



# Local Government Needs Assessment FAQs

UPDATED FEBRUARY 2023

## Frequently Asked Questions

These frequently asked questions have been developed to help local governments and service providers understand the Needs Assessment being conducted as part of implementation of the Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act (RMA).

The information in this document does not describe every possible scenario, nor is it offered as a substitute for the [statutory language](#) or intended as legal advice. In the case of conflict, the statute shall prevail. Administrative rulemaking in 2023 and 2024 may provide additional detail.

Additional information on the legislation, the rulemaking process, and how different stakeholders may be affected when the law is implemented can be found on [RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov](https://recyclingact.oregon.gov).

This document is organized by the following categories:

- **Purpose of the Needs Assessment**
- **Needs Assessment & the RMA**
- **Completing the Survey**

## Purpose of the Needs Assessment

### 1. Why are local governments being asked to complete the Needs Assessment survey?

The Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act modernizes Oregon's recycling system and leverages the resources of producers of packaging, printing and writing paper, and food serviceware to create new opportunities for Oregon's local governments and their service providers to receive funding to expand recycling services starting July 1, 2025. All local governments, regardless of size, will be eligible to receive funding for recycling service expansion from the Producer Responsibility Organization(s).

The RMA requires DEQ to conduct a periodic Needs Assessment of local governments statewide to determine their interest in expanding recycling services.

### Translation or other formats

[Español](#) | [한국어](#) | [繁體中文](#) | [Русский](#) | [Tiếng Việt](#) | [العربية](#)  
800-452-4011 | TTY: 711 | [deqinfo@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:deqinfo@deq.oregon.gov)

The first Needs Assessment, being conducted now, gauges interest in expanding recycling collection during the first program plan period, from July 2025 through December 2027. To be eligible for funding support, local governments **must** complete the Needs Assessment survey by April 14, 2023.

**2. Do local governments have to complete the survey?**

Completing the Needs Assessment survey is voluntary, and expansion of recycling services covered by the Needs Assessment is not required; however, to be eligible for funding from the PRO(s), local governments must complete the survey. The requirement to complete the survey to be eligible for the funding is required by statute.

**3. If my city does not want to expand recycling services, do we need to fill out the Needs Assessment survey?**

There are additional survey questions that ask about existing recycling services and your service provider. Even if you are not interested in expanding recycling services, completing the survey provides DEQ with valuable information.

Please note that the Needs Assessment is separate from the RMA requirements. Even if a local government does not complete the survey, it is still responsible for implementing the RMA requirements.

**4. If my city does not fill out the Needs Assessment survey, does that mean it is not eligible for PRO funding?**

Yes. If a local government does not complete the survey it will not be eligible for funding from the PRO(s) during the first program plan period for the recycling expansion services covered by the Needs Assessment. There will be other opportunities for funding in later rounds.

**5. How will the Needs Assessment information be used?**

The Needs Assessment will be complete by July 1, 2023. After the survey is complete, DEQ will provide the Needs Assessment information to the PRO(s), who will incorporate the information into their program plans. The PRO(s) will work with local governments and service providers to determine implementation of expansion services. Service expansion will begin as of July 1, 2025.

## **Needs Assessment & the RMA**

**1. How does the Needs Assessment relate to the RMA requirements?**

Completing the Needs Assessment is separate from the other RMA requirements. If a local government does not complete the survey, it is still required to implement the other requirements of the law.

**2. What materials list should local governments consider when thinking about recycling needs and service expansion?**

Expansion of service covered in this needs assessment survey is around the proposed list of materials associated with the Uniform Statewide Collection List (USCL). That list can be found [here](#).

**3. How does a local government designate a service provider or partner to receive compensation?**

The Needs Assessment is separate from the designation process. The designation process will be developed mid-2023 or early 2024.

**4. What are eligible expenses for services requested through the Needs Assessment?**

Eligible expenses are those associated with the expansion and provision of recycling services for covered products. Eligible costs could include:

- Start-up costs for new on-route collection
  - Including adding single-family routes, multifamily routes, and/or commercial routes
- Costs for expanded on-route collection to accommodate new materials
  - including but not limited to trucks, containers, and promotional literature
- Start-up and operational costs for new or expanded recycling depots
  - including site preparation, containers, on-site monitoring equipment, and staffing
- New recycling reload facilities, if necessary and none other is available
- Expanding reload facilities
  - Including any necessary compaction equipment

In addition, service expansion will be accompanied by meaningful outreach, such as promotional literature, that will be covered by the PRO(s).

The table below shows an additional list of potential eligible expenses. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

<b>On-Route Collection</b> (Residential, Commercial, Multifamily)	<b>New and Expansion</b> Trucks Containers Onboard contamination monitoring Promotional literature Safety Equipment
<b>Recycling Depot</b>	<b>New and Expansion</b> Containers Signage Monitoring equipment Equipment to move and load recyclables Compaction or baling equipment Safety Equipment (e.g., vests, boots) Ongoing Operational cost, including staff Storage Land Site preparation
<b>Recycling Reload Facility</b> (if necessary and none other is available)	Building Construction Monitoring equipment Equipment to move and load recyclables Compaction or baling equipment Safety Equipment (e.g., vests, boots) Ongoing Operational cost, including staff Storage Land Site preparation

**5. Does a request for education and outreach funding need to go in the survey? Because with changes in collected items, there will need to be outreach.**

Educational and promotional material related to expansion or a new service is a cost that will be covered by the PRO(s). There is no specific question for it in the survey because it will be part of a service included with any expansion.

The targeted level of education and specific costs will be part of the conversation between jurisdictions and the PRO(s). The funding for education and outreach related to an expansion of service is not the

same as the contamination reduction education laid out in the RMA that is capped at \$3 per capita. Education/outreach related to service expansion is not capped.

**6. Is this the only opportunity for recycling service expansion funding?**

This is not the only opportunity to receive funding, as DEQ will be conducting Needs Assessments periodically in the future. Participating and completing this survey identifies those who will receive funding during the first program plan period (July 2025 through December 2027).

**7. When will funding be available?**

Funding for the first program plan period will be available starting July 1, 2025.

**8. How will costs be covered by the PRO(s)?**

Reimbursement and advance funding are both options allowed through the statute. Funding will not be available until July 1, 2025. The PRO(s) will contact survey respondents to discuss their answers, and then enter conversations with the local governments and their service providers, to determine implementation timing and funding.

**9. How will PROs prioritize which areas get funding first?**

DEQ has proposed draft rules that outline the initial prioritization for funding for the first program plan period. All communities that have requested service expansion through the needs assessment will receive funding, however it will not occur all at once.

**10. What services are covered by the PRO(s) even if a local government does not complete the Needs Assessment?**

The RMA provides opportunities for local governments and their service providers to receive funding for from the PRO(s) for several services without completing the needs assessment survey. These services are described in statute (ORS 459A.890), including:

- Transportation of covered products to the closest responsible end market or commingled recycling processing facility, with capacity to accept, that is a distance 50 miles or more from a recycling depot or recycling reload facility.
- Contamination assessments
- Contamination reduction programming
- Post-consumer recycled content
  - Costs to ensure roll carts, bins and containers purchased by the local government's service providers are manufactured from at least 10 percent post-consumer recycled material and are certified by an independent verification standard.
  - Costs are covered to the extent that the use of post-consumer recycled material is more expensive than the lowest priced alternative.
- Educational resources and promotional campaigns that address:
  - The Uniform Statewide Collection List
  - Requirements to properly prepare materials for recycling
  - The importance of not placing contaminants in commingled recycling collection

**11. What is the timing for the different steps of the process for what happens after the survey? When will local governments be talking with the PROs about service expansion?**

The PRO(s) will develop program plans by March 31, 2024. The plans must be submitted to DEQ for review and approval. It is possible that the PRO(s) may reach out to discuss the needs assessment responses with local governments before their program plans are approved.

## Completing the Survey

### 1. How will local governments receive the survey?

Local governments (counties & incorporated cities) and service providers were emailed a link to the survey on **Jan. 5**. The email came from [julia.marsh@eunomia-inc.com](mailto:julia.marsh@eunomia-inc.com). The link takes you to an online survey hosted on SurveyMonkey.

If you did not receive the survey and believe you should have, please email [julia.marsh@eunomia-inc.com](mailto:julia.marsh@eunomia-inc.com).

### 2. Should service providers complete a Needs Assessment for the areas they serve?

No, a service provider should not fill out the Needs Assessment survey. DEQ strongly encourages local governments to work closely with their service providers to prepare answers to the survey questions, and the survey has been shared with service providers to facilitate this collaboration. However, local governments (and for unincorporated cities, the county) are responsible for filling out the Needs Assessment survey. A survey submitted by a local government's service provider does not qualify for funding eligibility.

### 3. If a local government relies entirely on a hauler to carry out recycling requirements, does the local government still need to fill out the survey?

Yes, the county still needs to complete a needs assessment survey to be eligible for funding in the first program plan period. DEQ encourages local governments and service providers to work together to complete the needs assessment survey.

### 4. Can communities work together to submit joint Needs Assessments?

Each incorporated city needs to complete and submit its own individual survey to be eligible for funding from the PRO(s). However, communities can discuss responses in advance and collaborate if needed to prepare answers.

### 5. There is no one at our city responsible for solid waste.

DEQ encourages you to work closely with your service provider and other relevant stakeholders to determine answers to the survey. Each local government needs to complete its own survey, but it can gather input from and work closely with these partners. If you still need assistance, contact your DEQ Regional Specialist.

### 6. I did not receive a survey link and believe I should have. Who do I contact?

Email [julia.marsh@eunomia-inc.com](mailto:julia.marsh@eunomia-inc.com) to request the link to the survey.

### 7. How do I request a hardcopy version of the survey?

To request a hardcopy version of the survey, either email [RethinkRecycling@deq.Oregon.gov](mailto:RethinkRecycling@deq.Oregon.gov) or call your Regional Specialist, and one will be mailed to you. Regional Specialist contact information is at the end of this document.

### 8. What is the deadline for completing the Needs Assessment survey?

April 14, 2023, at 11:59pm PT. The survey can be completed at any point before the deadline. Surveys can be resubmitted, by returning to the survey link and resubmitting answers. The later submission will be recorded.

**9. Will counties be responsible for completing a Needs Assessment for incorporated cities under 4,000 population?**

Incorporated cities, regardless of size, are responsible for completing their own Needs Assessments. The county is responsible for completing the Needs Assessment survey of unincorporated cities and towns within county boundaries.

**10. How do counties complete the survey on behalf of unincorporated areas?**

Counties are asked to complete a survey on behalf of the county and on behalf of unincorporated areas. If you are a county completing the survey on behalf of multiple unincorporated areas or county areas, first, identify the new or expanded recycling services needed in each area. Then, either submit a separate survey for each area, or you can group surveys and submit a single survey on behalf of areas within the county that are requesting the **same** services. When completing the survey, be sure to specify which area(s) it is for. Contact your Regional Specialist (contact information at the end of this document) if you need help completing multiple surveys on behalf of multiple areas.

**11. How should the survey be completed when there are multiple levels of local government? Should all jurisdictions within a watershed be coordinating on plans?**

There should be a conversation that takes place between the levels of government, and coordination will be key so everyone knows what's happening within jurisdictions and watersheds. DEQ strongly encourages collaboration and coordination between local governments to prepare for and complete the survey.

**12. What is the methodology for answering Question 13? (reporting number of new on-route customers served; reporting multi-family units in particular will be difficult)**

A methodology has not been specified. DEQ might be following up with respondents to ask about their calculation methodologies if needed, and local governments are welcome to share that information proactively. If the number of units is not known, but the number of properties is, providing that information will be sufficient. DEQ acknowledges the difficulty of estimating MF housing and asks for an educated guess. This answer is not binding. A building with five or more units qualifies as multi-family.

**13. I completed the survey, but my answers have changed.**

You can resubmit the survey at any point before the April 14 deadline. To resubmit, return to the survey link and submit a new version of the survey with your updated responses. The later submission will be recorded.

**14. Where do I get help with answering the survey questions?**

DEQ's Regional Specialists are available to answer questions and assist with completing the Needs Assessment survey. Regional Specialist contact information is at the end of this document.

## More Information

More information is available on DEQ's website at [RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov](https://www.reyclingact.oregon.gov)

To view a recording of the Needs Assessment information session or view the presentation slides held in January 2023 please visit the Needs Assessment [web page](#).



Additional survey materials, including a Needs Assessment Survey Information Sheet, Survey Instructions and Questions, the Proposed Materials Acceptance List, and Definitions and Eligible Expenses, can be found on this page.

If you have other questions, please reach out to your DEQ Regional Specialist or email [RethinkRecycling@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:RethinkRecycling@deq.oregon.gov).

## DEQ Regional Specialist Contact Information

Counties	Name	Contact Information
<b>Eastern Region</b>		
Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Milton-Freewater, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco and Wheeler	<b>Laurie Gordon</b>	Office: 541-633-2029 Cell: 541-408-7842 <a href="mailto:Laurie.Gordon@deq.oregon.gov">Laurie.Gordon@deq.oregon.gov</a>
<b>Northwest Region</b>		
Opportunity to Recycle - Clatsop Other Issues - Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington	<b>Lexi Meek</b>	Office: 503-229-5790 Cell: 503-319-5681 <a href="mailto:Lexi.Meek@deq.oregon.gov">Lexi.Meek@deq.oregon.gov</a>
Opportunity to Recycle - Columbia, Tillamook Other Issues - Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington	<b>Gretchen Sandau</b>	Cell: 503-915-6786 <a href="mailto:Gretchen.Sandau@deq.oregon.gov">Gretchen.Sandau@deq.oregon.gov</a>
<b>Western Region</b>		
Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine and Lane	<b>Cathy Brown</b>	Office: 541-687-7325 Cell: 503-753-6153 <a href="mailto:Cathy.Brown@deq.oregon.gov">Cathy.Brown@deq.oregon.gov</a>
Benton, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk and Yamhill	<b>Cat Rhoades</b>	Office: 503-378-5089 Cell: 503-446-7410 <a href="mailto:Cathie.Rhoades@deq.oregon.gov">Cathie.Rhoades@deq.oregon.gov</a>

## Non-discrimination statement

DEQ does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age or sex in administration of its programs or activities. Visit DEQ's [Civil Rights and Environmental Justice page](#).