

Comments on improving material management in CT

VW

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To: DEEP RecyclingProgram

Thank you for facilitating the working groups for municipalities. It is timely and my hope is that it bears fruit. I have put together my thoughts on ways that the State of CT could provide leadership and facilitate waste reduction.

1. Legislation, mirrored after the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act, that sets minimum recycled content for various products – cardboard, HDPE, LDPE, PP, glass, paperboard
2. Packaging EPR legislation, mirrored after the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act. Include “eco-points” for development of packaging reuse programs.
3. State invest in market development of recyclables
4. Fix the bottle bill - increase deposit, increase share to redemption centers in order to increase the number of redemption centers, add glass products – or fold it into a packaging EPR legislation
5. State grants for reuse market/system development (ie, a widely available system for reusable take-out containers), create a municipal reuse marketplace
6. Address food waste/wasted food
 - a. Legislation, like NY’s, requiring that facilities/institutions/businesses first manage food so it doesn’t go to waste
 - b. DEEP create permit to allow transfer station to compost on-site in leaf piles & streamline permitting process - eastern CT is a black hole for access to composting facilities
 - c. DEEP mirror the Institute for Local Self-Reliance’s recommendation that small, medium and large compost systems are equally valued and provide greater resilience
7. Legislation that requires building deconstruction – mirror after Massachusetts program

Additional thoughts about recycling contamination -

Haulers are supposed to notify towns if recyclables are mixed in trash. I have yet to have the driver contact me if there is a mixture in the trash. I think it would be fair to say this is not uncommon among towns/cities. We do have a contract that states that the hauler is supposed to notify us, but I don’t have the time to chase after them. I also don’t have time to do much enforcement. Most of the enforcement I do is reactive (when a resident calls with a complaint). When I think about how this could be resolved, I circle back to my points - #1, 2 &3. If we have strong regional market demand, it will be financially in the interest of the MRF (and hauler) to capture recyclables.

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