

Bottles Workgroup Recommendations to the Council on Recycling

Background: This workgroup was tasked with recommending actions to increase recycling of PET and HDPE plastic bottles. Specifically, plastic beverage bottles were identified as having the greatest potential to boost recovery using data from the 2009 DNR Waste Characterization Study. Because residential recycling is well established in Wisconsin, the greatest need for improving recovery is in away-from-home recycling settings. This workgroup focused on strengthening public place recycling to increase recovery of PET and HDPE bottles.

Recommendations and Suggested Action Steps

The following recommendations and action steps were chosen based upon their potential for immediate action and high likelihood of success.

- 1) Increase the number and visibility of recycling bins available in public spaces such as special events and parks.**
 - a. Set up a workgroup to arrange a distribution network for recycling barrels that can be provided from beverage bottlers through the Wisconsin Beverage Association.
 - b. Work with the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) regarding the need to provide more recycling bins at youth sporting events across Wisconsin. Initial focus would be on one or two sports. Overall goal would be to address the need for increased availability of recycling bins at all venues for all youth sports.
 - c. Publicize grant opportunities from Keep America Beautiful.
 - d. Create a platform for the public to voice demand for more opportunities to recycle. This would be a social media campaign where citizens would voice the need for a recycling bin in a specific location using Four Square, Twitter or Facebook. The platform would be set up to email the corresponding responsible unit of government (RU) or the distribution network handling the recycling barrels.
 - e. Special event permitting: Inventory municipalities that require event organizers to report a recycling plan as a condition for permit application acceptance. As appropriate, provide education on the benefits of integrating this requirement into the permitting process.

- 2) Provide technical assistance to operations/custodial staff that manage recycling in public spaces. This assistance will focus on operations, but will also include a component on how to educate public space/event patrons.**
 - a. Distribute materials such as a recycling preparation checklist to appropriate staff at large events. Make sure all parties are using the same set of “talking points”; ensure the same materials are provided to the RU and waste hauler.
 - b. Provide strategy suggestions for increasing recycling bin visibility.
 - c. Task events to hold themselves accountable for recycling by providing recycling data after the event. An online registry should be set up for event staff to voluntarily provide recycling information. This information would be used in marketing materials the following year and for data capture to track progress.
 - i. Incentivize by having waste haulers provide certificates commending events for their recycling efforts.