alternate to the model

approach or to validate the model; this will be sent to Eunomia.

- Q18. Modeling for curbside recycling assumes ALL curbside communities (all municipalities with population >1,500) receive weekly recycling collection. This should be modeled assuming bi-weekly recycling for any municipalities that do not currently have curbside recycling available and sustaining current frequency of weekly or bi-weekly recycling collection in municipalities that have service now. There is no basis for weekly collection given that weekly data only shows about 20 pounds more recycling per household per year compared to bi-weekly, and it over-estimates costs to provide access.
- a. Bi-weekly would be expected to be more cost-effective but weekly was chosen to maximize tonnage recovered.
 - b. The Advisory Council emphasized the interest in bi-weekly service being modeled.
- Q19. An interim condition calculating the cost and recycling performance with curbside and drop-off recycling access provided by the criteria in the statute should be provided. This answers a key question of what the cost of access and its impact alone would be, which is valuable for policy setting.
- a. Eunomia will look at the access as a lever with assumption of bi-weekly for any new service.
- Q20. Please provide a corrected Table 3-1; data for Regions 1, 3, and 4 are identical, which is assumed to be an error.
- a. This will be looked at.
- Q21. For purposes of the packaging and paper products evaluations for future conditions, was ICI composition data excluded? If not, in what manner was it utilized? Section 3 of the report is not germane to the needs assessment as it blends residential and ICI data; this should be revised to fully segregate the sources.
- a. This was mentioned but not answered.

5. Questions and Comments from Council Members

- a. None

6. Public Comment Period

- a. Walter Willis (Solid Waste Agency of Lake County) – IEPA is implored to get the information and data needed, and the Advisory Council should assist in that, in order to answer questions that have been raised to inform the General Assembly and support discussions on future policy.

7. Next Meeting

- a. August 24, 12-1:30pm CT via WebEx

8. Adjournment

- a. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm CT; motion by Brad Cole, second by John Pausma.