

SAVE MAINE'S MUNICIPAL RECYCLING PROGRAMS

Save taxpayer money and make recycling more effective.

Maine's recycling programs are struggling to survive.

- Mainers want to do the right thing for the environment by recycling but are increasingly frustrated by the lack of access and confusion about what is recyclable.
- Maine taxpayers must unfairly cover 100% of the cost of recycling. This broken system costs taxpayers an estimated \$16-\$17.5 million each year, forcing many municipalities to scale back or eliminate their recycling programs.
- Big corporations that are flooding Maine with plastic packaging pay nothing for the growing volume of waste they create, so they have no incentive to design less wasteful packaging or to ensure that packaging can be recycled.

Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging is a proven solution to help Maine towns.

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging has been successfully implemented in 47 jurisdictions worldwide and has a proven record of reducing taxpayer costs, increasing recycling rates well above 50%, expanding local infrastructure investments, and creating jobs.
- Under EPR for Packaging, large corporations like Amazon and Walmart pay their fair share by helping to finance recycling programs. Maine's small businesses and manufacturers will be exempted from participating.
- EPR for Packaging will help Maine finally reach its long-established 50% recycling goal, which would reduce as much carbon pollution as taking 166,000 cars off the road.

Maine towns support this solution to save taxpayer money and make recycling resilient to change:

- **More effective:** Producers of packaging materials would have an incentive to produce less wasteful packaging that can easily and profitably be managed by Maine's cities and towns.
- **More sustainable:** The current approach to recycling is not resilient to fluctuations in the global recycling market. EPR for Packaging protects Maine municipalities when global recycling markets are unfavorable.
- **More equitable:** Maine's taxpayers are currently footing the bill for a problem they didn't create. Under EPR, that burden shifts to producers of packaging, who would reimburse municipalities for the net costs of recycling the materials they create.

“THE COST OF RECYCLING HAS SKYROCKETED... EPR FOR PACKAGING IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION BY ASKING PRODUCERS TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION” – Maine Municipal Association



SUPPORT RECYCLING REFORM WITH EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PACKAGING.

For more information, please contact Sarah Nichols, Natural Resources Council of Maine, at (207) 430-0170 or snichols@nrcm.org.

Environmental Priorities Coalition



Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition is a partnership of 32 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations representing over 100,000 members who want to protect the good health, good jobs, and quality of life that our environment provides.

We are counting on Maine policymakers to take the important steps needed to protect Maine's extraordinary environment so Maine people and Maine communities can thrive.

