DEQ

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Local government implementation of the RMA

Frequently Asked Questions from the March 2024 webinar

At the end of March 2024, DEQ and Circular Action Alliance, the only producer responsibility organization to submit a draft program plan, hosted a <u>webinar</u> for local governments and their service providers to learn more about the Recycling Moderiniation Act implementation. Below are answers to questions asked before and during the webinar. Local governments can find more information on RMA implementation on <u>this website</u>.

Question	Answer		
Education and outreach questions			
I saw that educational materials will be available for the USCL. Will the PRO fund or advertise to residents regarding their new depots for these items?)	Local governments are still required to conduct local promotion of opportunity-to-recycle services such as curbside recycling. PROs are required to develop statewide educational resources and campaigns. For Uniform Statewide Collection List or USCL materials, the PRO will create resources that local governments can use and customize and a statewide campaign that will supplement local outreach efforts. For PRO-list materials, the PRO must promote the network of collection sites, including a website in multiple languages that provides location/hours of operation and information on how to properly prepare materials. DEQ would expect some local governments to also issue communications about the collection of PRO list materials because existing depots operated by local governments will serve as some of the collection points for the materials. Pages 47 and 84 of the proposed program plan have more information about PRO depot promotion. Find the proposed plan on DEQ's RMA website.		
What key points should we share with our customers at this time?	We all want to share the exciting news of the RMA, but it is still a bit early to share information with customers because of the lack of action folks can take. <u>DEQ's RMA website</u> has many resources if you want to start sharing.		





Will there be a mass market and harmonized educational outreach, i.e., social media, billboards, buses, and mailings, that educate the public in the same way for the statewide recycling list and common contaminants?

The PRO is required under statute to issue educational materials for collecting and recycling the Uniform Statewide Collection List and the PRO Recycling Acceptance List materials. The prospective PRO will detail how it plans to fulfill this requirement in its program plan. Visit DEQ's RMA website to review the plan and provide public comment.

Will DEQ / CAA be creating standardized messaging or providing communication packages?

Answer from CAA - CAA will be developing a suite of educational resources that communities across Oregon will be able to access. There will be uniform messaging as well digital resources that will allow communities to customize communications to residents. The resources will also be available in multiple languages to ensure all Oregonians have an equal opportunity to participate in recycling.

What materials are available to help with promotional information to residents? When will PROs start their education and how will that tie into OTR education requirements for cities and service providers?

Answer from CAA - CAA is working with DEQ to develop a timeline that includes sharing draft educational materials with local governments over the course of 2024, with the goal of distributing resources to local governments throughout the first half of 2025 as we work toward implementation July 1. These materials will focus on PRO responsibilities (USCL materials and PRO depot assets) to complement existing local government information required under the Opportunity to Recycle Act and will be customizable in nature to reflect local language and material considerations.

PRO depots and material

Since the pressurized containers and aerosol cans will be collected by PROs now, should local governments still collect them at HHW events?

Local governments can continue to collect aerosol cans and pressurized cylinders, especially those still containing hazardous contents. DEQ expects the PRO to encourage users to deliver empty aerosol containers to their collection points and to use other collection options (e.g., HHW programs) for containers that are not empty. Local governments could explore opportunities to negotiate with the PRO if they want financial support for such collection as part of a PRO's alternative compliance approach to convenience standards, according to OAR 340-090-0640(6).

Where will we take block polystyrene when Agilyx closes? Should this material still be on the PRO depot list?

White block expanded polystyrene is on the PRO Recycling Acceptance list, so PROs must collect it at their network of depots and collection points to fulfill its convenience

	standards. PROs will also need to ensure the flow of the material to responsible end markets. If the material has to travel more than 75 miles, the PRO is also required to densify it safely to ensure efficient transportation. DEQ can't speak to what specific markets will process the material, as that's up to the PRO to determine. Still, the PRO must report its disposition to DEQ and verify all downstream entities that handle the material against the responsible standard (see OAR 340-090-0670(2)(b)). DEQ based its original recommendation to include block polystyrene on the PRO depot list on the availability of responsible end markets other than Agilyx, and our assessment found that such distant markets might deliver superior environmental benefits even when the impacts of longer transportation distances were taken into effect. Thus, the closure of Agilyx does not change DEQ's recommendation.
How is CAA planning to manage EPS and wine bottles, given recent developments?	In consultation with the wine industry, the Oregon legislature will choose whether to move wine bottles into the Bottle Bill; until a change is made, they are included in the RMA. From CAA proposed PRO plan- "There are three regions in the state that have established foam densifying operations or are themselves a recycling market for block white EPS foam. Outside of these areas, CAA will work with specific PRO depot locations or partners to house nonthermal foam densifiers for consolidating the foam in the surrounding communities. CAA is exploring placing densifiers and exploring mobile densification near Grants Pass, Klamath Falls, Burns, Redmond, Ontario, The Dalles and Pendelton. These sites will prevent the movement of loose polystyrene for more than 75 miles. Where these sites do not meet the requirements, third-party sites will be contracted and/or mobile units will be dispatched. Additional contracting with these locations for staff and proper compensation will be negotiated with those sites."
Anything touching building materials?	The RMA covers printing and writing paper, food serviceware and packing. The Act doesn't cover building materials, but it does cover the packaging some materials come in.

Are there required hours and/or staffing requirements at Depots?	PRO depots located at another facility (such as a transfer station or retailer) must be open to the public during the same hours as that facility. Stand-alone PRO depots must be available at least eight hours/day, four days/week, one of which must be a Saturday or Sunday.	
How do special collection systems for hard-to-recycle items fit into RMA (i.e., Recycle Plus by SaniPac)?	These programs can continue to operate under new rules proposed to the Rulemaking Advisory Committee. The public comment period for these rules opens in late spring and will go to the Environmental Quality Commission by the end of 2024.	
How will this impact the list of recyclable items? Will the list of recyclables be the same statewide?	The EQC established several Recycling Acceptance Lists in November 2023. The full list is at RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov The Local Government Recycling Acceptance List (which the Uniform Statewide Collection List is a subset) establishes a consistent list of materials to be accepted through local government (opportunity to recycle) programs across the state. Local governments may collect additional materials, but not in the commingled mix. The PRO program plan process could (and has asked to) add materials to the list, according to ORS 459A.914(4)(b). Read CAA's proposed PRO plan on DEQ's RMA website.	
Will you be taking milk bottles?	Plastic (HDPE) milk bottles are included on the Uniform Statewide Collection List. The full list is at RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov	
What is planned to support consistent and reliable compliance with the statewide accepted materials list?	Local governments subject to the Opportunity to Recycle Act are required to collect or provide for the collection of materials on the Local Government Recycling Acceptance List (including the Uniform Statewide Collection List). DEQ will review compliance as part of its annual compliance review (which is now in its fifth decade). Financial support from the PRO will make compliance more affordable for local governments.	
Funding Funding		
If funding is to go to the entity actually engaging in the activity, it may not be appropriate to give transportation	ORS 459A.890(2) provides for PRO funding to the local government or the local government's service provider. If some other entity is transporting the materials collected	

reimbursement money to a hauler since they under the local government's recycling obligation, then a may not be actually paying for the long-haul local contractual arrangement could be explored to accept from reload to CRPF or REM. Can we talk funding from the PRO and disburse it to that other party. about this a bit more - there are probably other more appropriate ways to work it...? **Answer from CAA** - The goal of the system expansion funding is to ensure new recycling system across Oregon is designed to meet the needs of each community, creating equal access to recycling across Oregon. The "right-sizing" will done for each community and wasteshed. If a community is implementing curbside recycling for the first Can CAA say more about funding and time, the CAA will work with that community and their investments being "right-sized" to anticipated service provider to ensure the number of roll carts, trucks volumes? I am concerned how this would and other supporting equipment fits need of that impact rural communities. community. If a community is adding just few, smaller volume materials, they potentially may not require any new equipment. The funding solutions for each community will be tailored, and "right-sized" for the unique conditions that exist in each community across Oregon. **Answer from CAA** - The CAA team will be working closely with local governments and their service providers through August (2024) to identify the system expansion funding needs. Based on the information provided by local governments during this time, CAA will develop a proposed schedule for processing local government funding requests along with a preliminary estimate of anticipated funding amounts. This information will be included in the second program plan submitted to DEQ in September 2024. The more detailed the information that local governments can provide during this initial stage of engagement, the more More clarity about when the funding is refined the investment schedule estimates will be. Once expected to be distributed. When should local that schedule is approved in the program plan, CAA will governments expect to have money in hand? then enter negotiations with local governments as per the approved schedule to reach agreement on what will be purchased and when. Additional notes from DEQ: The response above applies to

PRO funding for service expansion. The "schedule" that CAA refers to above allows the PRO to satisfy requests under the needs assessment throughout the 30-month duration of the first program plan (7/1/25 - 12/31/27). However, other compensation obligations (e.g., for contamination reduction programming and transportation of materials to distant processors) go into effect on July 1, 2025, and local

	governments might expect to receive initial compensation shortly thereafter.	
Will there be funding for populations less than 4000 if they want to implement this?	Yes, for contamination programming, transportation (if the closest processing facility or end market with capacity is more than 50 miles distant) and expansion if the jurisdiction completed a needs assessment.	
How can we improve our local infrastructure with RMA funds?	There are a lot of opportunities to expand or strengthen programs under the RMA. If your community responded to the first needs assessment, then you have a roadmap for what that looks like. If not, there will be more opportunities in the future, as the needs assessment will be periodically updated. Depending on your location, new materials may be added to the recycling acceptance list (both on-route and at local depots), and new on-route service might happen. New recycling depots will be located across the state, and new requirements for sorting and end markets mean more trust in recycling and better conditions for the workers.	
How do local governments use funds from PROs to support contamination reduction interventions?	DEQ will establish a list of contamination reduction programs from which a local government can choose. The PRO will provide up to \$3 per capita funding to implement the selected programs. Also, the PROs will create educational materials for local government use for education and outreach.	
I'd like to learn more about all of the new funding streams that are part of the RMA.	There are many new funding streams in the RMA, including the contamination management fee and processor commodity risk fee for sorting facilities, as well as system expansion and contamination reduction programming funding for local governments. See a handy list of PRO funding categories in Appendix B of this document: Recycling Modernization Act Program Plan IMD (oregon.gov)	
How can we work together on a more predictable cost for recycling?	Local governments may want to work with other jurisdictions to pool money and create an economy of scale. Washington County and its cities are examples of how local governments can work together. In addition, the	

	 RMA has mechanisms to dampen some of the natural fluctuations in recycling program costs: PRO compensation for long-distance transportation should reduce some impacts of changes in fuel prices PRO's payment of processor commodity risk fee to commingled processing facilities should reduce the impacts of swings in commodity prices. For example, if the market price for waste paper falls, the per-ton fee paid to the processors should rise in the following month; this will allow processors to offer more stable prices that should improve predictability over time. 		
Will funds be available for tribes who wish to opt in?	 Depots operated by tribal nations are considered existing depots under the definition at OAR 340-090-0640(1), and as such, must be negotiated with for the collection of PRO materials where possible. Tribal nations are eligible for funding through the Waste Prevention and Reuse fee per ORS 459A.941 		
What is the anticipated funding schedule? When do local governments need to begin planning how they plan to use RMA funds?	PRO(s) will fund projects outlined in the needs assessment during the first program plan, which runs from Jul. 2025 to Dec. 2027. Some funding may also be available before the Jul. 2025 start date. It is never too early to start planning.		
What will funding source and amounts look like and what are the anticipated milestone timelines?	 Funding for the RMA comes from two sources. Ratepayers – Local governments and their service providers will continue to charge ratepayers garbage and recycling fees. Producers – Producers of covered products will pay membership fees to the PRO(s)to cover things like new educational materials, some transportation of recycling, contamination reduction, commingled processing, and more. 		
When will companies be notified of funding and be able to start ordering equipment?	PRO(s) will fund projects outlined in the needs assessment during the first program plan, which runs from July 2025 to December 2027. CAA proposes to negotiate details with local governments and their service providers during 2024 and 2025.		
Rules and regulations			

	The adopted rules from the first rulemaking are on the <u>RAC</u> one website.	
Where are the admin rules published for public review?	The proposed and draft rules for the second rulemaking are on the RAC two website. The notice of public comment for the second rulemaking is expected to be issued around the beginning of June 2024.	
How are local governments to "ensure adequate space for multifamily collection"? How will DEQ enforce the required recycling space in new multifamily dwellings starting in 2026?	DEQ is proposing draft rule language to clarify that to comply with the requirement of ORS 459A.911 and ensure adequate space for recycling collection at multifamily properties, local governments must submit an implementation plan and annually report on their implementation progress. DEQ will provide a template for the implementation plan and model code language. DEQ is conducting a needs assessment for multifamily recycling collection due to the Oregon Legislature on September 15, 2024, which may further inform this work.	
What is the definition of Portland metro area? Metro Service District boundary		
lm	plementation	
Will that primary/secondary contacts survey be put out again soon? Can you talk in a little more detail about what you are looking for on that survey, as opposed to the "designation of local service providers" process, which will happen after December 2024?	Yes, we will send it out again with the follow-up materials. We encourage all local governments to fill it out. The survey is to help the PRO efficiently start the conversation with the right folks at the local government and identify service providers or other partners that should also be at the table. The funding authorization process is the formal statement/agreement that other entities may receive PRO funding directly on a local govt.'s behalf. Survey link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/62TWKSM	
DEQ published a document stating that Oregon has 87 cities over 4,000 population, 81 of which already provide on route recycling collection. Most of those that don't are in eastern Oregon. How will those cities putting new curbside recyling in place meet the July 2025 implementation date, when the PRO funding doesn't begin until July 2025?	Per OAR 340-090-0630(4)(f), phasing-in of the new collection after July 1, 2025, is allowable upon request to the department if the ability to collect the materials is contingent upon the PRO funding.	

Will haulers be able to continue to use carts w/out recycled content and just purchase new carts with content moving forward or will they have to transition to all new carts with recycled content?	Yes! The requirement is that beginning January 1, 2026, new collection containers that are purchased (on or after that date) must contain 10% verified post-consumer recycled content.	
There was still a lot of ambiguity about what "expansion" vs. "new" needs would involve at the time of the first needs assessment. Is it okay that many of us may have pretty significantly changed "needs" now that the picture is more clear? Will changes be up for discussion?	Yes, the PRO will reach out to confirm your current needs.	
How does the RMA apply to or impact Tribal governments? What are the requirements and/or funding available for system improvements?	1) Depots operated by tribal nations are considered existing depots under the definition at OAR 340-090-0640(1), and as such, the PRO must negotiate with these depots to arrange for their collection of PRO materials where possible. 2) Tribal nations are eligible for funding through the Waste Prevention and Reuse fee per ORS 459A.941.	
As a representative of a local government, we have questions about the "Local Government Requirements" as listed on your local government brochure. Our jurisdiction has franchises with privately owned service providers, so we would appreciate clarification on how our local government is required to "ensure that commingled materials are directed to approved processors, ensure at a minimum that materials identified in the statewide collection lists are collected at disposal sites, implement new contamination reduction activities from the DEQ program elements list, ensure newly purchased roll-carts etc. have 10% post-consumer recycled content, ETC. How will local governments ensure that these elements are being satisfied with private businesses when local government staff are probably not educated in these things, and what liability is the local government subject to if one or more of these elements are not satisfied?	The Opportunity To Recycle requirements are (and always have been) on the local governments. The RMA does not change that obligation. As a local government that already has a franchise agreement with a service provider, you can update that franchise agreement to include the new RMA requirements. Many cities include the expectations of their service providers in their franchise agreements and/or administrative rules to ensure the requirements are met. Others form co-ops with other cities and the county or hire another contractor to assist. DEQ is the agency that enforces the RMA. DEQ plans to work closely with communities and service providers to address concerns and issues and find a resolution before moving to formal enforcement.	
Can you explain the requirements, if any for towns with population under 4,000?	For depots only that are designated to meet the Opportunity to Recycle requirements OAR 340-090-0030(1) Begins July 2025	

Permitted disposal sites that provide a place for collecting source-separated recyclable materials at the disposal site or a more convenient location will be required to collect materials identified on the recycling acceptance list in 340-090-0630(4)(a), found here. Ensure that commingled materials are directed to approved processors OAR 340-090-0030(2) | Begins July 2025 Commingled recyclables collected under the Opportunity to Recycle Act will be prohibited from being delivered to commingled processing facilities unless such facilities have a valid Commingled Recycling Processor Facility permit or certification from DEQ. Material may NOT be collected as part of the commingled recycling program unless the material is identified for collection on the Uniform Statewide Collection List or USCL. OAR 340-090-0030(5) | Begins July 2025 Prohibits the commingling of any material not on the USCL. Cities below the population of 4,000 are not required to collect every material on the list; however, all local governments are prohibited from putting in the commingled recycling cart any material that is not on the USCL identified in OAR 340-090-0630(4)(e)e. Use recycled plastic in recycling and waste containers OAR 340-090-0030(4) | Begins January 1, 2026 Ensure new recycling and waste containers purchased by the local government or service providers contain at least 10 percent verified post-consumer recycled content. DEQ is the agency that enforces the RMA. DEQ plans to What could happen if local governments were work with communities to address concerns and issues and unable to meet these requirements? Are there find a resolution before moving to formal enforcement. consequences from DEQ? Some changes may be necessary as the law moves forward for things such as multifamily recycling. DEQ encourages What are the required ordinance changes? local governments to review local ordinances to ensure compliance.

On the survey, who are you looking for as the "additional contacts with the prospective PRO," meaning who we franchise with?	Additional contacts are not required but could include service providers, other local government staff, or a depot your community contracts with.		
Better understanding of roles and responsibilities of local governments.	The roles and responsibilities of local governments depend on the community's population and what optional elements they choose to take on. The local government webinar, found on the RMA local government website under resources, covers some of this. Your DEQ Regional Specialist is a great resource for learning more.		
General info about the new rules and how they will improve recycling and its economics.	The Recycling Modernization Act is a shared responsibility model, meaning producers of covered products will take on responsibility and costs for some parts of the system. The RMA will change Oregon's recycling system, including one statewide recycling list, more collection depots, culturally responsive educational materials, living wages and supportive benefits for recycling facility workers, contamination standards, responsible end markets, and so much more. Local recycling system economics will be improved (that is, recycling should become more affordable and costs less variable) due to several funding obligations on producers (including producer compensation of commingled processing costs). Visit RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov to learn more.		
How it will affect Local Governments and Transfer Station operations	Transfer stations with depots under the Opportunity to Recycle Act must accept the materials on the Local Government Recycling Acceptance List and additionally may choose to contract with the PRO to collect materials on the PRO Recycling Acceptance List. Compensation of certain system costs by the PRO may impact transfer station economics. Local governments will have different requirements depending on their population. DEQ and the PRO covered many of the local government requirements during a webinar on 3/21, found on the RMA local government website under resources.		

How will cities without dedicated solid waste staff navigate all of the new requirements and reimbursement opportunities?	Some cities work with their service providers to help with this. Others form co-ops with other cities and the county to have a larger economy of scale. Washington Co. does this if you have more questions about its mechanics.		
How will local governments be involved?	Local Governments have been heavily involved from the start of the Act, including on the Recycling Steering Committee, the Recycling Council, and both Rulemaking Advisory Committees.		
How will the PROs interface with transfer stations?	This depends on whether the transfer station is a PRO depot location or a reload facility.		
Impacts to cities that use a contracted vendor for garbage and recycling services	A city can designate a service provider to receive funding directly from the PRO or accept the money and distribute it. Otherwise, there will be few changes in how local governments work with their garbage and recycling providers.		
Needs Assessment, getting communities ready to implement RMA.	The first needs assessment was completed in July 2023. The PRO is working with partners on system optimizations such as PRO depots, funding, etc.		
Want to learn more about how PROs will work with direct to processing recycling. for example, cardboard from store to processor	Generally speaking, such recycling is not subject to the RMA. Rule concepts are currently being worked on as part of the second rulemaking. Stay up to date at the RAC 2 website.		
I am looking for general information about the RMA and associated timelines, and I want to stay up to date on the latest impacts and timelines.	Visit RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov to learn more about the law. You'll find videos, fact sheets and more information on this website. Sign up for the RMA GovDelivery newsletter here.		
What are local governments responsible for implementing?	The local government webinar, found on the <u>RMA local</u> government website under resources, covers some of this. Your DEQ Regional Specialist is a great resource for learning more.		

What can local governments do to prepare in advance for meetings with the PRO, and what is the timeline for those negotiations?	Answer from CAA - CAA is developing a suite of tools that local governments and their service providers can use to begin to gather and organize information for the initial engagement to identify specific funding needs. These tools will help them capture details of their current system and infrastructure, begin to estimate the impact the RMA might have on their system, and project some of the investments that might be necessary to expand the system. CAA hopes these resources will prepare stakeholders across Oregon for a productive engagement period with the CAA team over the coming months. Our goal is to have these resources available to Oregon stakeholders by mid-April (2024).
What changes will it bring to how local governments recycle?	Depending on what your community currently recycles, there might be changes in the list of acceptable materials, as well as opportunities to expand recycling opportunities. DEQ's regional specialists are working on communicating how different local governments will be affected. Find more information under the resources dropdown on the RMA Information for Local Government web page.
If there are multiple PROs in Oregon, will we get to choose one or be assigned one based on location?	Currently, DEQ has only one letter of intent to submit a program plan on file with the department, and as such, we anticipate only one PRO operating in the state at the start date. However, our rules allow multiple PROs, and another PRO could enter the system in the next program plan period starting in 2028 or earlier with pre-approval of DEQ to submit a draft program plan. If DEQ approves multiple PROs, producers will choose which PRO to join. As for the implementation of PRO obligations, the PROs will coordinate with one another, and the general approach is to split up tasks by obligation rather than by region, with a coordinating body potentially serving as a single point of contact for multiple topics.
CAA - in most parts of the state (at least geographically), the service providers will be the entities that will be doing the work on all this reporting on current system and determining needs going forward. Will LG's be able to just give CAA permission to engage directly with the haulers/transfer station/reload/depot operators?	Answer from CAA - CAA can engage with local government service providers but will need a formal designation from local governments to do that. CAA will work with the designee that any local government elects to fulfill that community's obligations under the RMA. That could be the county in some cases, or a service provider. If service providers know they will be leading in certain areas of RMA implementation, they should work with their local

	government to make sure the proper authorizations are made.	
	Additional information from DEQ – The formal process for issuing such a designation is currently under development and should be made available by soon.	
When can we expect a list of approved sorting centers, and will they be required to be in Oregon?	 Under the RMA, there are two types of proposed sorting facilities. Limited sort facilities that glean some materials but do not sort all materials. Commingled Recycling Processing Facilities are the facilities that sort commingled recycling. Sorting facilities in Oregon will need a permit, while facilities outside the state will need a certification. Check with your service provider about where they deliver materials and your local sorting facility about the status of their LSF or CRPF permits. 	
What role does a City (under 5, 000) play in implementation?	The presentation from the local government webinar outlines some of the roles and responsibilities of cities of different sizes. The recording and the presentation are on the Recycling Modernization Act Information for Local Governments website under the "Resources" dropdown.	
When can we see the PRO plan(s)?	The PRO plan is posted at RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov.	
Who will be accountable for enforcing that PRO(s) participate in the RMA?	The PRO(s)will submit a plan outlining their requirements and how they plan to meet them. PROs have a financial incentive to ensure producers of covered products are members of a PRO. DEQ would be the one to take enforcement action if a PRO was not meeting the requirements outlined in the law.	

Contact

Learn more at RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov. or email RethinkRecycling@deq.oregon.gov.

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