

Solid Waste Laws Revision



MICHIGAN Recycling Initiative

WHAT – Landmark legislation is being needed to refocus Michigan’s solid waste law on identifying and prioritizing the highest and best use of materials, before being dumped in a landfill.

WHY – In Michigan, we only recycle 15 percent of waste material, which is less than half the national average. At the same time, over 25 percent of our trash comes from other states and Canada. To improve how we recycle and plan for our waste materials, Michigan’s solid waste law must change. The solid waste law is the foundation for planning, development, and oversight of how waste materials are managed, and its current focus is on disposal. Its new focus will be on:

- Ensuring residents have convenient access to recycling services in their homes, businesses, places of work, and in all State of Michigan facilities. Wherever there is a garbage can, there also should be a recycling bin.
- Local planning for the siting and development of facilities for recovering waste materials, composting, and processing recycled material.
- Improvements to licensing provisions of landfills and better DEQ oversight of all material management facilities to minimize risks to people and the environment.

WHO – The DEQ is coordinating the development of the legislation with a broad-based team of stakeholders including representatives of local governments, business and industry, environmental and recycling organizations, consultants, and academia are working together on a bill that will create a culture that promotes the environmental, social, and economic benefits of managing materials more sustainably.

WHEN – Legislation will be introduced in Spring 2018. If enacted, the new law will trigger the development of new materials management plans by all 83 counties in 2020, with the first new plans approved by 2023.

The materials management legislation is one part of the statewide initiative to triple Michigan’s recycling rate. This comprehensive initiative also includes developing an education and engagement campaign; developing markets for recycled materials; leading by example through state government’s promotion and provision of recycling opportunities at State of Michigan facilities, parks, and rest areas; and securing stable, long-term public and private funding for the effort.

For more information about this initiative, visit www.michigan.gov/swra.

