

Governor's Recycling Council Policy Statements

The Governor's Recycling Council (GRC) has adopted the following policy statements in its role advising the Governor and DEQ Director - having concluded that these are essential to Michigan's development of metric-driven, cost-effective recycling strategies for our state that achieve the Governor's stated goal of 30% residential recycling and that will realize the economic, job creation, and environmental benefits that strong and robust recycling brings to Michigan.

Measurement

The GRC advises the Governor and DEQ Director that legislative action this session is needed that requires reporting by entities that receive, process or market recyclable materials from residential and commercial sources.

Access

The GRC advises the Governor and DEQ Director that legislative action, this session is needed that requires, by state statute, solid waste haulers to provide residential recycling collection services, if they provide residential trash collection services.

Support Services

The GRC advises the Governor and DEQ Director that the provision of convenient recycling services at the local level requires concerted leadership at the state, regional, county, and local levels, and recommends the following actions at the departmental level, along with allocation of the required funding and resources:

- Integration of recycling and waste-utilization planning into the solid waste management planning process administered by DEQ;
- Establishment of strong market-development capacity within DEQ, in collaboration with the MEDC, the state's Prosperity Regions, and other resources as appropriate, to create and support the infrastructure necessary for robust recovered materials markets in Michigan.
- Development and distribution of an on-going state-level recycling message and coordinated educational/informational tools for local customization.
- Leading, administering, providing technical assistance, and ensuring compliance in all recycling related programming

Funding

The GRC advises the Governor and DEQ Director that future action is needed to address funding needs. The GRC asserts the following:

- The recent actions taken by the Governor and Legislature in appropriating additional General Fund resources are viewed as a significant step in the right direction that will accomplish much to increase recycling, but may not be sufficient to address the need in the long term;
- Existing residential recycling funding tools and policies (in place for decades) have not resulted in successfully reaching the Governor's stated goal of 30%, thus both reinvention of existing and additional funding tools and policies are needed;

- More analysis is needed on the real “gap” between roll-out of best-practice recycling services across the state and our current level of service, and thus performance;
- The GRC is working to further develop the necessary analysis but the overall conclusions are already obvious – a shortfall exists, as evidenced by studies completed by the Solid Waste Funding Advisory Work Group, the Michigan Beverage Container Recycling Task Force, Public Sector Consultants, and the Michigan Recycling Coalition;
- Policy frameworks and funding mechanisms to be considered should include but are not limited to one or, more likely, a combination from the following options:
 - point of disposal fees,
 - point of purchase fees;
 - cleanup and redevelopment trust fund (funded by escheats); and
 - General Fund
- Distribution of funds should take into account the need to deploy those funds equitably and effectively for the purpose of reaching the recovery goal and prevent misappropriation of funds from their originally intended purpose.

The GRC intends to provide more specific recommendations on funding in the future.