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California's 75 Percent Initiative Defining the Future

The Legislature and Governor Brown set an ambitious goal of 75 percent recycling, composting or source reduction of solid waste by 2020 calling for the state and the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to take a **statewide** approach to decreasing California's reliance on landfills. This represents the next evolutionary phase of waste management in California: an approach that makes current landfill diversion programs equal partners with materials management program to achieve the highest and best use of all materials in California. These goals cannot be met without motivation and action at multiple levels within both the private and public sectors. This mindset is also reflected in ongoing reforms within the Beverage Container Recycling Program to safeguard the recycling fund, combat fraud and maximize resource use.

75 Percent Strategy Published

The [Report to the Legislature](#) puts forth five strategies and three additional focus areas that can be pursued by the department, Administration or Legislature to reach the 75 percent recycling goal. They are not intended as an implementation plan, but rather a catalog of options for moving forward. Detailed recommendations include a mix of statutory and regulatory changes, infrastructure expansion, fiscal policies and incentives, as well as monitoring and enforcement. Additionally, moving more organics into the resource stream supports the state's broader environmental goals, in particular those contained in Governor Brown's Executive Order B-30-15 and addresses four of the Governor's climate change strategy pillars.

- Moving **Organics** Out of the Landfill
- Expanding the Recycling/Manufacturing **Infrastructure**: Permitting/Compliance Assistance and Financing
- Exploring New Models for **State and Local** Funding of Materials Management Programs
- Promoting **State Procurement** of Postconsumer Recycled Content Products
- Promoting **Extended Producer Responsibility**

Concepts are also included for three additional focus areas:

- Source Reduction
- Commercial Recycling
- Other Products (packaging, waste tires, e-waste and used oil)

The appendices summarize the concepts and current activities related to each concept. A more comprehensive listing of ongoing staff work and collaborations with sister agencies is described on the [focus area webpages](#).

Quantifying the 75 Percent Goal

To reach [the goal](#), an additional 23 million tons will need to be recycled, reduced or composted in 2020. That is based on an estimated 80 million tons of solid waste generated in 2020. We assume current recycling and composting efforts will account for at least the same recycling volume as 2013—about 37

million tons, and that 20 million tons would still go to disposal and disposal-related activities (alternative daily cover, alternative intermediate cover, beneficial reuse, transformation, etc.).

Measuring Statewide Progress

This new, statewide goal is different from earlier local government diversion mandates. The statewide goal is a recycling goal, not a diversion goal. It only focuses on source reduction, recycling and composting. The goal ensures that 75 percent is more than a numerical accomplishment, but rather one that brings into sharp focus the diverse reuse benefits of all waste stream components that could conceivably be kept out of the landfills. To measure statewide progress, CalRecycle will use the term “recycling” for a range of activities related to source reduction, recycling and composting (including anaerobic digestion). Waste-to-energy processes, alternative daily/intermediate cover, and other beneficial reuse at landfills is not included as “recycling” to measure progress toward 75 percent. However, activities that do not count as recycling for reaching the statewide goal may still have value as the highest and best use of a material compared to landfilling.

Development of Statewide Strategy

CalRecycle drafted a discussion document in May 2012, held workshops, and solicited survey responses to gather stakeholder input. The drafts organized the existing efforts and new ideas into “focus areas” which provided a framework for the statewide strategy. After additional input, a refined concept list and summaries of stakeholder comments was published in October 2013. Based on that input, CalRecycle’s recommendations were presented as a report to the Legislature.

Comments or Questions?

You can reach the CalRecycle team by email at 75Percent@calrecycle.ca.gov.

Workshops

Upcoming Workshops

- **October 10, 2017**: Packaging Reform. Focused discussion on screening criteria and data sources for determining priority packaging types for analysis relative to different mandatory policy approaches.
- **October 11, 2017**: Future of Electronic Waste Management in California-Part 4.

Past Workshops

Stay Informed

- **Follow CalRecycle activities and workshops on the [focus area webpages](#).**
- **Sign up for the [75 Percent Initiative listserv](#)** for email notification of workshops and activities related to the statewide 75 percent recycling goal.

Documents

If you require assistance accessing any documents on this page, contact CalRecycle's Office of Public Affairs at (916) 341-6300.

- ***AB 341 Report to the Legislature.*** Report outlines five strategies and three additional focus areas as potential pathways that can be pursued by the department, Administration or Legislature to meet California's goal to recycle 75 percent of its' solid waste by 2020. Preparation of the report was directed by the Legislature with the passage of AB 341. Includes a catalog of options for for statutory and regulatory changes as well as a snapshot of current activities and other recommendations for action at multiple levels.
- ***State of Recycling and Disposal:*** Report summarizes solid waste disposal, recycling and composting in California, particularly with respect to implementing the statewide 75 percent recycling goal.
 - [2017 Update](#) (August 15, 2017 monthly public meeting [presentation](#))
- ***State of Recycling.*** Report summarizes recycling and composting infrastructure in California, particularly with respect to implementing the statewide 75 percent recycling goal.
 - [2016 Update](#) (February 16, 2016 monthly public meeting [presentation](#))
 - [State of Recycling 2015](#) (March 24, 2015 monthly public meeting [presentation](#))
- ***State of Disposal.*** Report discusses solid waste disposal in California including the history of solid waste disposal in California since 1989, the disposal infrastructure, material flows within and out of California, tracking disposal, disposal fees and funding.
 - [2016 Update](#) (February 16, 2016 monthly public meeting [presentation](#))
 - [State of Disposal 2015](#) (March 24, 2015 monthly public meeting [presentation](#))
- ***California Exports of Recyclable Materials.*** Reports provide details regarding recyclables exported from California's ports, the amount shipped, and their value for various years.
 - [2016 Exports Report](#) (August 15, 2017 monthly public meeting [presentation](#))
 - [2015 Exports Report](#) (September 20, 2016 monthly public meeting [presentation](#))
 - [2014 Exports Report](#) (July 21, 2015 monthly public meeting [presentation](#))
 - [2013 Exports Report](#) (Background for August 2014 [presentation](#))
 - [2012 Exports Report](#) (Background for July 16, 2013 [presentation](#))
- ***Update on AB 341 Legislative Report: Statewide Strategies to Achieve The 75 Percent Goal by 2020.*** Update summarizes [stakeholder comments](#) and a revised concept list based on that feedback and ongoing staff work. (October 2013)
- ***AB 341's 75 Percent Goal and Potential New Recycling Jobs in California by 2020.*** Report reviews prior studies and, using current disposal tonnage and exports, forecasts job creation (manufacturing and collection/processing sectors) as a result of achieving 75 percent goal. (Background for April 16, 2013 presentation).
- ***Statewide Progress Presentation.*** Presentation reviewed statewide per capita disposal, diversion, and recycling rates for calendar year 2012. (June 18, 2013 Monthly Meeting)
- ***Creating New Jobs through Increased Recycling, Processing and Remanufacturing.*** Presentation reviewed prior state, regional and national studies to forecast future California jobs. (April 16, 2013)
- ***California's New Goal: 75 Percent Recycling.*** Initial discussion document of program concepts organized into focus areas. The concept summaries are "in development" and do not encompass all the nuances, variations or details needed to reach the statewide goal. (May 2012)
- ***What Does 75 Percent Recycling Mean?*** Presentation from May 14 and 21, 2012 workshops.

- **The Why and How of Measurement for a 75 Percent Statewide Recycling Goal**. Presentation from September 19, 2012 workshop.
 - **AB 341 (Chesbro, Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011)**. Statute that directed CalRecycle to examine existing efforts and propose strategies to reach the 75 percent goal.
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CalRecycle: <https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov>

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