



OREGON ENVIROTHON

CURRENT ISSUE ORAL PRESENTATION 2022

Waste to Resources: Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act

Overview of New Act

Recycling has the potential to conserve natural resources and reduce pollution. The recently passed Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act is a significant overhaul of state policy that will modernize Oregon's recycling system. This system-wide update will make recycling more equitable and easier for the public to use, expand access to recycling services, upgrade the facilities that sort recyclables, and create environmental benefits while reducing social and environmental harms such as plastic pollution. Producers of packaging, paper products and food service ware will have new responsibilities and pay for many of the necessary improvements and to help ensure recycling is successful in Oregon. Cities and counties will continue to determine who provides their recycling services and ensure that education and waste prevention and reuse programs are also provided.

The new law takes effect on Jan. 1, 2022 and recycling program changes will begin by July 2025. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will provide oversight and enforcement for the program. The Act can be broken down into three main parts:

1. The creation of a statewide list of what items should go in the recycling bin. The new list will be promoted through education and outreach across the state.
2. Producers will finance improvements to the recycling and be responsible to ensure their products are disposed of responsibly.
3. Ongoing studies and assessments to help ensure the recycling system is meeting the goals and needs of Oregonians. The studies will be focused on these areas:
 - a. Increasing access to recycling services for all Oregonians, especially those living in multifamily housing and rural parts of the state.
 - b. Improving the safety and convenience of recycling areas and other conditions in multifamily housing.
 - c. Assess the amount of litter and marine debris across the state and how producers might fund programs to prevent this waste from entering waterways.

Find more the details about the Act on the DEQ website: [RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov](https://www.deq.state.or.us/recycling/RecyclingAct.Oregon.gov)

Presentation

In 2022, DEQ will begin assessing recycling needs for communities across the state. Your team has been hired to describe the current recycling program in your community and make recommendations to local officials such as the county commission, city council or other relevant government officials about the needs for the local recycling program. Your local officials will then be ready, when asked, to present these needs to DEQ.

These needs could include, but are not limited to, being part of the studies:

- A. a recycling service needs assessment – How might your community benefit from increasing access and services?
- B. a multifamily needs assessment – What improvements would support better recycling in multifamily housing?
- C. a litter and marine debris study – What litter reduction or prevention strategies might benefit your community?

After identifying your community's needs, your team will to create a framework with suggestions for your local government to make sure the Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act is a success.

This presentation should accomplish the following:

- Define what you are considering your community. Is it your city, town, neighborhood or other?
- Provide an overview of the current recycling system in your community.
- Address the gaps or needs of the current program.
- Address the community's local need for the recycling program and how your local government could help make that need known to DEQ.
- Address how the Recycling Modernization Act would make a difference or fill some of your community's needs.
- Create a framework for local government to work with stakeholders to ensure the Recycling Modernization Act is a success in your community.

Consider the following while developing your presentation:

- Who are the stakeholders in your community? What is the perspective of each stakeholder? You are encouraged to contact stakeholders to understand the complexities and details related to your town's recycling system.
- The proposed framework for local government should be feasible, practical and cost-effective.
- Your team should be aware of the policies and timeline of the Recycling Modernization Act, but for the presentation, focus more on the local needs of your community and how your local government would communicate those needs to DEQ and the community.



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Oral presentation resources:

Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act, DEQ:

<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/recycling/Pages/Modernizing-Oregons-Recycling-System.aspx>

Recycling Modernization Act Overview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Z2JIPrwtm8>

Timeline of the Recycling Modernization Act:

<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/recycling/Documents/recRMAImpTimeline.pdf>

City and Counties responsibility and benefits:

<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/recycling/Documents/recSumGovResp.pdf>

Examples of Metro's Regional Waste Plan and other research:

https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2018/11/20/RWP_Engagement_Report_20181120.pdf

Metro's multifamily recycling research: <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/multifamily-recycling-research>

The stakeholder interest form: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/recycling/Pages/Stakeholder-Interest-Form.aspx>

Find your county's webpage and find the Recycling tab:

Examples:

Deschutes county- <https://www.deschutes.org/solidwaste/page/recycling>

Marion County- <https://www.co.marion.or.us/PW/ES/disposal/Pages/default.aspx>

Find your community's provider:

Examples:

Waste Management: <https://www.wmnorthwest.com/>

Republic Services: <https://www.republicservices.com/>