

Materials Management Program

Recycling Modernization Act: Material Lists Technical Workgroup

Meeting Summary: Meeting #6

Tuesday Sept. 20, 2022
Zoom

List of Technical Workgroup Members in attendance

- Brian May
- Dan Weston
- Dave Claugus
- Dave Larmouth
- David McCall
- Jerry Powell
- Kate Eagles
- Kim Holmes
- Laura Leebrick
- Liz Bedard
- Rosalynn Greene
- Wayne Jackson

DEQ project staff (participating)

- David Allaway
- Jessica Branom-Zwick (Cascadia Consulting Group, under contract to DEQ)
- Chris Bell, Bell & Associates (subcontractor to Cascadia)
- Tim Buwalda, Circular Matters (subcontractor to Cascadia)
- Justin Gast
- Cheryl Grabham



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Time	Topic
8:30 a.m.	Welcome, review agenda, meeting logistics Justin Gast opened the meeting by welcoming all workgroup members, special MRF guests and the public. David Allaway thanked the workgroup members and reflected on all the work the group has done and how it has helped DEQ prepare for rulemaking.
8:40 a.m.	Aerosol containers David Allaway provided a brief summary of DEQ's current understanding of aerosol cans: there are significant environmental benefits to recycling steel and aluminum; there are concerns regarding several propellants and the potential that not all cans will be empty; the Household and Commercial Product Association (HCPA) is currently conducting a study of the content of cans pulled from several MRFs, and this might help inform future choices by DEQ regarding how to best handle aerosols. DEQ's current thinking is that empty aerosols might be designated for collection at PRO depots, with non-empty aerosols being directed to household hazardous waste collections. Particular

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	attention would also be given toward communication meant to inform the public around safe handling of this material. Discussions here were led by Laura Leebrick, David McCall and Dan Weston around handling and draining of non-empty aerosols, how to educate the public around proper sorting and disposal of aerosols, and how collection of aerosols at depots could work.
9:00 a.m.	<p>PET thermoforms</p> <p>Justin Gast led a presentation on DEQ's current understanding and thinking regarding PET thermoforms. The understanding is that there is a lack of domestic reclaimers for bales with high thermoform content, the sortation of thermoforms can be problematic for some MRFs, and the adhesives and labels used with such products is negatively impacting reclamation efforts. These concern have helped inform DEQ's current thinking to exclude packaging formats with high thermoform content from the uniform statewide collection list (e.g., exclude clear plastic clamshells, which are mostly PET thermforms, but not plastic tubs, where thermoforms contribute a smaller percentage), while acknowledging that there are future conversations to be had around this material and on-ramps to add this material if appropriate. Discussion with workgroup members were around other reclaimers or end markets for PET thermoforms, the issues with how to identify a thermoform from other kinds of molded PET plastic containers, and labels.</p>
9:30 a.m.	<p>Discussion with expanded MRF panel</p> <p>Justin began by introducing the special MRF guests: Jeff Murray (EFI), Vinod Singh (Far West Recycling), and William Posegate (Garten Services). They joined workgroup members Dave Claugus (Pioneer) and Wayne Jackson (WestRock) for facilitated discussions on three materials: large plastic packaging (e.g., buckets, pails), nursery packaging, and scrap metal (not cans).</p> <p>Justin introduced each material by summarizing DEQ's understanding of the materials and how they are or are not successfully recycled within Oregon MRFs. David then asked the MRF operators a series of questions around how the material specifically flows through their MRF, any challenges that come with sortation or optical sortation, if and how they accept, bale and market these materials, and how including these materials in statewide collections would impact operations. The different MRF operators took turns answering the questions and engaged in light discussion around each material.</p>
10:30 a.m.	Break
10:40 a.m.	<p>Modeling of economic and environmental impacts at the level of whole scenarios – Part One</p> <p>Jessica Branom-Zwick from Cascadia Consulting Group was introduced by David Allaway. She introduced her team members, Chris Bell and Tim Buwalda, then gave a review of how to access and review draft models, what certain elements of the models mean, and how to provide feedback. Jessica and David asked workgroup members to review models and provide feedback by September 30th. The group then pivoted to more detailed discussions of specific model elements.</p> <p>David introduced the modeling of PRO depots and how they are included in different scenarios. He shared the four types of depots DEQ envisions might arise (expanded existing multi-material depots, return-to-retail, single-material drop-box, and new multi-material depots), and the assumptions (such as convenience standards, low/medium/high depot densities, and other input provided by partners around the state) used for estimating the number of depots, by type, located in each different geographic grouping.</p>

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	<p>He then shared assumptions for certain scenarios and how different lengths of material acceptance lists at depots might impact the number and type of depot per geographical grouping. Kim Holmes asked a question about return-to-retail programs in Canada, and whether DEQ had spoken with any retailers.</p> <p>Next Jessica went into their work on how Cascadia is estimating depot land and building costs as well as assumed labor and other operational costs. The land and building calculations are based off of lease rates for retail and industrial spaces, estimated square foot requirements for the different kinds of depots, and estimates of land costs. Rosalynn Greene raised a concern over using a statewide average for land costs when prices for land in the Portland-Metro area are so high compared to the rest of the state. David McCall asked about the modeling of site infrastructure needs.</p> <p>Covered next were the operating and labor costs. For labor, Cascadia used average labor costs per hour and applied that to the potential staffing needs for each type of depot. To help illustrate where depot operators might be compensated by PROs, Cascadia shared RecycleBC's compensation rates and discussed how those are used in their model. Several workgroup members suggested that Cascadia's assumed labor compensation rates were low. It was also suggested that Cascadia take a closer look at Tillamook County's experience with densification of expanded polystyrene.</p>
11:50 a.m.	Lunch
12:20 p.m.	<p>Modeling of economic and environmental impacts at the level of whole scenarios – Part Two</p> <p>Jessica then covered the new material capture rates (for both on-route and depot collection) that her team estimated for different scenarios. She shared with the group how their assumptions are derived from existing programs and provided the reasoning behind each number used in the equations for the new capture rates for different materials. Throughout all the different topics Jessica constantly asked the workgroup if the work done seemed reasonable and if the group members had any other information to add. The reaction from workgroup members included an overall trust in Cascadia's process in calculating numbers, some concerns around the data points used, and questions on the plastic recycling goals set in the act.</p> <p>Jessica covered the approach Cascadia took to estimating contamination in collected recyclables. She talked on the impacts that different kinds of efforts for contamination reduction - feedback only, ongoing refusal, campaign refusal, driver-based refusal, and refusal unspecified - have had on contamination. These were used to help determine contamination rate factors amongst different sectors and materials. Jessica then presented on specific scenarios and requested feedback. David McCall and Dave Claugus noted that increased materials on acceptance lists can result in higher recovery, but can also increase confusion and the resulting contamination by other materials.</p> <p>Next up was a discussion regarding the modeling of MRF operations and upgrades, which involves modeling a theoretical future using existing and current technologies, without predicting the full details of how each and every MRF might adapt. Jessica and Tim Buwalda shared assumptions involving how materials might move through the system of MRFs serving Oregon. Next covered were potential equipment costs and an</p>

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	<p>explanation of factors included in processing cost portion the model. The MRF operators in the group were encouraged to review this and provide feedback and updated information. Dave Claugus asked about the modeling assumptions behind a “container recovery facility”. Tim Buwalda replied that the model assumes that somewhere in the system will be a new line dedicated to conducting advanced sortation of containers; this line might act as a secondary processor for several other MRFs. The model does not specify the location of the facility but does provide for land, building, and equipment.</p> <p>The discussion then turned to environmental impacts and social costs. David shared preliminary results for two materials, expanded polystyrene and polycoated/aseptic cartons, in part to illustrate how results might be shared and interpreted in the future. He reiterated that economic considerations are just one of many criteria the Act requires DEQ to evaluate.</p>
<p>2:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Public input Thomas Egleston, Washington County shared that his community is home to many people who are passionate about recycling, and may feel betrayed if modernization results in fewer recycling opportunities (if the County is forced to remove materials from its acceptance list). The County is already criticized for not offering as robust of a collection list as Seattle. His community won’t appreciate this change and losing public trust would be detrimental.</p> <p>With no other public comments at the time, David invited the workgroup to offer feedback regarding Tom’s concern. Laura Leebrick sympathized with Tom and agreed that communicating changes can be very hard, but that at least under the uniform statewide collection list everyone will be in it together; she hopes collaboration can happen with messaging. David offered clarification on the ways that communities could still collect materials not on the uniform list. Dan Weston presented a different perspective that public confidence is already in decline, and there are benefits to being able to confidently tell the public that materials on the acceptance list actually are being recycled. He noted that he doesn’t want people to lose confidence in the system, but some of their existing confidence might be misplaced.</p> <p>From this conversation two more public comments were made. Maya Buelow of Lane County expressed a hope that through eco-modulation, some of these problematic materials could be phased out or redesigned. Nicole Janssen of Denton Plastics suggested a roundtable discussion with people working in the field in order to learn from their experience.</p>
<p>2:15 p.m.</p>	<p>Next steps, thank yous and final questions/feedback David wrapped up the meeting by requesting that workgroup members review the models and scenarios and provide their feedback or any new and relevant information by September 30th. He noted that the next two rulemaking advisory committee meetings (Nov. 9 and Jan. 11) will be addressing materials acceptance lists, and he shared with the group the various ways to provide public comment during those meetings and afterwards. With one more sincere thank you from David to the workgroup members and their hard work and dedication, he introduced Cheryl Grabham, DEQ’s manager for producer responsibility programs, for a few more final thoughts.</p>

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	<p>Cheryl echoed the praise and gratitude for the workgroup members and her DEQ team members for all their hard work contributing to helping DEQ along in this process.</p> <p>David then opened the last few minutes of the meeting to workgroup members for any final comments or parting thoughts. Rosalynn Greene, Liz Bedard, Kate Eagles, Dan Weston, Kim Holmes, and Laura Leebrick all shared their gratitude for being involved, and appreciation for transparency and the approach DEQ took. Justin at the end threw in one more shout out to workgroup members, industry reps, and all others involved in this work.</p>
2:30 p.m.	Adjourn

List of other attendees

Abby Boudouris
Alasdair Carmichael
Alex Bertolucci
Alicia Givens
Andrea Fogue
Angie Marzano
Ariane Sperry
Carole Branom
Carolina Paez
Cat Rhoades
Cathy Brown
Charles Shull
Charles Zwick
Christa McDermott
Clarence Rasquinha
Colette Bazirgan
David White
Denise Barnes
Devon Morales
Elena Bertocci

Gary Panknin
Greg Ryan
Gretchen Sandau
Heather Church
Heather Kazmark
Heather Robinson
Heather Trim
Jeff Murray
Jennifer Dolin
Jennifer Olson
Jessica Nadeau
Jill Hrycyk
John Bush
John Salvador
Jordan Fengel
Katie Romano
KJ Lewis
Kristan Mitchell
Laurie Gordon
Leah Navarro

Matt Markee
Maya Buelow
Nicole Janssen
Paul Rainey
Peter Bierbaum
Peter Canepa
Peter Spindelow
Richard Park
Ryan Pessah
Sabrina Gogol
Samantha Siegner
Scott Klag
Shannon Crawford
Susan Robinson
Thomas Cuomo
Thomas Egleston
Vinod Singh
William Posegate

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