



Annual Report

NERC-NEWMOA Joint Strategic Action Plan

Prepared by Lynn Rubinstein, NERC Executive Director & Terri Goldberg, NEWMOA Executive Director
July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Introduction

In June 2017, the NERC and NEWMOA Boards of Directors entered into a [Joint Strategic Action Plan](#) to further action on matters of mutual concern. This first-of-its kind effort received national attention and commendation, including an in-depth article in *Resource Recycling* magazine. In the fall of 2019, that Plan was updated and expanded to reflect current priorities and activities (see http://newmoa.org/publications/NERC-NEWMOA_Joint_Strategic_Action_Plan.pdf). We are pleased to share the remarkable progress that has been made in the third year of the initiative.

Priorities for Action

The latest Joint Strategic Action Plan identified the following key areas of shared interest:

- Food scrap reduction, recovery, and management
- Recyclables collection strategies and impacts on manufacturing/end-users
- Increasing the use of recycled content in products
- Product stewardship
- Climate change and impacts on the recycling and solid waste infrastructure
- Waste tires
- Emerging contaminants in the solid waste stream
- Bottle bill coordination

This collaborative initiative has opened unexpected doors and opportunities for both organizations. In the past three years, we've taken on several significant programs with substantive results, advancing our missions and benefiting the industry.

Kaley Laleker, Maryland Department of the Environment

The Plan includes short and long-term strategies for each of these important challenges. A summary of third-year accomplishments under each topic area are provided below.

TOPIC: Food Scraps Reduction, Recovery, & Management

Task: Joint Food Recovery Workgroup

Accomplishments:

- Held Workgroup call in November 2019 (10 participants from state programs and EPA).
- Held Workgroup call in May 2020 (17 participants from state programs and EPA).
- Prepared and distributed notes.

Lead organization: NEWMOA

Task: Webinars

Accomplishments:

- Planned, promoted, and held a webinar, “Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic on Reducing and Recovering Wasted Food” with presentations by ReFED and the Harvard Food Law and Policy Center (HPLPC) in May 2020 (813 registrants).
- Promotional activities included:
 - Publication of a NERC Email Bulletin article: [Don't Miss NERC's Upcoming Webinars](#).
 - Sending notices to NERC's listservs.
 - Sending notices to NEWMOA's email lists of contacts.
- Recording and Slides: [What's New With Reducing & Recovering Wasted Food - webinar recording](#); or www.newmoa.org/events/event.cfm?m=412.

Lead organizations: NEWMOA and NERC shared responsibilities equally

- Planned and promoted a webinar, “AgStar’s Anaerobic Digestion Resource for Farms” for mid-July 2020.
- Promotion activities included:
 - Sending several notices to NERC's listservs.
 - Sending several notices to NEWMOA's email lists of contacts.

Lead organization: NERC

- Planned and promoted a webinar, “Practical Strategies for Reducing Wasted Food through Community Events” for early August 2020.
- Promotion activities included:
 - Sending several notices to NERC's listservs.
 - Sending several notices to NEWMOA's email lists of contacts.

Lead organization: NEWMOA

Tasks: State Program Support

Accomplishments:

- In anticipation of an EPA grant solicitation to promote the use of food waste in anaerobic digesters, interviewed people and developed topics for a grant proposal. The intent is for NERC and NEWMOA to submit a joint application. Grant application due in mid-July.

Lead organizations: NERC and NEWMOA shared responsibilities equally

- Updated a food waste calculator spreadsheet and post online (to be completed in July).

Lead organization: NEWMOA

Unsolicited comments from webinar participants

“Thank you for this awesome presentation!”

“Thank you for the resources!! Great webinar!”

“Thank you for this excellent and time critical webinar”

“Yet another awesome webinar! Thank you NEWMOA, NERC, ReFED, and HPLPC.”

This working relationship has brought together two great organizations that will continue to distinguish the northeast as materials management leaders and help address our common regional and national issues.

Peter Pettit, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

TOPIC: Recyclables Collection Strategies & Impacts on Manufacturing/End-users

Task: Regional Recycling Markets Committee

Accomplishments:

- Held monthly calls, prepared notes.
- Published three updates to the expanded paper recycling capacity report: [Summary of Announced Increased Capacity to the Use Recycled Paper - Updated March 2020](#).
- Published [North American Recycled Plastic Processing Capacity Increases](#).
- Researched and published directory of businesses in the region using post-consumer recycled content: [Recycling Businesses in the NERC Region that Process or Use Post-Consumer Recycled Content “Blue Bin” Materials after MRF Processing](#). Wrote an article for [Resource Recycling](#) about the directory.
- Conducted quarterly materials recovery facilities (MRF) surveys, analyzed results, and published three reports. Most recent: [NERC Report on Blended MRF Values Survey - May 2020 EPA Region 3 States](#).
- Received grant from EPA Region 3 to expand participating MRFs.
- Delivered talks by webinar about these resources and reports to:
 - Connecticut Solid Waste Advisory Committee (75 attendees).
 - Recycling Leaders (51 attendees).
 - Massachusetts Recycling Coordinators (100 attendees).
- Published NERC Email Bulletin articles and press releases about publications and distributed on listservs:
 - [Another Update Released - Summary of Announced Increased Capacity to Use Recycled Paper](#).
 - [NERC Releases Latest MRF Blended Value Report](#).
 - [North American Recycled Plastic Processing Capacity Increases – New Report Published](#).
 - [Updated Blended Commodity Values in the Northeast](#).
 - [Summary of Announced Increased Capacity to Use Recycled Paper – Updated November 2019](#).
- NERC Press releases:
 - [First Ever Report on Blended Commodity Value in the Northeast Released](#).
 - [Updated Blended Commodity Values in the Northeast](#).
 - [Summary of Announced Increased Capacity to Use Recycled Paper – Updated November 2019](#).
 - [North American Recycled Plastic Processing Capacity Increases – New Report Published](#).
 - [NERC Releases Latest MRF Blended Value Report](#).
 - [Summary of Announced Increased Capacity to Use Recycled Paper – Updated March 2020](#).
 - [NERC Releases Latest MRF Blended Value of a Ton Report - Region Expanded](#).

Lead organization: NERC

Task: Webinar

Accomplishment:

- Planned and promoted a webinar, “State Actions to Address Recycling Market Changes” for late July 2020 in collaboration with the Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (ASTSWMO).
- Promotion activities included:
 - Sending notices to NERC’s listservs.
 - Sending notices to NEWMOA’s email lists of contacts.

Lead organization: NEWMOA

TOPIC: Increasing the Use of Recycled Content in Products

Task: Workshop on using recycled content in road and infrastructure projects

Accomplishments:

- Developed Workshop agenda and recruited speakers, with a focus on:
 - Plastic corrugated drainage pipes with recycled content
 - Ground asphalt for roads
 - Use of crumb rubber in roads
 - Processed glass aggregate (PGA)
- April session postponed to November 17, 2020 due to the pandemic.
- Promotional activities included:
 - NERC Email Bulletin article: [Workshop Rescheduled - Increasing the Use of Recycled Content in Road & Infrastructure Projects - November 17](#).
 - NERC press release: [Unique Workshop Being Offered – Drive Recycling Markets for Hard to Manage Materials](#).
 - Sending notices to NERC’s listservs.
 - Sending notices to NEWMOA’s email lists of contacts.

Lead organization: NERC

Task: Webinar

Accomplishment:

- Planned, promoted, and held webinar in October 2019 on the use of compost in road and infrastructure projects (140 registrants).
- Promotion activities included:
 - Sending notices to NERC’s listservs.
 - Sending notices to NEWMOA’s email lists of contacts.
- Recording and slides: www.newmoa.org/events/event.cfm?m=394 or [Using Compost in Erosion Control & Infrastructure Projects - PowerPoint presentation](#), [Using Compost in Erosion Control & Infrastructure Projects - Recording](#).

Lead organization: NERC

Task: Recycled Content Workgroup

Accomplishments:

- Formed regional Workgroup to develop model legislation for minimum recycled content in products sold into a state.
- Held a kick-off meeting in May 2020 (5 state program participants), prepared and distributed notes.
- Conducted a survey in May and June to help select priority targets for model legislation. Expect to identify final scope early in FY 2021.
- Reached out to other organizations, including Eunomia and Reloop, to discuss their efforts.
- Held a meeting in June (9 state program participants) to continue planning and sharing information with Eunomia and Reloop.

Note: NERC has a separate initiative focused on model legislation for minimum recycled content requirements for glass containers sold into the region.

Lead organizations: NERC and NEWMOA shared responsibilities equally

Task: Webinars

Accomplishments:

- Started planning two webinars on minimum recycled content requirements and voluntary programs for FY 2021.

Lead organization: NERC

TOPIC: Product Stewardship

Task: Northeast EPR Network

Accomplishments:

- Held a conference call of state officials who are responsible for implementing EPR programs in July 2019 (8 participants).
- Held a conference call of the EPR Network in August 2019 (13 participants).
- Held a conference call of the EPR Network in November (18 participants).
- Held a conference call of the EPR Network in February (20 participants).
- Held a virtual meeting of the EPR Network in May (21 participants).
- Prepared and distributed notes.

Lead organization: NEWMOA

Task: Publications

Accomplishments:

- Drafted, finalized, posted, and publicized:
 - White Paper for EPR for Packaging - www.newmoa.org/solidwaste/EPR_for_PPP_White_Paper.pdf.
 - Fact Sheet on EPR for packaging - www.newmoa.org/solidwaste/NEWMOA_PPP_flyer.pdf.
- Promotional activities included:
 - NERC Email Bulletin: [NERC & NEWMOA Publish White Paper on EPR for Packaging & Paper Products](#).
 - NERC press release: [NERC & NEWMOA Publish White Paper on EPR for Packaging & Paper Products](#).
 - Sending out announcement about the publications via email to NEWMOA's lists of contacts.
- Drafted EPR for Packaging and Paper Products FAQ for posting in July 2020.

Lead organizations: NEWMOA and NERC shared responsibilities equally

TOPIC: Climate Change & Impacts on the Recycling & Solid Waste Infrastructure

Task: Workgroup

Accomplishments:

- Held conference call in February 2020; prepared and distributed notes.
- Participated in West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum monthly calls and shared information on their discussions with the Workgroup.
- Held a joint virtual meeting of the Workgroup and the Forum in June 2020 (13 participants from the northeast states and EPR Network).

Lead organization: NEWMOA

TOPIC: Waste Tires

Task: Publications

Accomplishments:

- Wrote, researched, and publicized [End-Markets for Used Tires in the Northeast](#).
- Promotional activities included:

- [NERC Email Bulletin article](#), [press release](#), and listserv announcements.
- Sending out an announcement to NEWMOA's email lists of contacts.

Lead organization: NERC

- Drafted a summary of state waste tire regulations and programs. Expect to finalize in early FY 2021.

Lead organization: NEWMOA

TOPIC: Emerging Contaminants in the Solid Waste Stream

Task: Science of PFAS Conference

Accomplishments:

- Held meetings of the Conference Planning Committee, planned sessions, and promoted the Conference - www.newmoa.org/pfassscienceconference/; prepared and distributed Committee meeting notes.
- Rescheduled to December 1-2 due to COVID-19.
- Contributed to NERC's Fall Conference.
- Made a presentation at NERC's Fall Conference on PFAS compounds in food service ware and packaging: [PFAS and Modern Life, Part 1](#).

Lead organization: NEWMOA

TOPIC: Bottle Bill Coordination

Task: Regional bottle bill group

Accomplishment:

- Supported NYSDEC in holding five conferences calls on state bottle bill programs.

Lead organization: NERC

TOPIC: Overall Coordination & Management

Tasks: Coordination and reporting on results

Accomplishments:

- Planned, promoted, and held a joint virtual meeting in April focused on "Overcoming Solid Waste & Sustainable Materials Management Program Challenges during the COVID-19 Crisis" (60 state and EPA participants); prepared and distributed notes.
- Promotion activities included:
 - Sending several notices to NERC's Board.
 - Sending several notices to NEWMOA's email lists of relevant contacts.
- Executive Directors spoke numerous times to develop materials and plan activities; exchanged numerous emails.
- Prepared quarterly reports and shared with the NEWMOA and NERC Boards of Directors.
- Prepared and distributed 2019 annual report on accomplishments and shared with the NERC and NEWMOA Boards and other state contacts.

Lead organizations: NERC and NEWMOA shared responsibilities equally

Summary of Accomplishments

NEWMOA and NERC's overall achievements during the third year of our Joint Strategic Plan included:

- Two successful organics and wasted food reduction webinars.

- Publication of two documents on EPR for packaging and paper products.
- Publication of eight resources on markets for recyclables.
- Publication of a resource on end markets for used tires.
- Formation of a new workgroup focused on recycled content legislation.
- Coordination of and support for six joint workgroups with numerous conference calls/virtual meetings.
- A well-attended virtual meeting focused on how state solid waste programs are managing during the pandemic.
- Regular reports for each groups' Board on the status of activities under the Joint Plan, in addition to an Annual Report.
- Regular, at least monthly calls of the NEWMOA and NERC Executive Directors to coordinate and plan activities.

In FY 2020, NERC and NEWMOA built on the momentum that began in 2018 under the Joint Strategic Action Plan. We organized a regional workshop focused on recycled content in roadway projects that had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Jointly planning workshops has resulted in unique and important educational opportunities. We will continue to plan and hold joint webinars and workshops (if possible) in FY 2021.

The publication of joint documents was important in FY 2020, and both organizations look forward to continuing to publish ground-breaking information resources on critical issues related to EPR, climate change, and other topics.

None of the work outlined above would have been possible without the dedication and hard work of the NEWMOA and NERC Joint Workgroup members, including the Food Waste Workgroup, the Regional Recycling Markets Committee, the Climate and Materials Working Group, the newly formed Recycled Content Legislation Workgroup, the Bottle Bill Group, and the Regional EPR Network. Their engagement is critical to the success of these initiatives, and NEWMOA and NERC appreciate their ideas and hard work.

About NEWMOA

The Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA) is a non-profit, non-partisan, interstate association whose membership is composed of the state environment agency programs that address pollution prevention, toxics use reduction, sustainability, materials management, hazardous waste, solid waste, emergency response, waste site cleanup, underground storage tanks, and related environmental challenges in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. NEWMOA' mission is to provide a strategic forum for effectively solving environmental problems through collaborative regional initiatives that:

- Advance pollution prevention and sustainability
- Promote safer alternatives to toxic materials in products
- Identify and assess emerging contaminants
- Facilitate adaption to climate change and mitigate greenhouse gas sources
- Promote reuse and recycling of wastes and diversion of organics
- Support proper management of hazardous and solid wastes
- Facilitate clean-up of contaminant releases to the environment

For more information, visit www.newmoa.org.

About NERC

The Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) is a multi-state non-profit organization whose programs emphasize source reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP), and decreasing the toxicity of the solid waste stream in the 11-state region comprised of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Its *mission* is to minimize waste, conserve natural resources, and advance a sustainable economy through facilitated collaboration and action. For more information, visit <https://nerc.org/>.