

2018 Sonoma County Zero Waste Initiative Suggestions

AUGUST, 2018

In June 2018, The Sonoma County Local Task Force on Integrated Waste Management (LTF) recommended the Sonoma County Solid Waste Management Agency adopt a Zero Waste Resolution with substantive goals and policies. In support of this request, the LTF also provided two sample resolutions, 33 initiative suggestions and numerous resources on the impact of wasting.

These documents were prepared by an ad hoc committee the LTF initialized in 2017. Known as the Sonoma County Zero Waste Task Force (ZWTF), the group is a collaboration of stakeholders including representatives of including the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency, 350 Sonoma, North Bay Jobs with Justice, Sierra Club Redwood Chapter, Compost Coalition of Sonoma County, Zero Waste Sonoma County, North Bay Labor Council, Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority, Sonoma County Conservation Action, Recology Sonoma-Marin, Sonoma County Resource Recovery, local businesses, and engaged citizens. The LTF seeks to build on previous collaborative policy efforts such as the good work of the Solid Waste Advisory Group (SWAG), which adopted a policy of reaching 80% diversion by 2015 and 90% diversion by 2020.

The LTF offers the following initiatives as a guide and invites each jurisdiction to consider suggestions that reflect their community's needs. They are organized in six sections: Reduce, Recover/Reuse, Education and Outreach, Green Purchasing, EPR and EPP, Service Providers and Workforce, and Fiscal Sustainability.

A. REDUCE

- Support programs and incentives to reduce the manufacture and use of materials that are non-recyclable or hazardous.
- Incentivize use of locally extracted, manufactured or recycled and reused materials including construction materials, compost and mulches.
- Advocate for products designed for on-going use that are 100% recyclable and incorporate the highest post-consumer recycled content possible.
- Foster the development and commercialization of technologies that support Zero Waste including the collection, sorting, and processing of segregated discards.
- Require and incentivize restaurants, caterers, grocery stores, and other venues and businesses to donate excess edible food to food distribution programs consistent with state laws.
- Expand and develop ordinances to reduce distribution of single-use goods (such as single-use plastic bags not covered by current policy, take-out food packaging, straws, etc.). Expand support of "Sip it Sonoma" campaign where restaurants provide straws only upon request.
- Adopt and implement voluntary then mandatory sales and disposal bans for toxic, non-recyclable or non-compostable materials as well as single-use, disposable and problematic products.
- Provide grants and loans for not-for-profit organizations that remove debris from our watersheds and beaches, rescue surplus food, repair durables, and collect and redistribute reuseable goods.
- Create a county-wide Construction and Demolition Reuse and Recycling Ordinance.

B. RECOVER/REUSE

- Adopt land use policy to facilitate the siting and permitting of processing and end market infrastructure that will be needed to manage the volume of material from higher levels of diversion
- Develop incentive programs for the establishment and expansion of local businesses that recycle and reuse materials as feedstocks such as paper, compost and building materials.
- Provide economic incentives to encourage manufacturers to use locally recycled and reusable materials.
- Promote the development of reuse infrastructure such as take-back programs for refillable glass containers, bulk beverage containers (growlers and kegs) and propane tanks.
- Incentivize establishment and expansion of bulk sections in grocery and hardware stores and farm stands.
- Enhance the promotion of re-use networks such as Free-Cycle and events such as Repair Fairs, Clothing Swaps and Tool Exchanges
- Provide grants and loans for tool lending libraries, equipment rental and repair businesses and creative reuse depots for teachers, students and artists.

C. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- Expand programs to educate residents and businesses on the environmental and community benefits of reducing wasteful consumption and increasing diversion, as well as the processing and marketing of compostables and recyclables.
- Partner with local school districts and private schools to expand waste reduction and recycling programs including the Zero Waste Lunch and Green Schools programs.
- Expand multi-family outreach programs for owners, property managers and residents.
- Ensure recycle bins with clear and consistent signage are accessible in public places and businesses.

D. GREEN PURCHASING, ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE PROCUREMENT POLICIES (EPP) AND EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY (EPR)

- Incorporate EPP and EPR principles and practices into all government operations and events.
- Update and expand the Sonoma County Green Purchasing Policy as well as all relevant regulations, specifications and solicitation language.
- Support and adopt EPR policies which require producers, rather than the general public or ratepayers, to cover the costs of recycling and disposal of products, especially hard-to-manage items like pharmaceuticals, carpets, mattresses, etc.
- Encourage local businesses to adopt EPP and EPR principles and practices, and recognize businesses that showcase exemplary green purchasing practices.

E. SERVICE PROVIDERS AND WORKFORCE

- Establish Zero Waste as a goal within franchise hauling agreements, with phased diversion milestones, reasonable rates and financial incentives, transparent reporting and rigorous annual compliance reviews to ensure services are of the highest caliber and all materials are put to the highest and best use.
- To insure the development of good green local jobs, give preferential hiring to locals and develop training partnerships with community colleges, workforce agencies and apprenticeship programs.
- To support just and fair jobs, bar long-term use of temporary workers and require part-time employees be offered additional hours before new employees are hired and support whistleblower protections for those who point out violations of labor or health and safety laws, noncompliance with a union contract provisions, or inefficiencies and lack of quality control.

F. FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

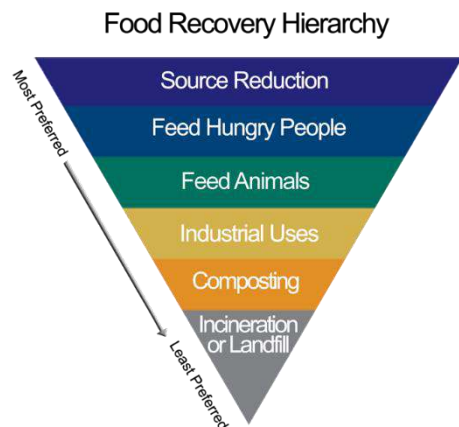
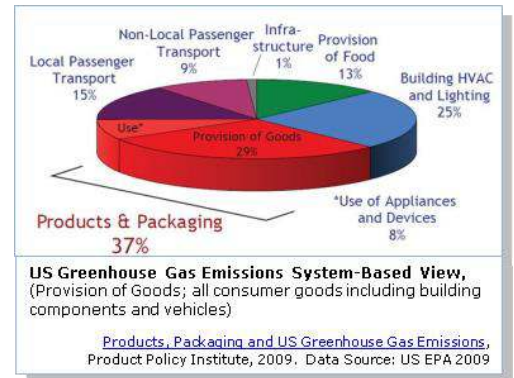
- Develop and maintain a sound financial model that can sustain high diversion and Zero Waste programs and enable long-term delivery of quality services.
- Explore opportunities and methods to harvest buried resources from existing landfills.
- Consider environmental and social costs in all decision-making and budget decisions.
- Increase recycling market development programs utilizing funding at the state level.
- Develop long-term fee-based options to address the impact of waste diversion activities on the General Fund, Integrated Waste Management Fund and other relevant funds.
- Continue to support the statewide landfill surcharge to fund local programs and facilities, including an exemption for locally enacted landfill fees or other statewide solutions to address low-cost regional landfill issues.

The Impacts of Wasting, 2018

In-Depth Resources for the Sonoma County Zero Waste Initiative Suggestions

GLOBAL WARMING

The EPA chart illustrates the provision, transportation and disposal of products and packaging (37%) and provision of food (13%) are responsible for 50% of all US greenhouse gas emissions. [The Center for Climate Protection](#) reports that in 2016, Sonoma County residents and businesses sent 420,865 tons to the landfill, generating approximately 103,000 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent from decomposing organic matter. The [California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2016 – SB 32](#), requires that there be a reduction in GHG emissions to 40% below the 1990 levels by 2030. Zero Waste planning supports Sonoma County's 2020 Climate Action Plan.



EDIBLE FOOD DISCARDS

The 2017 Sonoma County Hunger Index reports that 32% of Sonoma County households were food insecure at some time during the year. It has been well documented that Americans throw out an average of 400 pounds of food per person per year representing up to \$218 billion dollars (1.3% of our GDP). By committing to the [EPA Food Waste Hierarchy](#) to feed people, feed animals, and feed the soil, we can reduce hunger in our community while mitigating the environmental impacts of food discards. Recent California legislation to reduce the landfilling of organics includes: [Mandatory Commercial Organics Recycling of 2014 - AB 1826](#), (requiring businesses that generate organic wastes to arrange for organic waste recycling services), and [Short Lived Climate Pollutants Reduction Act of 2016 - SB 1383](#) - (requiring a 20% reduction of edible food waste by 2025 and a 40% reduction in methane levels by 2030).

GREEN PURCHASING AND GREEN BUILDING

Sonoma County was an early leader in Environmentally Preferable Procurement, Green Purchasing and Construction and Demolition Reuse and Recycling. The existing ordinances, policies and programs would greatly benefit from being brought up to date and standardized while still balancing environmental considerations with performance, availability and financial costs.

EQUITABLE JOBS

Drivers and other waste and recycling workers are the 'first responders' for the refuse industry. Creating good jobs ensures low turnover, increased productivity and high quality services. Good jobs include a living wage, full-time work, predictable schedules, comprehensive benefits, ongoing training and the highest health and safety standards.

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Additional References, 2018

GLOBAL WARMING

- Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Agency, Climate Action 2020 and Beyond, <http://rcpa.ca.gov/projects/climate-action-2020/>
- Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Agency, 2015 Greenhouse Gas Inventory Update, Authority, <http://rcpa.ca.gov/data-and-reports/sonoma-county-greenhouse-gas-inventory/>
- USEPA, West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum, <https://westcoastclimateforum.com/>
- California Department of Food and Agriculture, California's Healthy Soils Initiative, <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/healthysouls/>

EDIBLE FOOD DISCARDS

- Sonoma County Food Recovery Coalition, Making Connections for Donating and Receiving Food, <http://ucanr.edu/sites/SCRFC/>
- Natural Resources Defense Council, Wasted: How America Is Losing Up to 40 Percent of Its Food from Farm to Fork to Landfill, 2017, <https://www.nrdc.org/resources/wasted-how-america-losing-40-percent-its-food-farm-fork-landfill>
- USEPA, Food: Too Good To Waste Implementation Guide and Toolkit, 2016, www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/food-too-good-waste-implementation-guide-and-toolkit

GREEN PURCHASING AND GREEN BUILDING

- Alameda County Waste Management Authority, Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Model Policy, 2014, www.stopwaste.org/resource/policies/environmentally-preferable-purchasing-model-policy
- San Francisco Department of Environment, SF Approved, www.sfapproved.org
- CALGreen, Construction Waste Management Requirements, 2014 www.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/Library/CandDModel/Instruction/CALGreenTbl.pdf
- CalRecycle, Construction and Demolition Diversion Informational Guide, 2014
- www.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/Library/CandDModel/

EQUITABLE JOBS

- US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries Summary, 2016, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cfoi.nro.htm>
- Los Angeles Network for a New Economy, Cleaning Up Waste and Recycling Management and Securing the Benefits: A Blueprint for Cities, 2015, <http://laane.org/research/?type=waste-recycling>
- GAIA, Safe & Sustainable Recycling: Protecting Workers who Protect the Planet, 2015, <http://www.no-burn.org/safe-sustainable-recycling-protecting-workers-who-protect-the-planet-2/>
- GAIA, Recycling Jobs: Unlocking the Potential for Green Employment Growth, <http://www.no-burn.org/recycling-jobs-unlocking-the-potential-for-green-employment-growth/>

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