

Let's Recycle Better, Together.



Today's Panelists







Jill Martin

Director of Community Programs

The Recycling Partnership

Cassidy Campbell

Program Manager

North Central Texas Council of Governments **Jill Aki Hrycyk** Senior Planner

Oregon Metro







Join the Discussion

From your toolbar:







Inconsistency is a Barrier to Recycling





Let's Recycle Better, Together.



Recycling's Brand(s)



















Inconsistent Messaging Causes Confusion























Next Panelists

Jill Martin

Director of Community Programs The Recycling Partnership









Harmonized Recycling

Simplifying the system and fostering interlocal collaboration for increased capture

Tuesday, July 15, 2025





Who We Are

The Recycling Partnership is a team of experts, practitioners, and thought leaders with real-world experience who are delivering on our mission of building a better recycling system.

Our Vision

A future where the burden of waste has been transformed into a beneficial resource.

Our Purpose

Protecting natural resources, building more sustainable communities, and ensuring that everyone who wants to recycle can recycle is at the heart of everything that we do.

Our Mission

Our mission is to build a better recycling system, one that delivers the economic and environmental benefits our communities and the hundreds of thousands of people who work throughout the recycling industry deserve.



Impact to Date 🗲

1 Billion Pounds of NEW Recyclables Captured

1.4 Million Metric Tons GHG Avoidance



*Cumulative Metrics 2015 – November 2024



Why Are Only 24% of Recyclables Captured in Households?



People support recycling, but they are confused and frustrated by inconsistent instructions

Less than half believe their recyclables are made into new things.



75% of people don't recall receiving communication about their recycling program.



In-home setups are insufficient and lacking point-of-decision supports.

Result: Higher contamination rates Lower overall capture

Harmonizing means bringing into consonance or accord.

- Aligning all stakeholders—MRFs, municipalities, educators—around shared messaging
- Coordinating guidelines so residents see the same instructions at home, work, and in public
- Not identical programs, but one unified narrative



Source: The Recycling Partnership, "MRFshed Report," August 29, 2017, <u>www.recyclingpartnership.org/mrfshed-report</u>



System-Wide Harmonization: Five Key Elements



Source: <u>The Partnership's State of Recycling Report</u>



Communities can achieve harmonization by:

- Establishing consistent material lists and terminology by MRFshed
- **Collaborating** to design outreach with consistent colors, imagery and **branding**
- Regional Outreach Campaigns
- Leveraging contracts & regulations
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)



Case Study

Peoria, AZ

2021 study tested different outreach strategies on 4 collection routes

Before:

Recycling = Brown Trash = Tan

After:

Recycling = Blue lid + education flyer

Result:

20.3% lower contamination







Peorakeeje



Case Study

Fort Collins, CO

New 2024 residential curbside hauling contract requires **standardized cart colors**. Recycling = blue Compost = green Trash =grey

Simplified, regionally consistent recycling guidelines

Statewide Momentum

Source: The Recycling Partnership. <u>*Case Study: Fort*</u> <u>*Collins, Colorado.*</u> June 2025.









The Recycling Program Solutions Hub **Effective and Innovative** Solutions to Increase Material In the Cart

An open-access, free tool for recycling program leaders to **access**, **track & verify** critical recycling program data.

Focused on connectivity and actionable **suggestions**, the Hub offers a wealth of resources and support for recycling program leaders. It facilitates a **two-way information exchange**, strengthening the system.

Williken Walmart ; org





Key Features

Interactive Map

Custom Recommendations

Learning Hub & Resources

Peer-to-Peer Networking



www.recyclingpartnership.org/recycling-program-solutions

Thank you!



www.recyclingpartnership.org/grants



We mobilize people, data, and solutions across the value chain to reduce waste and our impact on the environment while also unlocking economic benefits.

Live Poll #1

Webinar poll | 1 question | 83 of 137 (60%) participated

1. Which, if any, steps has your organization taken to harmonize recycling with neighboring programs? (Check all that apply) (Multiple Choice) *

83/83 (100%) answered

Color branding of waste streams	(54/83) 65%
Revised rules to be consistent	(27/83) 33%
High common 'always-acceptable' materials	(42/83) 51%
Use same terminology	(38/83) 46%
Collaborate on PSA outreach campaign	(21/83) 25%
Other (details in the chat)	(5/83) 6%





Next Panelists

Cassidy Campbell

Program Manager Dept. of Environment & Development North Central Texas Council of Governments







Harmonization: Bringing Consistency to Recycling Programs

Pou KNONOW?

Regional Recycling Survey & Education Campaign

Cassidy Campbell, Program Manager Environment & Development Department North Central Texas Council of Governments





What is the North Central Texas Council of Governments?

- Voluntary association of local governments
- Assists local governments in:
 - Planning for common needs
 - Cooperating for mutual benefit
 - Recognizing regional opportunities
 - Resolving regional problems
 - Making joint decisions



53 School and Special Districts



Regional Materials Management Program

- Funded through the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
- The Resource Conservation Council directs the funding and provides guidance and support
- Funding covers pass-through grants, regional projects, technical studies, outreach activities, and more





Regional Residential Recycling Challenges

- Low Participation Rates; High Contamination Rates
- Goal: Educate residents how to "recycle more and recycle right".
- Solution: Develop a simple and consistent message to amplify across the region so that residents "know what to throw".
- In 2018, the RCC initially allocated ~\$660,000 toward The Regional Recycling Survey and Education Campaign





Campaign Development Process



North Central Texas

Know What To Throw

- Focus on contamination
- Clear and consistent regional messaging
- Promotional activities lead by NCTCOG and amplified by participating entities







Valuable Material Disposed

- Estimated \$122 million potentially recyclable material disposed annually
- Recyclable plastics and metals represent highest value material with lowest capture rates in region
- Developed Acceptable Materials List for regional consistency and clarity





Top Prohibited Materials

- Tanglers
- Plastic Bags
- Propane Tanks
- Food/Yard Waste



Can Stock Photo - csp2316236



Needles/Medical Equipment







Know What To Throw

- TimeToRecycle Website
- Quiz



Do You Know What to Throw?





Know What To Throw

- Paid Promotional Activities
- Customizable Templates

WWWHAT TO THROW?

BOXES

NO BATTERIES

FLAT, DRY

PAPER

NO TANGLERS

TEST YOUR RECYCLING IQ

Funded through a grant from NCTCOG and the TCEQ

TimeToRecycle.com

 \triangle

For recycling to thrive, we need to recycle the YES things and keep the NO things out.

BOTTLES, CANS

For full list of what to recycle, visit

or call 972-205-2000

NO BAGS

GARLAND WWW.garland.tx.us

DID YOU KNOW?

ALWAYS RECYCLE

LEAVE THESE OUT

OF RECYCLING

YES!

Coordinated Launch Topics



0

BAGS OUT.







No Plastic Bags (take back to retail)

(empty all containers) No coloque comida ni líquido (vacíe todos los recipientes)





No Hoses, Wires or Chains No coloque materiales que puedan enredarse, cables



No Batteries





or call 817-459-6777 Funded through a grant from NCTCOG and the TCEQ

recycle





manqueras o cadenas











Promotional Activities

39068

- Billboards
- Buses, Trains, Benches, Posters •
- Radio
- Movie Theaters
- Print Media

- Digital Media
 - Social Media
- Printed Materials

Time To Recycle @TimeToRecycle - Jun 22 Hang ten and keep it loosel Recyclables should be kept loose in the cart, NOT bagged in plastic. Learn more at TimeToRecycle.com/KnowWhatToThro... #KnowWhatToThrow #TimeToRecycle #Surf #SurfArt

Keep recycables

Q 14

M.KNOWWHAT

oose.

TimeToRecycle.com

17 76 0 617

Challenges

• COVID-19

Department Name

- Existing local campaigns
- Staff capacity & turnover





Final Thoughts

- Campaign materials are free
- Can help smaller entities
- Partnerships
- Perseverance





orth Central Texas
Thank you!

Cassidy Campbell

Program Manager Environment & Development Department

North Central Texas Council of Governments

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Live Poll #2

Webinar poll	1 question	65 of 134	(48%) participated
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 If you've tried to harmonize with neighboring organizations/agencies what, if any, barriers did you experience? (Check all that apply) (Multiple Choice) * 				
65/65 (100%) answered				
Lack of internal leadership support	(19/65) 29%			
Lack of support from other organization's leadership	(19/65) 29%			
Complexity of different programs	(33/65) 51%			
Legal/contractual barriers	(14/65) 22%			
Cost to implement changes	(34/65) 52%			
Other (details in the chat)	(3/65) 5%			





Next Panelists

Jill Aki Hrycyk

Senior Planner

Waste Prevention & Environmental Services

Oregon Metro









July 15, 2025 Harmonization: How a region agreed to recycling and waste disposal messaging and design.



Presented by Jill Aki Hrycyk, Senior Planner Oregon Metro



What we'll cover

Goals Process User testing Outcomes Extended producer responsibility







Who we are

Metro is a regional government and planning agency. We work on solid waste, land use, housing, parks and transportation planning as well as key venues like the Oregon Zoo and Oregon Convention Center. We serve 24 cities in the Portland, Oregon area.







Today we'll talk trash... and recycling.



2030 Regional Waste Plan

Implement regional standards for collection containers, colors, signage and other related information materials for single-family, multifamily and commercial services.



Decal/signage project goal and audience

Create regionally consistent decals and signage for multifamily that meets the needs of all users.








The challenge: inconsistency, contamination and agreeing to one regional design.

Before the project begins, establish the process and trust the experts.

- Multifamily is the most challenging. Lead with it.
- Local government staff know the criteria and the haulers.
- Designers know accessible design.
- Community partners know the experience, firsthand.

Let the community partners select and approve the design.



Primary design criteria

Wayfinding best practices

Create consistency

• Message hierarchy, layout, size of elements

Accessible type

 Strong, familiar typefaces with unique characters, heavier weights and white space

Accessible color

• High contrast, ADA compliant, can't rely on color alone (use photos/icons to compliment color system)



Design criteria

- Local gov't staff determine decal and sign sizes
- Prioritize bin identification and sorting
- Be clear across age, language and culture (prioritize non-verbal cue)
- Be visually distinguishable in the cluttered garbage/recycling areas
- Show individual photos over group photos
- Use four-factor language analysis (Vietnamese, Russian, Spanish and Simplified Chinese)
- Have no logos or contact information





Most importantly, it needs to work for the users.

Two designs for testing

Design concept A





X NO: lids, lightbulbs, caps, broken glass, ceramics



All food, including meat, bones & coffee grounds



🔀 No pet waste, liquids, napkins, to-go containers, garbage

Garbage Basura Мусор Rác 垃圾



NO: TVs, computers, batteries, hazardous waste (flammables, paint, pesticides)

Design concept B









User testing



User testing process

- Co-created with Trash for Peace and Centro Cultural
- Residents provided feedback via printed surveys and over the phone
- A/B testing to measure decal effectiveness
- All participants indicated decal preferences

User testing participants



User testing participants



User testing priorities

- Layout preference (hierarchy, typography)
- Wording and visual comprehension
- Images (show accepted items vs. showing accepted and unaccepted items)
- Garbage decals with and without images of contaminating items commonly found in recycling stream



User testing feedback

Decal effectiveness

- Participants who reviewed **Decal Set B** did better for 4 of 7 items:
 - Takeout containers, coffee cups, yogurt containers and plastic lids
 - No significant difference for coffee filters, milk cartons and glass jars



Which bin does a plastic lid go into? (answer: garbage)



Decal preferences

Clear Preference for Decal Set B



Decal feedback

"Bright colorful pictures make it easier to understand what goes in each category."

"The different colors are helpful to distinguish the categories."

"The images for what not to throw away are helpful."

"Me gusta el B tiene otras fotos que nos indica que esos articulos no se ponen en ese contenedor."

Decal feedback from Environmental Promoters

"The more images, the better! Definitely having images for each section, including what should NOT go in the containers, is important. Definitely an improvement!"

"The large images makes it so much easier to know what each image is of. Previous signs had such small images it was hard to tell."

"El conjunto B esta muy bien explicado con imagenes y letras."

Final designs and outcomes









Extended Producer Responsibility

The next frontier



Moving forward: How do we integrate statewide/national recycling materials with our other waste stream messaging and EPR programs?



Circular Action Alliance design Recycle On

Portland Metro regional design

Thank you!



Our Panelists







Jill Martin

The Recycling Partnership

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North Central Texas Council of Governments

Jill Aki Hrycyk

Oregon Metro





Today's Program Online



- Recording
- Presentation slides
- Resources
- Chatlog

Link will be emailed in coming days

Archive of Past Programs



- Labels & Signage
- Rebuilding Confidence in Recycling
- Developing Bin Standards
- Reuse programs
- + More







Next Up:



CHANGING BEHAVIOUR CASE STUDIES & BEST PRACTICES TO INFLUENCE ZERO WASTE BEHAVIOUR

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD | 1:00 PM ET





Jennifer Tabanico Action Research

Gretchen Engbring Stanford University







Thank You to Our Panelists!







Jill Martin

The Recycling Partnership

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Jill Aki Hrycyk

Oregon Metro







Share Feedback with Presenters



Post-Webinar Survey:

- Prompt at end of program, or
- Look for Email tomorrow



