

**Residential Recycling Initiative**  
**Department of Environmental Quality**  
**Status Report**  
**January 14, 2015**

Much has been accomplished in the nine months since Governor Rick Snyder's call to action on April 14, 2014, to double Michigan's recycling rate. Michigan's Residential Recycling Plan (Plan) outlined the steps necessary to achieve the ambitious goal. The components of the Plan include:

- Measuring recycling;
- Providing outreach, education, and technical assistance;
- Fostering strong recycling markets;
- Increasing access and participation;
- Creating the Governor's Recycling Council.

**Appropriation** - The appropriation of \$1 million in the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) fiscal year (FY) 2015 Budget and the use of \$250,000 Community Pollution Prevention (P2) Fund monies is enabling the DEQ to do the work necessary to implement the Plan. The funds are being used as follows:

- \$250,000 in 2014 for the Community P2 grants used for recycling measurement and identifying best practices (see below).
- Up to \$600,000 in 2015 for Community P2 Grants to support the growing recycling access and participation (see below).
- \$250,000 to grow recycling markets and ensure existing Michigan recycling markets are supplied with the valuable recycled commodities they need.
- The balance of the recycling funds have been used to fund DEQ staff working to implement the Recycling Initiative.

**Governor's Recycling Council** – The Council advises the DEQ on implementing the Governor's Residential Recycling Plan and other related issues so that the state will achieve a 30 percent residential recycling rate within two years. The council met on May 20, 2014 in Lansing, July 22, 2014 in Emmet County, September 3, 2014 at the Michigan Recycling Coalition office in Lansing, and November 6, 2014 at Schupan in Wixom.

**Community Pollution Prevention grants FY 2014** – Three separate grants for FY2014 were awarded to collect data on Michigan's recycling rate, percentage of population with convenient access to recycling, high performing recycling programs, composition of municipal solid waste currently landfilled and incinerated, and the economic value of this material. This data will assist local recycling programs identify best practices and aid the state to benchmark progress on the DEQ scorecard. The results from the recycling measurement grant will be presented at the Governor's Recycling Summit.

**Community Pollution Prevention grants FY 2015** – The FY2015 grants will be used for projects that enhance local or regional recycling programs and lead to increases in the statewide recycling rate. The target date for releasing the grant request for proposals is January 2015. The DEQ is hosting a Webinar on February 11, 2015, at 10 a.m. to assist with the grant application process. Requests for funding will be accepted through April 1, 2015.

**Recycling measurement legislation** - The DEQ has been working with interested parties to develop recycling measurement and reporting legislation. Significant work was undertaken to identify the acceptable scope of recycling data reporting and address diverse concerns. The interested parties were not able to reach a consensus by the end of last legislative session, thus recycling measurement legislation did not advance. The DEQ recognizes the importance of recycling data and will be returning to the issue in 2015.

**Electronic Recycling Reporting System** - An electronic recycling reporting system (Re-TRAC) has been secured through a contract. This will allow recyclers to report data electronically. The forms and surveys are being developed and will be ready by early spring. Additionally, the system will establish an easy to use directory for residents and businesses to find out where to recycle.

**DEQ staff resources** – The DEQ has established four field positions in the district offices to enhance recycling efforts. The specialist positions are providing on-site training, outreach, and technical assistance. The DEQ has realigned the existing Recycling Specialist position in Lansing so that it can take on the leadership role for developing markets for recycled materials and elevate the profile of recycling within the waste programs. Additionally, the DEQ is drawing upon the multiple existing staff to bring their diverse and unique abilities to support the recycling initiative. The recycling specialists' high level of knowledge in the waste and recycling field has enabled them to make a quick positive impact.

**County Solid Waste Planning** – The best approach to improving the Solid Waste Planning Program continues to be evaluated. The Residential Recycling Plan seeks to ensure the county solid waste management planning process supports, and does not impede waste utilization and recycling. The solid waste planning process may be a legislative priority in 2015.

**Lead by example** – The DEQ has been engaged in discussions with the Department of Technology Management and Budget (DTMB) and the Good Government Team regarding ways the state can better “lead by example”. Last summer, Director Dan Wyant distributed a message to all state employees seeking their input on how to provide more opportunities for recycling at state facilities. Over hundreds of ideas were submitted by state employees indicating a strong desire to expand state government recycling efforts. Additionally, DTMB is in the process of issuing a request for proposals for recycling service providers to collect and manage the recycling at state office buildings. Other efforts include work to expand recycling opportunities at state parks and rest areas.

**Recycling outreach and education** – To support local recycling outreach and education efforts \$250,000 was added to the 2015 Community Pollution Prevention Grants. This will enable local recycling programs to directly access the funding to grow local education campaigns. Additionally, the grants will be available for interested parties to propose the development of statewide education materials and messages that can be used at the local level.

**Market Development** – The DEQ is working to grow markets for difficult to recycle recycled commodities and ensure existing Michigan businesses are able to secure high-volume,

clean, recycled commodities for their manufacturing processes. Work is focusing on the following areas:

- Commodity Specific End-use Market Development
- Sector Specific End-use Market Development
- Organics
- Recycled Materials Market Directory
- Inventory Existing End-use Markets
- Quantify existing and potential economic impact of the recycling supply chain
- Recycling Collection and Processing Capacity

Additionally, The DEQ is working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to catalog existing business development tools that can be used to support the growth of the recycling industry.

**Recognition** – The DEQ will recognize successful programs already achieving a 30 percent recycling rate. The recycling programs achieving the goal will be recognized at the Recycling Summit on May 5, 2015. Businesses, institutions, government agencies, non-profits, and other organizations helping to achieve the Governor’s recycling goals will be recognized. The Excellence in Recycling Awards will celebrate success in the collection, processing, and utilization of recycled materials, as well as the creation of recycled products. A Webinar will be held on January 22, 2015, at 10 a.m. to assist with the awards application process.

**Best Practices** – By recognizing the successful recycling programs that are already achieving a 30 percent recycling rate the state of Michigan will be able to catalog best practices currently in place throughout Michigan. These best practices will be used as a tool to educate communities and service providers on the methods to grow recycling in Michigan.

**Recycling Summit** - The Governor’s Recycling Summit is being planned in conjunction with the Michigan Recycling Coalition’s Annual Conference, May 5-7, 2015, at the Kalamazoo Radisson. The Summit will emphasize the economic opportunities of recycling.

**Information and resources –**

- To view Michigan’s Residential Recycling Plan and find other documents regarding the Governors Recycling Council visit [www.michigan.gov/mirecycles](http://www.michigan.gov/mirecycles) and search “recycling plan of action”
- For general recycling information visit [www.michigan.gov/deqrecycling](http://www.michigan.gov/deqrecycling)
- For more information about the grants program, visit [www.michigan.gov/deqp2grants](http://www.michigan.gov/deqp2grants). For more information about the Excellence in Recycling Awards Program, visit [www.michigan.gov/deqrecycling](http://www.michigan.gov/deqrecycling) click on “[Excellence in Recycling Awards](#)”.
- Sign up for the Community P2 Grant Webinar on February 11, 2015 at 10 am and the Recognition Webinar on January 22, 2015 at 10 am webinar by visiting [www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq) and searching “[DEQ Webinars](#)”.