

Michigan Governor's Recycling Council

Policy Statement - Final Proposed January 9, 2015

Policy Framework for Recycling and Beneficial Utilization of Waste

The GRC advises the Governor and DEQ Director that the provision of convenient recycling services throughout the state requires concerted leadership from both the private and public sectors at the state, regional, county, and local levels. This leadership requires an approach that supports recycling and beneficial utilization of waste as part of a broader policy framework of sustainable materials management - creating a future for Michigan where we use materials responsibly, conserve resources, protect the environment and live well. Recycling and beneficial utilization of waste is a cornerstone of this policy framework.

As such we recommend the following planning steps, along with adoption of policies and allocation of the required funding and resources that make these possible. This comprehensive approach includes:

- Engaging our citizens, businesses and community leaders through an on-going state-level campaign that messages the vision for sustainable materials management and the call to action for Michigan to double its recycling rate.
- Integrating recycling and beneficial utilization into the solid waste management planning process administered by DEQ.
- Directing our sustainable management of waste materials into highest and best beneficial utilization – through prevention, reuse, recycling, composting (aerobic and anaerobic), fuel production from waste and landfill disposal of remaining residuals that can not be beneficially utilized.
- Increasing participation by residents and businesses in recycling programs by ensuring convenient access is available and developing and maintaining policies that create a culture of recycling.
- Building the infrastructure that enables convenient and cost effective recycling and composting by our citizens and businesses and, once those systems are set up, developing and maintaining policies such as disposal bans like those already in place for materials like yard waste, tires etc. to reinforce the need for our citizens and businesses to use that infrastructure.
- Integrating the combined strengths and capacity of the public and private sectors to support these sustainable materials management systems – as represented by the Governor's catalyst initiative, the Michigan Recycle by Design Challenge;

- Incorporating strong recycling and beneficial utilization market development capacity in DEQ, in collaboration with the MEDC, the state's economic development regions and other resources as appropriate – facilitating the continued development of infrastructure for robust recovered materials markets in Michigan.
- Engaging state government from the top down to drive metrics for sustainability and sustainable materials management into each department. Using the dashboards for each department to establish and measure the achievement of performance goals for beneficial utilization of waste for state government employees and the programs they run, establishing a model for regional, county and local government as well.
- Drawing on the resources of national partnerships in business, institutions and government that are actively supporting sustainable materials management.
- Engaging our institutions of higher learning and our centers of innovation to support research and technology transfer to rapidly scale up the use of recycled commodities in Michigan manufacturing.

PROPOSED