

Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act Implementation

Follow up from September 2024 Legislative Days presentation

December 2024

The Legislature adopted the Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act in 2021 (SB 582). The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and Circular Action Alliance, a prospective Producer Responsibility Organization, presented a status update on implementing the Act at the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment September 24, 2024. Following is additional information requested by committee members.

EQC adopted second set of administrative rules

In November 2024, the Environmental Quality Commission adopted the second set of administrative rules to implement the Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act (RMA).

- The first set of administrative rules, adopted in November of 2023, included topics that would enable a prospective PRO to develop its program plan, including establishing the new statewide recycling acceptance lists.
- The second set of rules built upon the first by setting in place elements of the new program necessary for approval of the PRO program plan in early 2025 and a successful program launch in the summer of 2025.

Overall, the new rules set a solid foundation for changes to Oregon's recycling system that will bring modern, convenient, responsible recycling to our state.

Circular Action Alliance submitted final program plan draft

Prospective PRO Circular Action Alliance submitted the third draft of its program plan to DEQ on Dec. 6, 2024. The program plan describes how the PRO will meet its obligations under the law. Once approved by DEQ, the program plan is an enforceable document.

- The submittal is available on [DEQ's Recycling Modernization Act web page](#).
- In alignment with statute, this is the final draft of the plan. In early 2025, DEQ will approve the plan as is or will order changes to the plan in order to generate a final version that meets all statutory and rule requirements.
- Public comment on the plan will be open for 39 days, closing on Jan. 17, 2025, at 5 p.m. PST, and can be submitted to RethinkRecycling@deq.oregon.gov.

Circular Action Alliance will present information about its plan at the Dec. 13, 2024, meeting of the Oregon Recycling System Advisory Council. By law, the Recycling Council has an advisory role in the plan review process. For more information and to find the meeting Zoom link, visit the [Recycling Council web page](#).

Refined RMA budget shows lower program costs

The third and final program plan submission provides a much more precise estimate of program costs due to the results of the Oregon Recycling System Optimization Project (ORSOP), a program costing survey conducted by CAA in the summer of 2024. This effort yielded data that enabled CAA to refine cost projections and reduce program costs and producer fees in the final plan.

- The newly-revised program operating costs are reduced by approximately one-third compared with previous projections from March 2024. After system expansion investments are made, they will not be incurred again in future program plan cycles. This

represents 20% of the budget that is a one-time cost and would not be incurred by producers in subsequent program plan cycles.

- It is important to note that CAA is only covering a portion (approximately one-third to one-half) of the total recycling system costs, offering funding to stabilize some of the most volatile parts of the system that have limited its growth. The remainder of system costs, including approximately \$200 million per year in collection costs, is already supported by rate payers.

Oregon communities are preparing for RMA implementation

DEQ is working closely with local governments, service providers, and Circular Action Alliance (CAA) to support planning for RMA implementation in communities around the state.

- DEQ has hired new regional staff to provide technical assistance to local governments as communities around the state begin planning for RMA implementation.
- Later this month, CAA will begin reaching out to local governments and service providers in communities that will need PRO funding to expand recycling services to meet new requirements.
- CAA is launching a webinar series in January for all interested parties on a variety of RMA topics, including funding agreements, education and outreach materials, collecting and recycling materials on the new recycling acceptance list, producer fees, and more. The [first webinar](#) will be held Jan. 22, 2025.

Next summer marks the beginning of a rolling launch for local governments that will need to collect the expanded set of materials on the new Uniform Statewide Collection List.

- The law provides flexibility for communities reliant on PRO funding to expand recycling programs.
- For others, DEQ will provide technical assistance through January 2026 to allow local governments the ability to comply with new obligations on a timeline that makes sense for each community.

New educational resources are under development

CAA is in the process of developing free educational resources for local governments and service providers to use to promote the new statewide recycling list.

- Following Recycling Council review and DEQ approval, these tools will be made available in several batches beginning in February 2025.
- CAA has laid out a review process and timeline for each batch of draft educational resources that begins in January 2025.
- CAA will share its communications strategy for the educational resources and promotional campaign at the next [Recycling Council](#) meeting on Dec. 13, 2024.

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