

U.S. EPA's Sustainable Materials Management Program

Update on America Recycles Activities

January 8, 2020

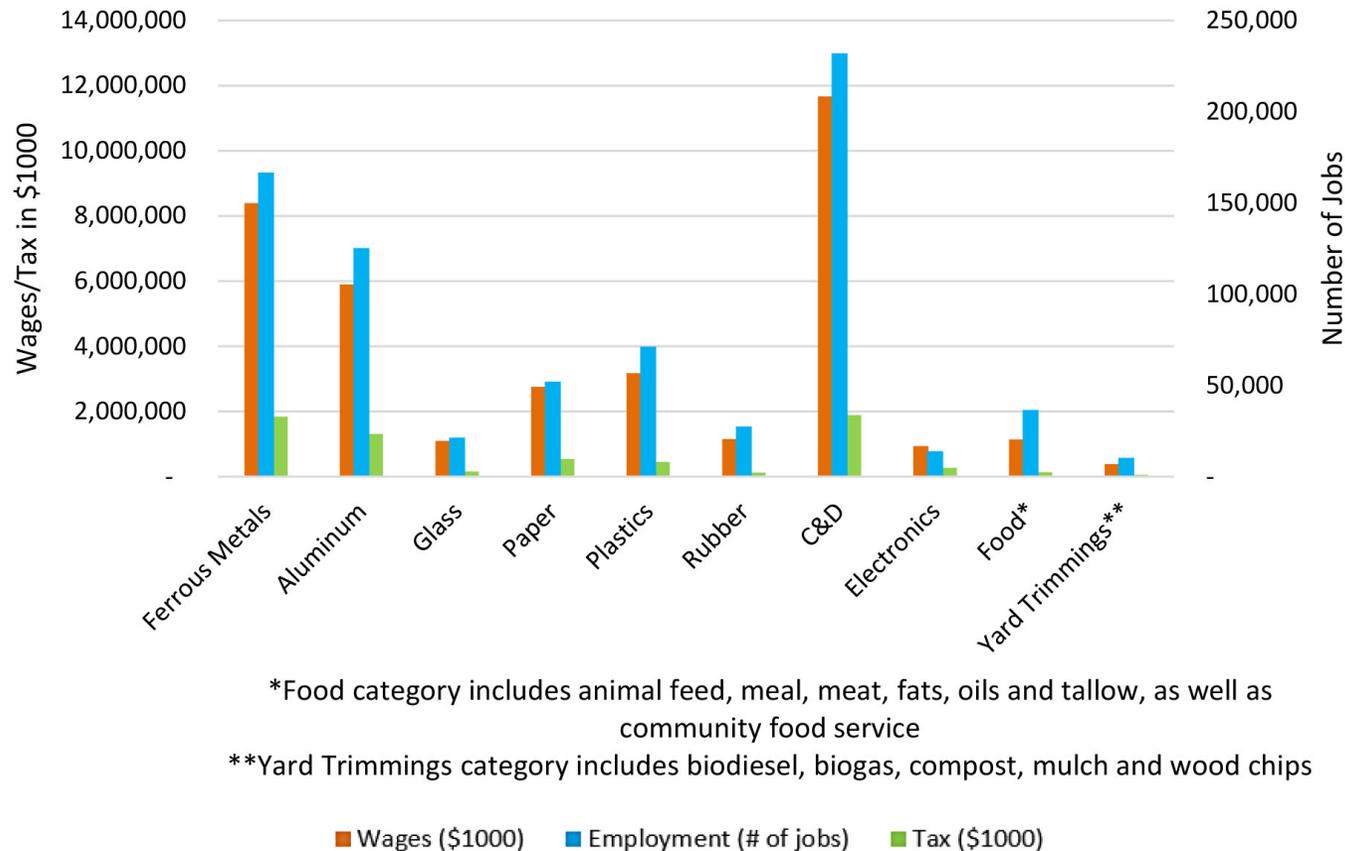
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Importance of Recycling

Wages, Tax and Jobs Attributable to Recycling



- 757,000 jobs
- \$6.7 billion annually in tax revenues

• \$9 billion are thrown away each year!

<https://www.epa.gov/smm/recycling-economic-information-rei-report>

Framing the Issue

- Import restrictions are not the *cause* of the challenges we face; they have brought to light pre-existing issues:
 - Consumer confusion about what is recyclable
 - Outdated processing infrastructure
 - Domestic market development needed
 - Diverse management approaches



America Recycles Week November 11-15, 2019

- Monday (11/ 11): *Veterans, Jobs and Recycling*
- Tuesday (11/ 12): *Measurement*
- Wednesday (11/13): *Markets and Market Development*
- Thursday (11/14): *Education and Outreach*
- Friday (11/15): *America Recycles Day: Collaboration is Key to Success*

EPA's 2019 America Recycles Summit

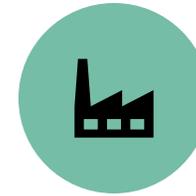


- EPA convened the second America Recycles Summit to hear about workgroup progress made over the last year to address the challenges and opportunities facing the U.S. recycling system
- The 2019 summit brought together America Recycles Pledge signers - over 150 people attended

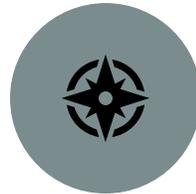
U.S. Recycling System Action Areas



Promoting
Education and
Outreach



Enhancing Materials
Management
Infrastructure



Strengthening
Secondary Materials
Markets



Enhancing
Measurement

Promoting Education and Outreach

- The **Education and Outreach workgroup** envisions clear, consistent messages about proper materials management activities that enable consumers to recognize the value of reusing, recovering and recycling materials, as well as the value of buying products with recycled content
- **Challenges:** inconsistent messaging on how to recycle due to localized differences, lack of information on contamination and limited public awareness on the value of recycling
- **Priority:** developing consistent messages for key recycling issues

Enhancing Materials Management Infrastructure

- The **Infrastructure workgroup** envisions a holistic, modern and adaptable national recycling infrastructure that embraces innovation and is resilient to changes in material streams, markets and consumer expectations
- **Challenges:** resiliency, pricing, and localized differences in managing materials across the country
- **Priority:** compiling existing information on funding opportunities for infrastructure investments nation-wide



Strengthening Secondary Materials Markets

- The **Markets workgroup** envisions high-quality recycled materials are produced that can be incorporated easily into products, driving demand and creating an integrated, robust and sustainable domestic recycling market
- **Challenges:** supporting existing end-markets and developing new end-markets
- **Priority:** hosting market development workshops across the country

Enhancing Measurement

- The **Measurement workgroup** envisions establishing standardized recycling metrics that are supported by consistent terminology and methodology.
- **Challenges:** new ways of measuring, and the diversity and variety of measurement approaches across the country
- **Priority:** compile information on a range of metrics and measures, including definitions; develop a recycling system schematic showing the flow of materials across the system

Virtual Clearinghouse Development

- The Chamber of Commerce Foundation, in partnership with the U.S. EPA, the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, and Keep America Beautiful, is launching a publicly accessible, web-based portal that will serve as a “virtual clearinghouse” for recycling tools and resources. The clearinghouse will serve as a one-stop-shop for recycling tools and resources

EPA Actions & Announcements

- Hold regional and state market development workshops
- Updates to EPA's ReCon Tool
- Updates to EPA's *Measuring Recycling: A Guide for State and Local Governments*
- 25th Anniversary of WasteWise
- Released [2016 & 2017 Facts and Figures data](#)
- Released [National Framework to Advance the U.S. Recycling System](#)
- Publications featuring [Pledge Signer success stories](#)
- Continued facilitation for America Recycles workgroup actions



Opportunities for Engagement

- Sign the America Recycles Pledge
<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/forms/america-recycles-pledge>
- Participate in workgroup dialogues
- Participate in State measurement program
- Explore market development opportunities
- Share messaging from Education and Outreach workgroup
- Contribute to virtual clearinghouse
- Celebrate America Recycles Day in 2020!



Thank you!

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