

EPA Region 3 National Recycling Strategy

EPA's Outreach Participation at the Professional Recyclers of PA Annual Conference

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July 2022

Current State of Recycling

The U.S. MSW recycling system currently faces a number of challenges:

- Confusion about what materials can be recycled.
- Recycling infrastructure that has not kept pace with today's diverse and changing waste stream, reduced markets for recycled materials, and varying methodologies to measure recycling system performance.
- The National Recycling Strategy identifies actions to address these challenges that build on the collaborative efforts by stakeholders from across the recycling system.

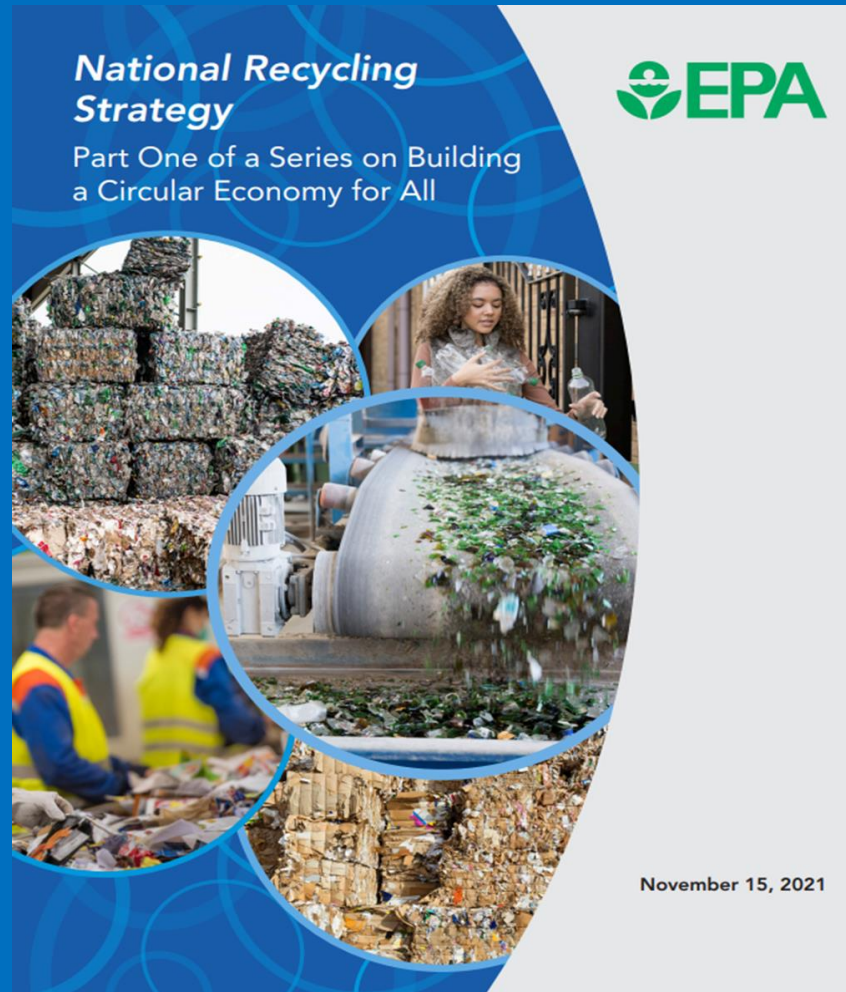
Background on Development of EPA's National Recycling Strategy

- FY'20 Appropriations directed EPA to develop a national recycling strategy.
- Save Our Seas 2.0 Act provides authority for grants, reports and a strategy on post-consumer materials management (“plastics strategy”).
- 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was created.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

- The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is an historic investment in the health, equity, and resilience of American communities. With unprecedented funding to support local waste management infrastructure and recycling programs, EPA will improve people's health and safety and help establish and increase recycling programs nationwide.

Overview of EPA National Recycling Strategy



National Recycling Strategy

- Focuses on enhancing the national municipal solid waste (MSW) or “household” recycling system
- Identifies stakeholder-led actions to create a stronger, more resilient, more equitable and more cost-effective MSW recycling system
- Acknowledges recycling alone cannot help us achieve a circular economy
- Commits EPA to developing additional strategies (material reuse and reduction, food waste, plastics)

National Recycling Strategy Objectives:

- Improve Markets for Recycled Commodities
- Increase Collection and Improve Materials Management Infrastructure
- Reduce Contamination in the Recycled Materials Stream
- Enhance Policies and Programs to Support Circularity
- Standardize Measurement and Increase Data Collection

Some Ways to Achieve The National Recycling Objectives:

- We need to improve markets for recyclable materials and recyclable products and better integrate recycled materials into product and packaging designs.
- Promote market development.
- Produce an analysis of different types of end markets that considers resilience, environmental benefits and other relevant factors for decision makers.
- Improve understanding of available recycling infrastructure and needs.

Some Ways to Achieve The National Recycling Objectives:

- Increase consideration of recoverability and sustainability in the design of products.
- Optimize processing efficiencies at materials recovery facilities.
- Increase collection of recyclable materials
- Enhance education and outreach to the public on the value of recycling and how to recycle properly.
- Develop and implement national recycling system definitions, measures, targets and performance indicators.
- Create a tracking and reporting plan.

What is a Circular Economy

- A circular economy, as defined in the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act, refers to an economy that uses a systems-focused approach and involves industrial processes and economic activities that are restorative or regenerative by design, enable resources used in such processes and activities to maintain their highest value for as long as possible, and aim for the elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, and systems (including business models)
- A circular economy reduces material use, redesigns materials to be less resource intensive, and recaptures “waste” as a resource to manufacture new materials and products.

EPA's Circular Economy Strategy

- Advancing MSW recycling alone will not achieve a circular economy for the United States; recycling is only one action in the toolkit.
- Work is necessary to broadly encompass areas not addressed here, including product redesign, source reduction, and reuse.
- Recycling efforts in the United States are inclusive of more than just the processing of MSW at material recovery facilities and include many other materials, such as electronics, textiles, cement, concrete, and food waste. Future strategies will address these and other aspects of building a circular economy for all.

How to Get Involved

- Sign up to “stay connected” to learn about:
 - New Grant Programs!
 - Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grants
 - Recycling Education and Outreach Grants (REO)
 - Circular Economy Strategies – Development and Implementation
- Sign up here: epa.gov/recyclingstrategy/forms/stay-connected

NEW EPA Grant Programs!!!





Sustainable Materials Management

Understanding the Issues



- [Basic Information about SMM](#)
- [Lifecycle Perspective](#)
- [International Initiatives](#)

Topics in SMM



- [Food](#)
- [Electronics](#)
- [Resources, Waste and Climate Change](#)
- [The Built Environment](#)
- [Packaging](#)

What Your Organization Can Do



- [Join the Effort - National Recycling Strategy](#)
- [Partnership Opportunities](#)
- [Find Recycled-Content Products](#)

Measurement, Tools and Resources



- [Facts and Figures about Materials, Waste and Recycling](#)
- [SMM Prioritization Tools](#)
- [Waste Reduction Model \(WARM\)](#)
- [Recycling Economic Information Report](#)
- [State Measurement Sharing Program](#)
- [Sustainable Materials Management Tools](#)

Highlights

- [2021 SMM Electronics Challenge Award Winners](#) **NEW**
- [WasteWise Award Winners](#)
- [Food Recovery Challenge Award Winners](#)
- [Federal Green Challenge Award Winners](#)
- [EPA's National Recycling Strategy](#)
- [MOU with the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative](#)
- [About Electric Arc Furnace Slag](#)
- [Resources, Waste and Climate Change web page](#)

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[Sign up for the SMM Newsletter](#) **EXIT** to get updates from EPA.



Sign up for EPA's Sustainable Materials Management Newsletter

Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grants (SWIFR)

GOAL: Build and transform solid waste infrastructure in the US to equitably reduce waste and manage materials to achieve a circular economy reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create cleaner, resilient, and healthier communities

- Total \$275M – \$55M/yr for 5 years
- Eligibility = States, Territories, Tribes and Local Govts
- Competitive and Non-competitive Grants



SWIFR Important Dates

Non-Competitive Grants:

- Notice of Intent to Participate
- Program Guidance made available to eligible parties
- Target Release - August 2022

Competitive Grants:

- Request for Applications (RFA) – Announcement Anticipated by September 30th



Recycling Education and Outreach Grants (REO)

GOAL: To fund education and outreach grants focused on improving public knowledge about waste reduction and recycling

- Total \$75M – \$15M/yr for 5 years
- Eligibility = States, Territories, Tribes, Local Govts, Non-profits and PPPs
- Competitive Only Grants



Model Recycling Toolkit



REO Important Dates

- Request for Applications (RFA) – Announcement Anticipated by September 30th
- Model Recycling Toolkit – Released for Public Use by September 30th



EPA Contact Information

- Lead or Support a National Recycling Strategy Action:
epa.gov/recyclingstrategy/forms/take-action
- Sign up to Stay Connected on our Strategies and grants:
epa.gov/recyclingstrategy/forms/stay-connected
- Email EPA at SMMPartners@epa.gov
- Reach your EPA Regional contacts:
 - Khalia Thompson, EPA Region 3, Recycling Contact, thompson.khalia@epa.gov
 - Melissa Pennington, Sustainable Management of Food, pennington.melissa@epa.gov