



**SPU Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)**

May 1, 2019 Meeting Notes  
 Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue  
 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

*Chair: Dirk Wassink*  
*Vice-Chair: Alessandra Pistoia*

Committee Members	Present?	SPU Staff	Role
Quinn Apuzzo	P	Natasha Walker	CAC Program Coordinator
Holly Griffith	Y	Sego Jackson	Solid Waste LOB Policy Liaison
Emily Newcomer	N	Dave Hare	Planning Strategic Advisor, Solid Waste Planning and Program Management
James Subocz	N	Katie Lynd	Strategic Communications Advisor for Solid Waste LOB
Alan Garvey	N		
Amelia Fujikawa	Y		
Adam Maurer	Y		
Rachtha Dahn	Y	<b>Guests</b>	
Alessandra Pistoia	Y	Joel Dashnaw	Guest
Dirk Wassink	Y		
Nico Onoda-McGuire	Y		
Kelsie Blanthorn	N		

**1. Regular Business**

- SWAC Chair, Dirk Wassink called the meeting to order at 5:33 PM
- Members and guests introduced themselves.
- Natasha indicated emergency exits and exit procedures.
- Meeting notes from March and April were approved.
- Solid Waste LOB Updates:
  - ESHB 1569 – On Governor’s Desk (Compostable Products Labeling)
  - E2SHB 1114 – On Governor’s Desk (Food Waste Reduction)
  - E2SSB 5397 – On Governor’s Desk (Plastic Packaging Study)
  - E2SHB – On Governor’s Desk (Contamination Reduction Plans and Recycling Development Center)
  - Did not pass:
    - ESSB 5323 – Plastic Bags
    - ESSB 5077 – Plastic Straws (became ban on plastic straw bans)
    - SHB 1632 – Plastic food service ware (became a ban on food service packaging local ordinances)
    - SHB 1342 – Right to Repair
    - SSB 5936 – Industrial Symbioses

- Sego provided an update on the Washington State Recycling Association (WSRA) Conference, noting that King County’s Lisa Sepanski, who has presented to SWAC, was inducted into the WSRA hall of fame.

## 2. Annual Recycling Rate Report

Dave Hare, Planning Strategic Advisor, SPU Solid Waste Planning and Program Management, provided an update on the status of the 2018 Annual Recycling Rate Report. As commercial rates are not yet available, SPU cannot provide an overall recycling rate at this time. However, Hare was able to review preliminary numbers and share interested insights into trends. The draft report will be available in a couple weeks for review. **The timeline for the report and SWAC letter is as follows:**

- Draft report will be done May 17; May 29 the final report will be delivered electronically to SWAC and is due to council by July 1. Once that is complete, the SWAC members who have volunteered to work on the letter will convene (Nico, Emily, Dirk, Alessandra).
  - SWAC needs to draft their letter before their June meeting.
  - SWAC will discuss the complete report and letter at the June meeting.
  - SWAC letter needs to be submitted by June 15.
- **A SWAC Member** asked if we receive hauler information on outbound of materials. They explained that China Blue Skies hasn’t changed what SPU accepts as recycling, so they did not understand how China Blue Skies could affect the recycling rate, if disposal happens after the hauler scale. Staff responded that SPU uses data to determine an approximate contamination number for the outbound stream. This is based off of composition reports, which are conducted every five years. The most recent contamination calculation is 10% for single-family and 11.4% for multifamily, which is used to adjust the amount that the outbound processors report. Contamination has increased in recent years. Additionally, SPU’s waste stream is only a portion of the materials processed by the outbound facility. Staff responded that SPU has the data for items that have been moved to the landfill instead of the MRF. SPU waits until everything has been sorted, sold, etc. and the recycling report data is reviewed, verified and prepared after that.
  - **A SWAC Member** asked if the information is based on the recycling reports from SPU contractors. Staff responded that yes, and why it takes longer to calculate the commercial rate is SPU is avoiding double counts. We want to make sure we’re not counting examples where one contractor has sold materials to another. (the example given was paper shredding companies).
  - **A SWAC Member** asked what California counts in their annual recycling rate report.

### SWAC Discussion around potential themes for a SWAC letter:

- Solid waste systems are volatile; SPU needs to be multi-dimensional to manage the things we cannot foresee or predict.
- If we’re seeing an increase, anecdotally, of rejected recycling loads and an increase of people balking at recycling, we need to heavily lean into education and messaging. Ensure messaging is clear, responsive and hitting various angles, i.e. “Recycling Right” message. Also need to include reduction and reuse.
- In the long-term, China sword forces us to reconsider the way we’ve been doing things.
- “Recycling is Dead” – we can joke about this messaging, but people across the nation are responding to this.

- With the viaduct coming down, my thoughts on C&D have changed. I am interested in how that affects SPU rates.
- (From a CAC member) How would SWAC feel about making a statement about SPU's decision to not landfill recyclable materials over the course of the year?
  - Personally, I feel proud and supportive of SPU's decision (to not landfill) when there was pressure to do so. Proud they stayed their course.
  - I think it's very appropriate to include.
  - I think it's made a big impact. It has helped support the messaging that the company I work for delivers to our clients.

Natasha to send 2018 SWAC Letter to SWAC members with survey. Add question for additional themes to include in the SWAC letter.

### 3. Introduction to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) / Product Stewardship

Sego Jackson, Solid Waste LOB Liaison, provided an overview of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), an environmental management strategy designed to address the life cycle of products, shifting the cost of disposal to the producers of those products. SeGo gave a brief overview of the history of waste management, beginning before 1900 to now. He then reviewed the shift in waste composition between 1900 to now, focusing on the uptick in "products" as the bulk of the waste stream. Jackson reviewed:

- Key components of product stewardship
  - Existing EPR programs
  - Convenience and equity considerations
- **A SWAC Member** referenced Slide 21, which discusses mattress recycling. They shared that New England has a successful program. Staff added that mattress legislation may be moving forward in Oregon and Washington will be watching to see what happens.
  - **A SWAC Member** referenced Slide 21, which noted smoke and fire alarm recycling. They asked how much of a market exists for those. Another SWAC member shared that the CO2 runs out, and that every seven years, every room has to replace theirs. Staff added that while it's not a constant churn, if you think about every room having smoke and fire alarms that adds up.
  - **A SWAC Member** referenced Slide 21, saying they were surprised to not see the bottle bills listed. Staff responded that some do not consider bottle bills EPR (see image on slide 22). But some are very much EPR-like – such as the Oregon system and in BC. Container deposit systems can also be state-run programs, so are not like EPR.
  - A discussion ensued around the benefits of depot systems versus one-shop systems. Staff noted that in some EPR models, it is assumed that the collector is someone already involved in that product (such as salvaging/reusing that product or attracting additional business in the exchange). Examples would be paint returned to paint stores or a reusable building supply company, or mercury lights to a lighting store. This is where covering the costs of collection is very important. Not all collectors have a direct connection and way to benefit from providing collection service. If there isn't a paint store in an area, but some other business or entity could provide a site, they are going to incur costs without getting payment to offset the costs of

providing the collection service. This will limit who can participate. Members said this was very interesting, but we were running out of time to discuss. They felt it was a “framework that will be recycling back through this Committee for time to come’

- **A SWAC Member** shared that they were curious to see what is mirrored in the EU/Germany.

SWAC members came prepared for the meeting by completing “homework” to visit EPR program websites or collection locations.

1. [www.ecyclewashington.org](http://www.ecyclewashington.org)
  - i. Great, easy to use. Didn't see many options for different languages. Liked downloadable outreach materials. User friendly, made sense.
2. <https://www.lightrecycle.org/>
  - i. ‘the website is fairly easy to navigate. I like the educational pieces that are included as well as an easy to use map to identify drop-off locations. However, when I did a Google search on where to recycle lightbulbs in Seattle, the website was not listed. Even when navigating from the first results that came up lightrecycle was not easily found.”
3. [www.medicinereturn.org](http://www.medicinereturn.org)
  - i. Liked that you can request an envelope sent to you. They include a list of drugs they take back, but it's a small font (not easy to read). Spanish was the only other language. Played into a lot of fears on opioid epidemic.
  - ii. If I wanted to know if my particular drugs could be taken back, it would work. But no zip code search. Made it tough to search. Wasn't a clear menu/clear zipcode. Didn't tell you where items are disposed. Approached it from a public health perspective.
4. <https://www.call2recycle.org/>
  - i. Aesthetically pleasing, easy to navigate. Liked Tab with “Recycling 101” – what, where but did not cover why. Not a lot of information about hazardous waste in landfills. Map was good: collection site near her house but wondering if it's a behind the counter service because haven't seen signage before. Only do single-use batteries, rechargeable batteries, and cellphones.
  - ii. Seemed low-key, like these were places you could go but they are not promoted in-house. Only one place does single-use batteries.
5. <https://www.paintcare.org/>
  - i. Found the site easy to navigate. Found location using zip code. Had phone number for donation site and directions. Clearly labeled what it does / does not recycle, and what happens when they process. Assume it is a free service but need to know before going there. Detailed, but concise enough that I would read it. Described what happens to the paint by category (Latex vs Oil).
6. <https://recyclebc.ca/>

The following comments were submitted electronically following the meeting:

- i. Generally, I found the website very intuitive and full of good resources
- ii. Interestingly enough, it took me quite some time to figure out that this non-profit was created by regulation that required packager and paper producers to operate a

recycling program (i.e. Producer Responsibility legislation) “Businesses that join Recycle BC report their materials and pay the required fees are in compliance with the BC Recycling Regulation.”

- iii. A few things I liked;
  1. “What happens to my recycling page” Includes video!
  2. Recycling depots page and resources. Allows you to easily figure out where certain materials are accepted. Seems like they have a lot more “transfer stations” there. As commingling gets more complicated and less effective (imo), I wonder if we should be trying to get more people to use the transfer stations so things are better separated? Maybe one strategy is to go back several decades and have more stations and fewer huge MRFs. Consolidation of the industry seems to have decreased the quality of the recyclables. I think the “recycling diehards” would give a little extra effort if they knew that going to a transfer station allowed for a better recycling process.
  3. They offer an app to help figure out what is recyclable. I wonder how many people have downloaded that and use it. Do we have an app here in Seattle? Would people use it? There are a lot of tech folks in Seattle and a growing population of younger people0-maybe they are more willing to use an app?

#### 4. SWAC Field Trip Check-in

There are three potential field trips that are under discussion:

1. All-CAC social event
2. SWAC Field trip, the following of which were discussed:
  - i. Second Use
  - ii. Visiting Construction & Demolition Recycling Facilities
  - iii. Republic Material Recycling Facility (MRF)
  - iv. Recology Material Recycling Facility (MRF) (Facilitated by Quinn)
  - v. Cedar Grove composting
3. Gathering with King County SWAC, possibly including field trip

SWAC members confirmed interest in all three activities and expressed interest in July as an option since SWAC does not typically meet in July. SWAC chairs will explore the feasibility of the suggested field trip options. We'll be sending out a survey shortly with dates to gauge availability.

#### 5. Debrief on All-CAC

- **A SWAC Member** shared that they empathized for Eric Duncan who was having to answer mostly legal questions. A couple other members echoed this sentiment.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that they enjoyed the exercise on equity around risk & resiliency.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that they felt the content was dry, but very interesting. They enjoyed the anecdotes, and appreciated the effort put in to make the topic interesting.

## 6. Around the Table & Community Insights

- **A SWAC Member** asked about Total Reclaim. They explained that Seattle Colleges had worked with them and now has backlog of batteries. Another SWAC member will share their contact with multiple SWAC members, which will be emailed after the meeting.
- **A SWAC Member** attended the Break Free from Plastics Webinar, which provided a European Union perspective on a dramatic circular economy model. The webinar discussed marine litter, ranking them. They also discussed legislation for policy measures effective June 2019, with June 2020 implementation.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that the current National Geographic issue is on marine waste.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that their organization has partnered with [www.Ubuntoo.com](http://www.Ubuntoo.com), which provides a directory of circular economy initiatives and businesses, specifically concerning plastics.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that the China International District Preservation District hosted their 21<sup>st</sup> Spring Cleaning. They also shared that they are in charge of a new apartment building going up, if anyone is looking for housing in the SHA rent limits. They are specifically targeting students.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that Engie Insight is undergoing another rebranding to become a global organization. Engie Impact is a merge with three other companies.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that Second Use hosted their 3<sup>rd</sup> spring market with reuse artists.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that the University of Washington's waste audit / "trash-in" went well, with about 60 volunteers over 4 hours. There is blog article up about it, for those interested.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that Seattle Colleges completed two waste audits over earth week, noting a lot of liquids and food-spoiled containers in recycling. A discussion ensued about whether any assessment has been done of food waste lost in recycled versus compostable packaging.
- **A SWAC Member** shared that California is making headway on legislation that all bottles would need to be 100% post-consumer recycled materials.

**Adjourned 7:31PM**