

Wisconsin Council on Recycling Meeting Notes

Friday, June 5, 2026
Via Teams/Conference Call

Council Members Present: John Anderson, David Keeling, Marty Oxman, Mark Walter, Jarrod Holter, Jerry DeMers

DNR: Jennifer Semrau, Sarah Murray, Kate Strom Hirons, Casey Krausensky, Amy Dubruiel, Xia Lowery, Mallory Susdorf, Erik Flesch, Haylee Kraker, Peter Waples

Public: Kate Bailey, Association of Plastics Recyclers; Jeff Tapper, Sibelco; Josh Davenport, Tetra Tech; Kathy Hutter, Winnebago County; Allison Burr, Waupaca County; Susan Schuller, Recycling Connections; Eric Tapper, Pellitteri Waste Systems; Rob Michitsch, UW-Steven's Point; Abbie Liedtke, Collin Duffy and Jenna Biermann, Waukesha County.

Note- due to the call-in/virtual ability to join the meeting, some participants may not be properly identified above; omissions or errors are not intentional.

Agenda Item	Notes
Call to Order	Meeting called to order at 10:05 a.m.
Introductions and Announcements	Council members and attendees introduced themselves.
Approval of Minutes (March 2026)	Motion made by David Keeling and seconded by Jerry DeMers to approve the minutes of March 6, 2026. Motion carried (7-0).
DNR/Legislative Updates	Jennifer Semrau, DNR informed the council of various DNR staffing updates: • New- Organics Management LTE, Haylee Kraker, started June 3 to help with work under EPA SWIFR grant • New- Adam Brown, Licensing, Reporting, Compliance Specialist started June 3 to help with reporting, licensing, and public records requests • Retirements: Joe Lourigan (hydrogeologist plan review expert) and Bob Germer (northern/west central solid waste/recycling specialist) both retired in May • In recruitment process for advanced hydrogeologist emerging contaminants expert (from PFAS legislation) and battery management specialist (to implement battery law) • DNR will be creating a new Landfill Section to allow us to better focus on key landfill policy and regulatory issues. DNR will hire a new section manager and move some staff from the current Recycling and Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste and Beneficial Use section. The section will include the program's lead engineer and hydrogeologist. More details will be shared as the new section takes shape later this summer. J. Semrau, DNR informed the council of various Waste and Materials Management (WMM) program updates: • Reporting season recently wrapped up. Thanks to reporters. Reporters needed new MyWisconsinID to access reports. Now onto QA/QC. • Responsible Unit (RU) Recycling Grant checks distributed last month by June 1 deadline.

	• DNR submitted workplan for 2nd round of SWIFR funding (starting October 2026) to EPA by the end of May. (More later on agenda.) • DNR is waiting for EPA headquarters to review Wisconsin's coal combustion residuals rule package (which has been in effect for several years), which is the next step toward having an authorized program. J. Semrau, DNR informed the council of various rulemaking/legislative updates: • Recycling rule revision – working on getting new recycling ordinances from Responsible Units (RUs). • E-Cycle rule: The DNR held a public hearing May 28 on a permanent rule to revise ch. NR 530, Wis. Adm. Code, relating to implementation of E-Cycle Wisconsin requirements. The proposed rule language is also available to review and submit comments through June 5. (More later on agenda.) • Non-landfill solid waste rule (NR 500, 502, 520, 526, 157): Public comment period on Economic Impact Analysis will start in June. (More later on agenda.) Legislative Updates • AB 713/SB 703 Battery EPR Safety Bill ○ AB 911/SB 895 accompanying funding bill ○ Now WI Act 170/171 ○ Beginning to work on implementation J. Semrau, DNR informed the council of various upcoming meetings: • WMM Study Group 8/6 ○ Agenda TBD, probably via Teams ○ Looking for up to two (2) additional WMM Study Group members Q: Why is the landfill part of the program being separated? A: The Recycling and Solid Waste Section is currently the largest section in the WMM program.
Non-Landfill Solid Waste Rule Revision Update Slides	Casey Krausensky, DNR presented an overview of the DNR's Non-Landfill Solid Waste Rule revision (See link to slides at left.) Drafting has concluded and rules are now in the public comment period. Areas covered by the rule include storage, transport, transfer, processing, incineration, open burning, woodburning, composting, municipal solid waste combustion, infectious waste, landspreading, PCB waste management, license exemption and more. Comments are being accepted on the Economic Impact Analysis through July 17. Review the proposed rule (go to WA-14-24).
Electronics Recycling Rule Revision Update Slides	Sarah Murray, DNR presented an update on the E-cycle rule revision. (See link to slides at left.) Goals of the rule revision include addressing statutory changes to manufacturer targets and shortfall fees, clarifying collector reporting and recordkeeping requirements, and considering whether additional battery containing devices could be recycled under E-Cycle Wisconsin. Proposed additional eligible devices include digital cameras, digital music players, radios, walkie-talkies, and wearable devices with internet

	connectivity, such as a fitness tracker or smart watch, that is operated by a battery.
Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant Update Slides	Sarah Murray, DNR provided an update on DNR organics management work, including the Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant. (See link to slides at left.) Since the last council meeting update, DNR has prepared the workplan for SWIFR round two funding, continued stakeholder engagement, finished draft updates to composting regulations and hired a new organics waste management specialist (Haylee Kraker). A main component of round one work is a contract with Dane County and other subcontractors to provide one-on-one food service technical assistance. Round two highlights include hiring a full-time DNR staff member to lead efforts and continue focusing on residential and food service sectors, specifically development of tools/resources to facilitate food waste diversion along EPA Wasted Food Scale and potential funding to establish food service composting/anaerobic digestion programs. S. Murray also shared stakeholder input DNR received via a listening session on priorities for addressing barriers, infrastructure development and priority actions. Q: Is the DNR getting case studies from contract with Dane County? A: Yes. Q: Are stakeholders asking for a food waste landfill ban and increased landfill tipping fees? A: Included in the food waste evaluation report. Other states have phased these in over time. A tipping fee increase would be on all waste. D. Keeling: There would be a lot of push back. Concerned on economics. Increasing landfill tip fees shouldn't be on the table. M. Walter: Maybe in the future, increase fees. J. DeMers: Collection costs make up 75%, disposal is 25%. If you subsidize processing, transportation is still an issue. C. Krausensky: Proposing to waive licensing fee for source separated compostable materials (\$275). Q: Is WI an importer of waste? A: About neutral (some waste imported, some waste exported).
Current Economics of Plastics Recycling Slides	Kate Bailey, Association of Plastics Recyclers (APR) provided the council a plastics recycling market update. (See link to slides at left.) APR is an international non-profit and the largest North American organization focused exclusively on improving recycling for plastics. There are ~80 mechanical and physical reclamation plastics recyclers in the U.S. and Canada. Five billion pounds of plastic was recycled in North America in 2022. Recent challenges for plastic reclaimers include competing with virgin plastic, resulting in decreased sales/revenue and some facilities closing. This trickles down to the MRF and communities. A 10-year average of PET bale prices is \$0.13/pound. In March 2026, bale prices were \$0.0174/pound, a near record low. In 18 months, six plastic reclaimers closed or shut down their wash lines resulting in a 20% loss in U.S. processing capacity. Over 500 million pounds of processing capacity were lost and over 500 jobs. Four problems undermining PET plastics recycling include more and more new plastic, low price of new plastic, brands backing off sustainability targets, and influx of imported recycled plastics. APR recommends a number of solutions including minimum recycled content requirements, procurement goals, federal tax credit bill (CIRCLE Act), and recycled content goals and strong end market development in packaging EPR (extended producer responsibility) laws.

	Q: With the increase in oil prices, has there been an increase in virgin plastic prices? A: Gasoline went up immediately. For plastic pricing, there was no change in first/second month, then slight increase. Reasons are contracts protect against price hikes and producers were using up existing inventory. Oil prices do not deal with long term plastic market problems (likely to go back down). Q: Is imported plastic subject to tariffs? A: Yes. Tariffs have been variable. In some cases, tariffs leveled prices to the U.S. or imports were still cheaper. It depends on the country. Q: What is the impact of packaging EPR? A: Some states adopting packaging EPR already had bottle deposits, which are not subject to the new EPR program. What EPR does is put more focus on markets. Also concern that as more material comes in from EPR programs, prices will decrease. Q: What's next with China? Plastic reclaimer closures? How are they handling lower pricing? A: Can't keep growing as in past. New plants are on hold. But still will take years to absorb all the additional capacity they brought online. For China it is about dominating markets. Q: Do other plastics follow the same trends? A: Europe is seeing plant closures not just for PET but for other resins as well. Q: Who is the plastic processor on the map in WI? A: Not sure. Will need to look that up.
Recycling Markets Update Material Pricing Matrix Paper Material Pricing Matrix Containers	Mark Walter, Brown County/Council Chair shared graphs showing commodity market pricing for paper and containers. (See links at left.) Pricing for aluminum, HDPE natural, HDPE color and PP have increased in 2026, while PETE has decreased and tin/steel remained flat. Pricing for newsprint, corrugated cardboard and mixed paper have increased in recent months. However, since March (last month on graphs), overall markets are lower. Marty Oxman said HDPE color and natural are down this month. M. Walter asked why aluminum pet food containers are not acceptable. M. Oxman stated they are a different grade of aluminum and UBC (used beverage container) buyers are particular. David Pellitteri said paper markets are seeing life, but plastics have been up/down. David Keeling said a domestic aluminum smelter is coming online and a steel smelter is opening, which should improve pricing.
Recycling Compliance Update	Deferred to next meeting.
Public Comment	No comments.
Other Business/Next Meeting Dates/Topics/Location	Next meeting will be Sept. 11 with the location to be determined. Send topic ideas to J. Semrau.
Overview of Sibelco Glass Recycling Slides	Jeff Tapper, Sibelco shared an overview of Sibelco's glass recycling operation. Sibelco has 43 locations in North America. When Sibelco acquired Strategic Materials in June 2024, it became the largest glass recycler in the world. Recycled glass is used in containers, fiberglass, flooring, highway safety beads, sand replacements and more. Forty percent of single stream glass is suitable to be recycled into new containers versus 98% from deposit

	programs, due to contamination in single stream. When Sibelco receives three mix glass from MRFs, it first preprocesses it to remove metals, small plastics and paper. Next material is dried, non-glass material is screened off and material is sorted by size. Then glass is optically sorted to remove ceramics, stone and porcelain. Finally, glass continues to a second optical sortation by color (flint [clear], amber [brown], emerald [green]). View “How do we recycle glass?” video on YouTube.
Adjourn Business Meeting; Tour of Sibelco Glass Recycling Operation	Motion to adjourn business meeting made by Jarod Holter, seconded by David Pellitteri. Motion carried 7-0. Business meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m. Council members and members of the public toured Sibelco (formerly Strategic Materials) glass recycling operation.