



EPA's Circular Economy Strategy Series and Recycling Programs

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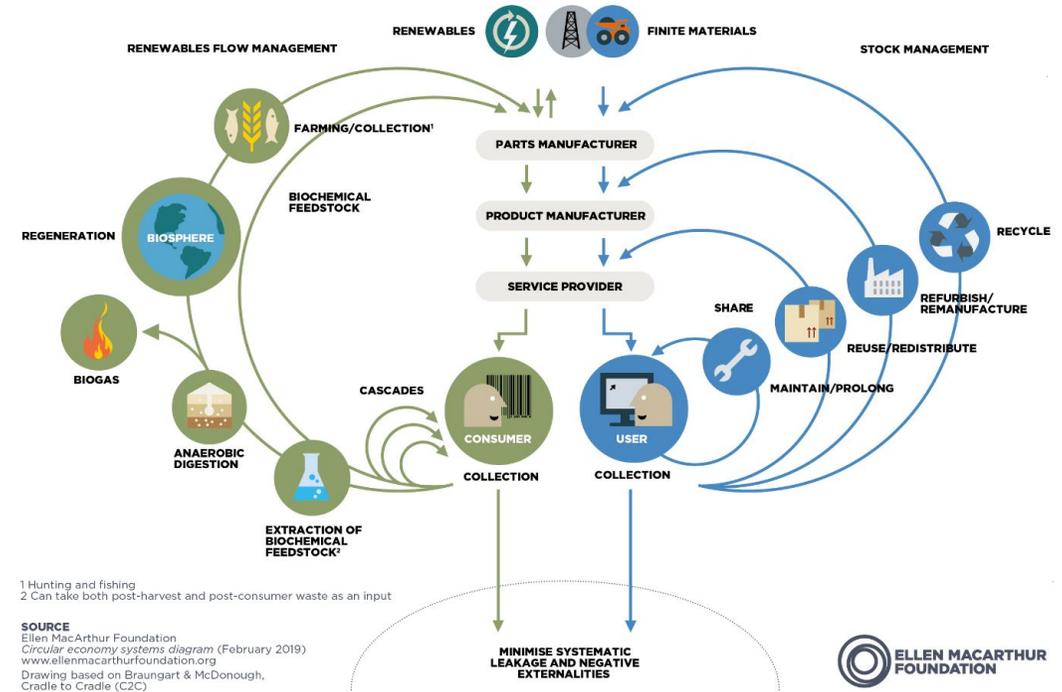
Overview

- **Context for Materials Management Challenges and Opportunities**
- **Preview of EPA's Circular Economy Strategy Series**
- **Highlights from Bipartisan Infrastructure Law programs related to recycling**
- **EPA's Next Steps**



Benefits of a Circular Economy Approach

- Materials, products, and services stay in circulation for as long as possible.
- It is an important part of slowing climate change.
- Can provide critical minerals that may have limited supply.
- Has the potential to protect the environment, improve economics, and elevate social justice.



Food Production and Waste

- One-third of all food in the United States goes uneaten
- More than 85% of the GHG emissions associated with food waste occur during production, processing, and distribution
- Food comprises over 24% of municipal solid waste in landfills
- Uncaptured methane from landfilled food contributes to climate change



Global Plastics Consumption & Waste

By 2060:

- Plastics *use* is projected to almost triple
- Plastic *waste* is projected to almost triple
 - Half will likely be landfilled
 - Less than a fifth recycled
- Plastic *leakage* is projected to double
 - Tripling the plastic build-up in aquatic environments



Batteries Consumption and Waste

- U.S. used ~2.4M tons of batteries in 2020
- Demand for batteries will triple by 2030 and increase six-fold by 2040
 - Due to ~23% yearly increase in demand for lithium-ion batteries, mostly to power electric vehicles
- CE principles provide accessible materials for the next-gen batteries



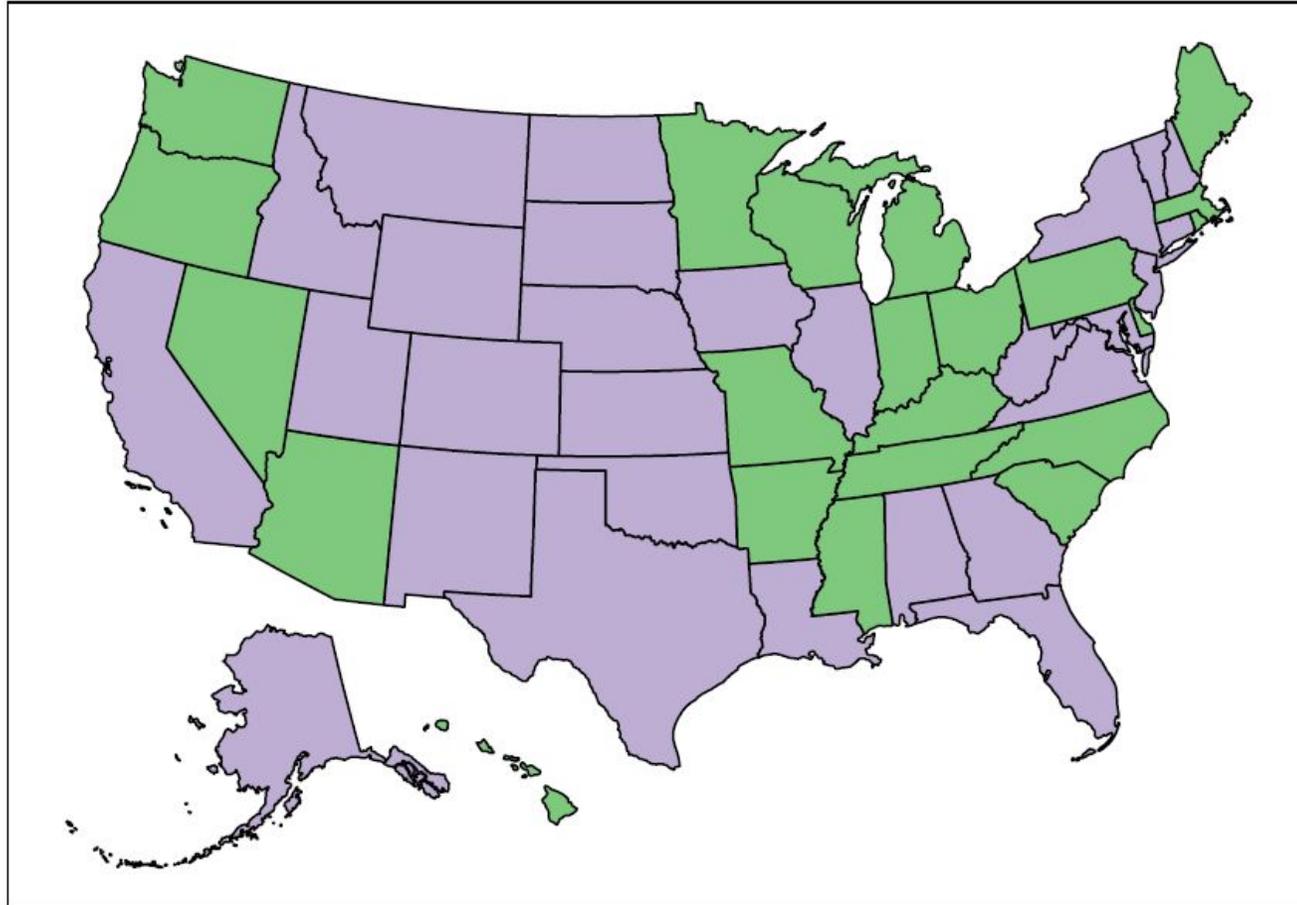
Textile Production and Waste

- In the U.S., 85% of textiles thrown away are landfilled or burned -- including unused textiles and unsold clothes
- Industry overproduction/waste is 30% to 40% each season
- Fashion is the world's second worst offender in terms of water pollution
- It is also responsible for roughly 10% of all carbon emissions



States That Collect Recycling Data

Does your state collect data on the total amount of residential materials collected through curbside programs annually?



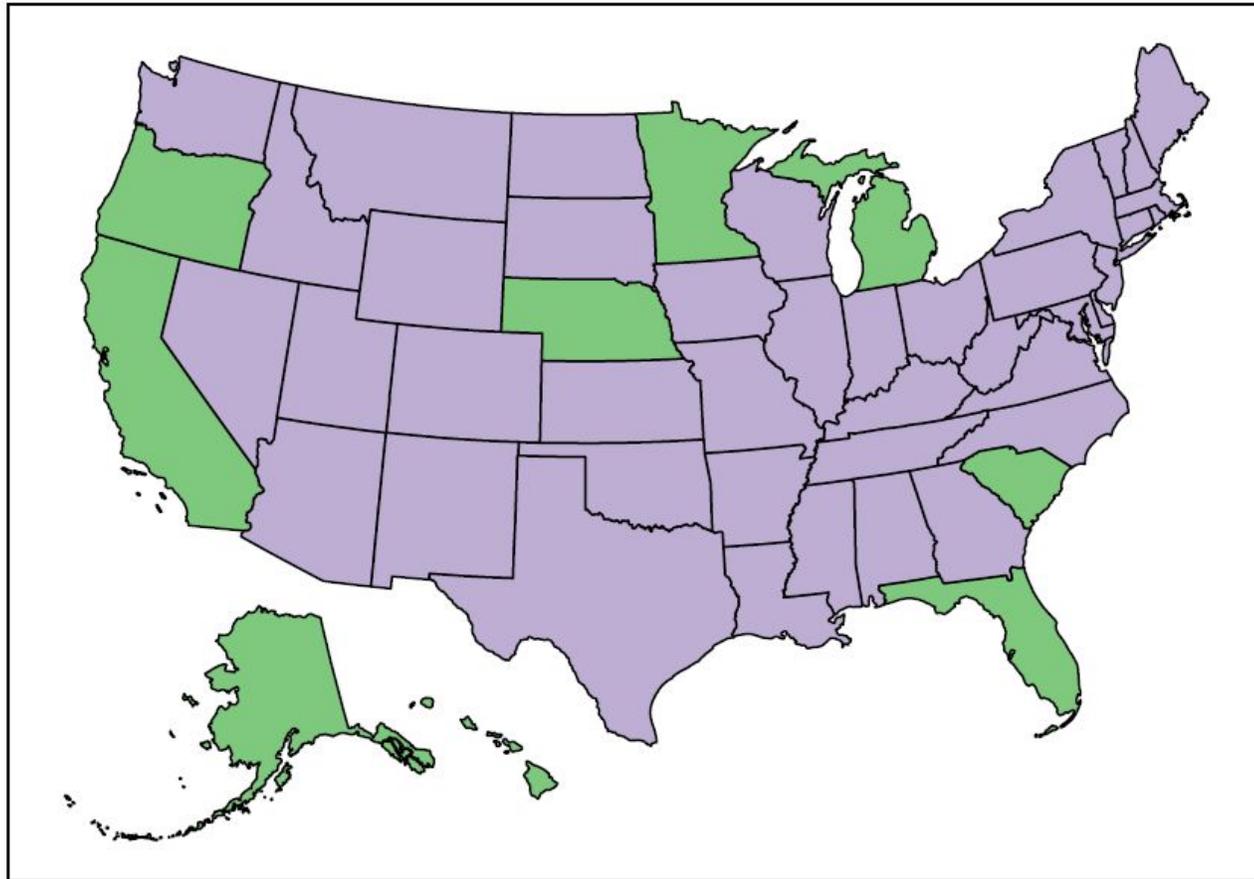
- Congress directed EPA to collect recycling information from States and Territories in 2022
- Findings:
 - 54% of state respondents do not track the total amounts of materials collected in residential curbside recycling programs
 - States and Territories need more resources to collect and improve recycling data

Yes No



State Data Collection on Plastics Recycling

Does your state collect data on the rates at which single use plastics are recycled?



Yes No

- States and Territories struggle to properly track the amount of single use plastics that are recycled
- Only 20% of respondents track recycling of single use plastics
 - These 10 states typically only collect data on plastics #1 and #2



Recent Congressional and Policy Drivers Shaping EPA's Materials Management Work

- FY20 Appropriations directed EPA to produce a national recycling strategy
- Government Accountability Office report asked EPA to strengthen recycling and recommend future policies
- FY21 Appropriations asked for data on recycling and single-use plastics
- 25+ pieces of proposed legislation related to recycling





- Became law in December 2020
- Gives EPA new authority to fund improvements to solid waste management programs and infrastructure
- Directs EPA to Develop (for example):
 - Strategy on Post-Consumer Materials Management and Water Management
 - Report on Eliminating Barriers to Recycling
 - Report on Ways to Spur Markets for Recycled Plastic
 - Report on Opportunities for Innovative Uses of Plastic Waste
 - Study on How to Create Less Plastic Waste



National Recycling Strategy Released on America Recycles Day

November 15, 2021

National Recycling Strategy

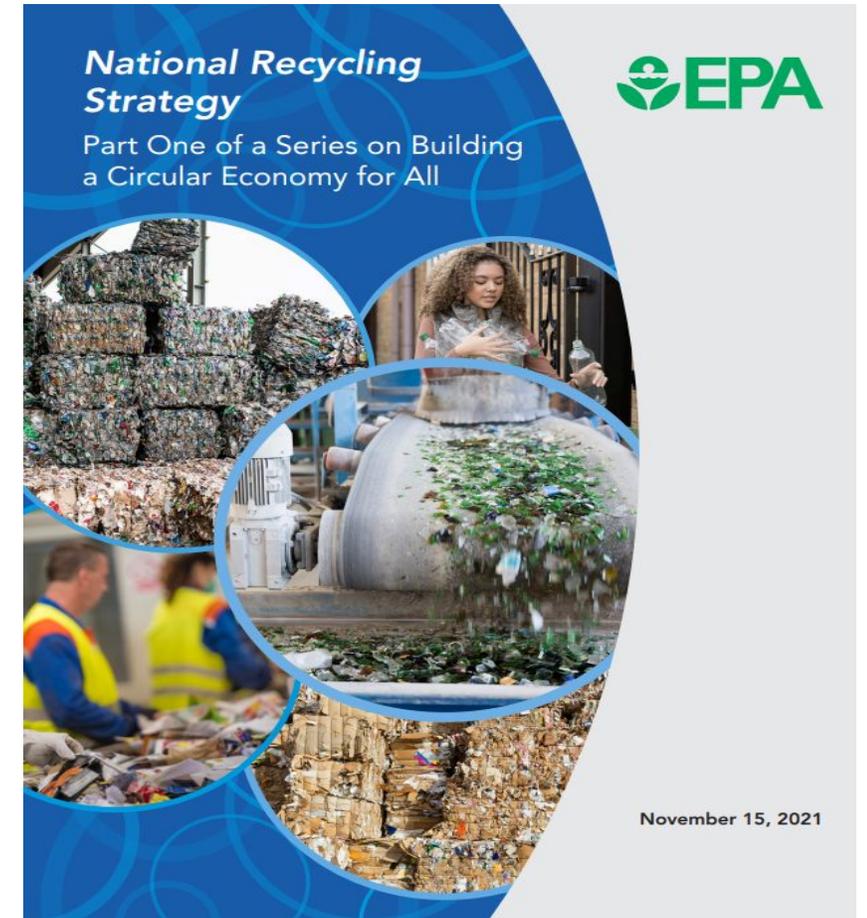
Part One of a Series on Building a Circular Economy for All



November 15, 2021

Strategies Series on Building a Circular Economy for All

- Part 1: National Recycling Strategy
- Part 2: Food Loss & Waste and Organics
- Part 3: Plastics
- Part 4: Critical Minerals and Electronics
- Part 5: Built Environment
- Part 6: Textiles



Circular Economy Strategy Series

 **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)**

 Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grants

 Recycling Education and Outreach Grants

 Battery Collection Best Practices and Labeling Guidelines



Objectives:

- A. Improve Markets for Recycling Commodities
- B. Increase Collection and Improve Materials Management Infrastructure
- C. Reduce Contamination in the Recycled Materials Stream
- D. Enhance Policies to Support Recycling
- E. Standardize Measurement and Increase Data Collection

EPA is establishing a 10-year vision that embraces circularity, sustainable materials management, addresses climate change, and environmental justice.





Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant Program

What is the Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant Program?

Total Funding: \$275M

- \$55 million/year from FY22-FY26
- Available until expended

Goals:

- Support improvements to recycling programs, post-consumer materials management, and waste management infrastructure
- Justice40 covered program

Eligible Entities:

- U.S. States and political subdivisions of states
- Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands
- District of Columbia
- Federally recognized tribal governments
- Former tribal reservations in Oklahoma (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior)
- Alaskan Native Villages as defined in Public Law 92-203
- Intertribal Consortia consistent with the requirements in 40 CFR 35.504(a)



What infrastructure activities are eligible for funding?

- The Save our Seas 2.0 Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law broadly define projects that are eligible for recycling infrastructure funding.
- The EPA Administrator may provide grants to:
 - Implement the strategy developed under section 301(a)
 - Support improvements to local post-consumer materials management, including municipal recycling programs; and
 - Assist local waste management authorities in making improvements to local waste management systems.





Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program and Model Recycling Program Toolkit

What is the Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program?



Total Funding: \$75M

- \$15 million/year from FY22-FY26
- Available until expended

Goals:

- Support education and outreach on consumer recycling and waste prevention
- Inform public on what is accepted in community recycling program
- Increase collection rates and decrease contamination in recycling
- Justice40 covered program (in addition to 20% minimum legislative set-aside for low-income, rural, or communities identified as Native American)

Eligible entities:

- U.S. States, including the District of Columbia
- Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands
- Local governments
- Federally recognized tribal governments
- Native Hawaiian organizations, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, Office of Hawaiian Affairs
- Non-profit organizations
- Public-private partnerships



What outreach and education activities are eligible for funding?

- Public service announcements
- Door-to-Door education and outreach campaigns
- Social media and digital outreach
- Advertising campaigns
- Toolkits for municipal and/or commercial recycling programs
- Labeling/Signs
- Information on the benefits of recycling
- Business recycling outreach
- What happens after the recycling bin
- Information on the importance of quality in the recycling stream
- Other activities determined appropriate to carry out



What is in the Model Recycling Program Toolkit?

- A standardized set of terms and examples to describe materials that are accepted by a residential recycling program
- Information that can be widely applied across residential recycling programs
- Best practices for the collection and processing of recycled materials
- A community self-assessment guide to identify gaps in existing recycling program
- Training modules that enable States and nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance to units of local government
- Access to consumer educational materials that states, tribes, and units of local government can adapt and use in recycling programs
- A guide to measure the effectiveness of a grant received under the Education and Outreach grant program



EPA's Next Steps

Recycling Grants:

- Issue Notices for Funding Opportunities in Fall 2022

Circular Economy Strategy Series:

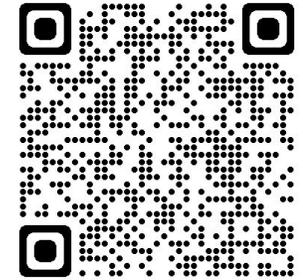
- Release Draft Food Loss & Waste and Organics Strategy for Public Comment in Fall 2022
- Release Draft Plastics Strategy for Public Comment in Fall 2022
- Continue to Develop Draft Electronics and Critical Minerals Strategy



Resources

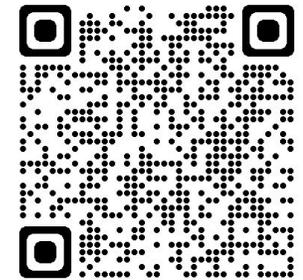
- Sign up to *Stay Connected* to learn more about grants, future strategies and reports:

<https://www.epa.gov/recyclingstrategy/forms/stay-connected>



- Prepare for grant applicants now:

<https://www.epa.gov/rcra/prepare-grant-application>



- Questions? Email

- RecyclingEd@epa.gov (Recycling Education and Outreach)
- SWIFR@epa.gov (Solid Waste Infrastructure and Recycling)
- Batteries@epa.gov (Batteries)



THANK YOU!

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