

Packaging EPR Advisory Board

Meeting notes

Virtual via Microsoft Teams or in-person at the MPCA St. Paul Office | 3 hours

Tuesday, July 15, 2025 | 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. CT

Recording available at: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/events-and-meetings/packaging-extended-producer-responsibility-advisory-board-meeting-2025-07-15>

Attendance

Board member attendance

Present (9 members required for quorum)			Absent
Townsend Brown	Sara Bixby	Gabbie Batzko-Conley	Bill Keegan
Kris Coperine	Megan Daum	Kate Davenport	Mac Sellars
Mike Griffin	Sydney Harris	Miriam Holsinger (Vice Chair)	
Kirk Koudelka	Gregory Melkonian	Shoshana Micon	
Victoria Reinhardt (Chair)	Maggie Schuppert	Jon Steiner	
Steve Vrchota			
Kate joined at 11:05 a.m.			

Guest presenters: Lyle Clarke, CAA; Peter Hargreave, CAA; Jake Duame, SET; Shannon Pinc, Natureworks

Agency staff: Mallory Anderson, Gwen Jenkins, Molly Flynn, Dave Benke, John Gilkeson, Tina Patton, Josh Hauf

Participants: Amanda Burke, Reynolds Consumer Products; Amanda Erickson, HDR; Andrew Morley; Angiulo Damiani, City of Minneapolis; Annebelle Klein; Apurupa Gorthi; Brian Martinson, Association of MN Counties; Brian Pontious; Bridget Randazzo; Dan Donkers, Ramsey County; Dan Leif, The Recycling Partnership; Darla Arians, Product Stewardship Institute; Drew Hatzenbihler, Morrison County; Dustin Strickland, SynergyLabs (a producer from North Carolina); Elly Ventura, World Centric; Garth Hickie; Gregg Felber; Isabelle Borkowski; Joei Tarrazi, Recycled Materials Association; John Berns, representing Republic Services; Julie Ketchum, WM Area Director of Gov Affairs; Kala Fisher, City of St. Louis Park; Kellie Kish, City of Minneapolis; Lucy Mullany, Eureka Recycling; Melissa Finnegan, R&E; Paul Gutkowski, Printing Industry Midwest; Phillip Shaffer, NWRA; Sarah Edwards, Eunomia research and consulting; Scott Moening, Republic Services; Steve Barthel, MN Grocers Association; Taylor Loeber, General Mills; Tim Wilkin, Minnesota Beverage Association

Meeting notes

Call to order

Chair Victoria Reinhardt opened the meeting.

Approval of February 2025 meeting summary

Kris Coperine motioned and Steve Vrchota seconded. Mallory conducted a roll call vote.

Aye: Batzko-Conley, Bixby, Brown, Coperine, Daum, Griffin, Harris, Holsinger, Melkonian, Micon, Reinhardt, Schuppert, Steiner, Vrchota

Nay: None

Absent: Davenport, Sellars, Keegan

Approval of May 2025 meeting summary & June 2025 meeting summary

Jon Steiner motioned and Miriam Holsinger seconded. Mallory conducted a roll call vote.

Aye: Batzko-Conley, Bixby, Brown, Coperine, Daum, Griffin, Harris, Holsinger, Melkonian, Micon, Reinhardt, Schuppert, Steiner, Vrchota

Nay: None

Absent: Davenport, Keegan, Sellars

Approval of Board Charter & approval of Conflict-of-Interest Policy

Miriam Holsinger motioned and Megan Daum seconded. Mallory conducted a roll call vote.

Batzko-Conley, Bixby, Brown, Coperine, Daum, Davenport, Griffin, Harris, Holsinger, Keegan, Melkonian, Micon, Reinhardt, Schuppert, Sellars, Steiner, Vrchota

Aye: Batzko-Conley, Bixby, Brown, Coperine, Daum, Griffin, Harris, Holsinger, Melkonian, Micon, Reinhardt, Schuppert, Steiner, Vrchota

Nay: None

Absent: Davenport, Keegan, Sellars

Approval of the agenda

Kris Coperine motioned and Sara Bixby seconded. Mallory conducted a roll call vote.

Aye: Batzko-Conley, Bixby, Brown, Coperine, Daum, Griffin, Harris, Holsinger, Melkonian, Micon, Reinhardt, Schuppert, Steiner, Vrchota

Nay: None

Absent: Davenport, Keegan, Sellars

Agency updates

Presented by Mallory Anderson, MPCA staff

Board members are not recommended to establish shared documents to make shared notes as it may violate Open Meeting Law. Options to establish notes to a “parking lot” to return to are to make note during the meeting and have that included in the meeting summary, establish ad hoc workgroups as needed, and/or to reach out to agency staff to highlight important notes or topics to be further explored later.

CAA updates

Presented by Lyle Clarke, Circular Action Alliance (CAA)

Registration is over 2,000 producers for Minnesota and on-track with Colorado. Working on outreach to Minnesota-only producers. New resources at CAA for technical support and compliance. A job posting as Minnesota Program Manager is available.

Recycling Education Committee overview

Presented by Gwen Jenkins, MPCA staff

Provided an overview of the work of the Recycling Education Committee, a group of stakeholders that meets quarterly with the goal of increasing recycling and reducing recycling contamination by building consensus around recycling education and communication. Discussion of how Recycling Education Committee will respond or proactively collaborate on the Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act implementation and how CAA could work with REC in the future. Recommend that the consultant for the Needs Assessment consult with the Recycling Education Committee on how their acceptable lists were developed and documenting the rationale.

Compostable product labeling law

Presented by Gwen Jenkins, MPCA staff

An overview of the compostable product labeling law was provided including a discussion of implementation efforts by the MPCA. Discussion of if utensils are included, role of backyard composting for compostable products (with a focus on greater MN with limited access to commercial composting).

Definition of food or beverage product for defining food and beverage packaging in the Compostable Products Labeling Law	Definition of food packaging for the Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act (and PFAS in food packaging prohibition)
MINN STAT 325E.046, subd. 4 (3) "food or beverage product" means a product that is used to wrap, package, contain, serve, store, prepare, or consume a food or beverage, such as plates, bowls, cups, lids, trays, straws, utensils, and hinged or lidded containers	<p>MINN STAT 115A.1441, subd. 17. Food packaging. "Food packaging" has the meaning given in section 325F.075.</p> <p>MINN STAT 325.075, subd. 1 (b) "Food package" means a container applied to or providing a means to market, protect, handle, deliver, serve, contain, or store a food or beverage. Food package includes:</p> <p>(1) a unit package, an intermediate package, and a shipping container;</p> <p>(2) unsealed receptacles, such as carrying cases, crates, cups, plates, bowls, pails, rigid foil and other trays, wrappers and wrapping films, bags, and tubs; and</p> <p>(3) an individual assembled part of a food package, such as any interior or exterior blocking, bracing, cushioning, weatherproofing, exterior strapping, coatings, closures, inks, and labels.</p>

Landscape of composting/compostables nationally

Presented by Peter Hargreave, Circular Action Alliance (CAA)

Provided an overview of the compostable product labeling requirements and requirements in the Colorado EPR for Packaging law and Minnesota's Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act. Overview of strategies being applied in Colorado's program.

Status update – composting/compostables in Minnesota

Presented by Kris Coperine, Minnesota Composting Council; Jake Duame, SET; and Shannon Pinc, Natureworks

Provided an overview of the composting process as well as advancements in compostable resins used for products, including packaging. In addition, considering how and where composting best fits into the circular economy.

Public comment

Julie Ketchum, WM – Related to the prior meeting [in June] it is important to note that WM needs the 4-6,000 tons of material now at the WM Twin Cities material recovery facility. On the discussion of baseline data, sort, and needing to update the 2013 State Composition Study it is important to note that other states that have done waste composition studies and packaging sort studies will have a different composition on packaging. Especially if they have container deposit systems. There was significant conversation on a packaging sort and needing that for a baseline and I don't see it recorded in the meeting summary.

Parking lot

Comments and questions have been consolidated and paraphrased.

- What are the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from composting, including transportation. Is there a hauling distance that makes disposal more effective than composting?
- How will gaps in composting infrastructure be addressed – particularly in greater MN. What about community composting and backyard composting?
 - *The MPCA has recently completed a Food Waste Management Lifecycle Assessment Tool that will be posted soon. GHG emissions must be considered when it comes to setting the rates/dates for recovery of materials as part of the Needs Assessment, statewide requirements set by the agency, and the performance targets set in the stewardship plan.*
 - *As part of the Assessments a consideration of infrastructure needs is included to help outline a plan for how to fill gaps. Funding for composting will be more complex than for recyclables:*
 - *Compostable packaging and paper products are only a portion of the overall materials going to compost sites that accept and manage source-separated organic material, with the bulk of the material being food scraps.*
 - *The law requires that producer fees “reflect the program costs for each covered materials type, net of commodity value for that covered materials type, as well as allocated fixed costs that do not vary based on covered materials type.” This means that reimbursements and investments in compostable packaging and paper products will be driven by the amount of fees from these material types.*
 - *A holistic solution to expanding composting infrastructure will need to leverage additional funding streams such as the Solid Waste Processing Facilities Capital Assistance Program and future opportunities for market development funding.*
 - *Further discussion on the role of community composting is needed. Current permitting rules allow for small compost sites (or community compost sites) to accept compostable packaging, but there is no tracking of these sites nor reporting collected by the agency. At this time backyard composting is seen as out-of-scope as a management option for packaging and paper products covered under this law as compostable products are only certified for the controlled composting processes.*
- Request that the cross-contamination in a material recovery facility and a compost facility is considered in the Needs Assessment, and what is the cost to the two systems when similar packaging formats have some brands using compostable and others using recyclable.
 - *The Needs Assessment is required to include an assessment of the level and causes of contamination of source-separated recyclable materials, source-separated compostable materials and collected reusables, and the impacts of contamination on service providers, including the cost to manage this contamination.*
- Do we envision that every recycling facility would need a way consolidate and redirect PLA resin?
 - *The priority will be to get compostable packaging and paper into the correct stream. At this time including diversion of a “compostables” stream at material recovery facilities has not been considered.*

- How will packaging and paper products that are outside the scope of an ideal bale spec, but are the correct resin type or material type (for example, PET clamshells or packaging) that decrease bale quality and value be handled?
 - *The Needs Assessment must include an evaluation of the factors for each covered material collected for recycling or composting as established in section [115A.1453, subdivision 4](#). Building on the work of the Recycling Education Committee, the Needs Assessment will assign a score to different material types against the criteria set in law. Following this report, it is anticipated a rulemaking will be completed by the MPCA to formalize the acceptable materials list.*

Notes compiled by: Mallory Anderson

[Minnesota's Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility Advisory Board](#)