

WEST COAST REFUSE & RECYCLING COALITION

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West Coast Refuse & Recycling Coalition Issues Study on British Columbia's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) System for Packaging

*New report details a lack of transparency and
results from BC's packaging EPR system.*

Today the West Coast Refuse & Recycling Coalition (WCRRC) issued a study that examines British Columbia's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) system for plastics packaging. Advocates have looked to export the British Columbia EPR model to all three West Coast states to increase recycling and encourage manufacturers to use more recyclable packaging.

A new report commissioned by the WCRRC exposes numerous flaws and shortcomings with BC's EPR Model for packaging. The report also documents a lack of transparency, which makes it nearly impossible to evaluate the program's true cost, effectiveness, or recycling rates.

BC's EPR model has failed to achieve significant environmental milestones. The report finds that examples of product redesign as a result of EPR policy in BC and Europe are "few in number and anecdotal at best." Furthermore, manufacturers simply pass on the costs of EPR to their customers as a cost of doing business.

BC's packaging EPR system fails to differentiate products based on recyclability and overall environmental performance. In fact, the program actively discriminates against lightweight products that are hard to recycle but still have a lower environmental footprint than their recyclable competitors. BC's EPR system is simply a recycle-only approach to materials management that is uninterested in achieving the lowest environmental footprint.

The report also examines how BC's EPR system is also failing local governments as a financing system. Cost data is underestimated and lacks transparency. BC's EPR system pays incentive fees it determines are "reasonable" to local governments. As many BC communities have pointed out, these fees do not necessarily cover their full costs. As a result, the true costs of recycling are underestimated. Local governments make up the difference where the "reasonable cost" payment does not cover the real costs and residents pay as manufacturers pass on the hidden costs of EPR without notice.

To access the study, follow this link: [Study on British Columbia's EPR System for Packaging](#)

About WCRRC

The West Coast Refuse & Recycling Coalition ("WCRRC") is comprised of the California Refuse Recycling Council, the Oregon Refuse & Recycling Association, and the Washington Refuse & Recycling Association. The WCRRC represents over 250 businesses engaged in waste collection, recycling and disposal in the States of California, Oregon and Washington.

About CRRC

First organized in 1953, The California Refuse Recycling Council (CRRC) is a trade association representing more than 100 private sector refuse, recycling and processing companies, partnering with over 360 local governments. Our members operate 71 material recovery facilities, 64 transfer stations, 23 composting facilities, 3 anaerobic digestion facilities, and 75 construction and demolition (C&D) facilities. CRRC members have a long history of supporting our communities and the environment as we work to achieve our mutual goal of diverting 75% of the state's waste from landfills by the year 2020, while significantly reducing greenhouse gases. We utilize cutting-edge resource management and environmental protection methods, while providing essential services to guard the health and safety of California.

About ORRA

Founded in 1965 to advance the efficiencies of collecting and processing recyclables and solid waste, Oregon Refuse & Recycling Association (ORRA) is a statewide trade association comprised of 158 members operating solid waste management companies or related businesses. ORRA regular members collect and process most of Oregon's residential and commercial refuse and recyclables, as well as operate material recovery facilities, compost facilities, and many of Oregon's municipal solid waste transfer stations and landfills.

About WRRRA

The WRRRA is a statewide trade association representing Washington's diverse and multifaceted solid waste handling industry. WRRRA is the oldest solid waste trade association in the western United States, having been formed in 1947. We represent your local curbside solid waste and recycling services companies. Member companies provide services in virtually every community throughout the state, providing those services under state law, administered by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission or by city contract. WRRRA Member

companies also operate many of the material recovery facilities where the collected recyclables are sorted and processed for shipping.

About Chaz Miller

Chaz Miller's career in waste and recycling spanned four decades with stints at the US EPA Office of Solid Waste, the Glass Packaging Institute and the National Waste and Recycling Association. He testified on waste and recycling issues at Congressional and state hearings and spoke at conferences throughout North America. He was a plenary panel speaker at the UN Zero Waste Conference in Tokyo and spoke at a paper recycling conference in China. His paper, "From Birth to Rebirth: Will Product Stewardship Save Resources" was named Best Paper at the 19th Fall Meeting (2011) of the American Bar Association Section of Environment, Energy and Resources.

Although he is now retired from full time work, he consults and continues to write his award-winning column "The Circular File" for Waste360 and to speak at waste and recycling conferences in the United States and Canada. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Maryland Recycling Coalition. He is also Chair of the Montgomery County, Maryland, Aiming for Zero Waste Task Force.

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