

PRODUCTS & PACKAGING SUBCOMMITTEE: MEETING #2

Meeting Date/Time: Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 1:00pm-3:00pm

Meeting Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84638037035>

Attendees

Subcommittee Members

John Deuel, Oregon State University (Retired)

Kathryn Duvall, Oregon Legislature Environmental Caucus

Carly Mick, University of Oregon

Bailey Payne, Benton County

Staff

Facilitator: Elizabeth Start, Start Consulting Group

Subject Matter Expert: Joel Schoening, RRS

Researcher: Marcus Coleman, RRS

Notes

Key Takeaways

- Decided to focus on two main areas: textiles and bulky products/materials
- Identified key strategies for each focus area, emphasizing actions counties can take
- Recognized challenges in addressing product/package issues at local government level; some recommendations may need to be for state-level action

Topics

- Research Presentation on Material Focus Areas
- Highlighted programs addressing paper, plastic, textiles, wood/metal, and circular economy

Initiatives

- Examples included education programs, junk mail reduction, reusable foodware, textile recycling pilots, and bulky waste collection systems
- Discussed tension between focusing on specific materials vs. broader actions applicable across materials

Refining Focus Areas

- Debated approach: focus by material type vs. by action type
- Decided to structure by action, with materials as sub-categories
- Narrowed to two main focus areas: textiles and bulky products
- Recognized need to balance upstream interventions with practical local government actions

Strategies for Textile Circularity

- Policies for brand accountability on durability
- Local market development for textiles
- Textile recycling technology development
- Textile sorting and collection systems
- Data collection on textile lifecycles and waste

Strategies for Bulky Products

- County investments in furniture reuse/rental models
- Expanded collection/drop-off options
- Education on repair/reuse options
- Partnerships with thrift/reuse organizations

Challenges and Considerations

- Difficulty addressing broad product/package issues at county level
- Need to focus research on county-level actions while acknowledging state-level policy needs
- Importance of reuse systems and infrastructure, currently underfunded compared to recycling/disposal
- Balancing upstream interventions with practical local government capabilities

Ideas

Potential Focus Areas

- Textiles circularity
- Bulky materials/products

Strategies for Textiles

- Policy to hold brands accountable for durability and reducing fast fashion
- Developing local textile recycling and end markets
- Investing in textile recycling technology and infrastructure
- Improving textile collection and sorting systems

Strategies for Bulky Materials/Products

- County investments in economic development for furniture reuse and rental models
- Creating assessment/coaching services to help residents determine reuse/repair options for bulky items
- Advocating for extended producer responsibility policies for bulky items like furniture

Other Ideas

- Exploring a "reuse mall" or centralized reuse/repair hub model that could handle multiple material streams
- Focusing strategies on actions/interventions that counties can realistically implement vs. relying on individual behavior change
- The group discussed balancing upstream policy/systemic changes with more direct county-level actions and programs

Considerations

- Balancing focus areas and strategies that counties can directly implement versus those that may require higher-level policy changes or regional/state collaboration
- Ensuring the recommended focus areas and strategies are well-suited to the capabilities and sphere of influence of the county-level governments involved
- Recognizing that some material streams like textiles may be a smaller portion of the overall waste, but still warrant attention due to the potential for circularity and community impact
- Trying to identify "low-hanging fruit" or high-impact areas where counties can make meaningful progress, while also acknowledging the complexity of addressing broader systemic issues
- Considering how to structure the recommendations in a way that empowers and enables counties to work together regionally, rather than just acting in isolation
- Striking the right balance between providing specific, actionable strategies versus keeping recommendations high-level to allow for flexibility in implementation
- Ensuring the research and analysis done by the consultant team aligns with and supports the decision-making needs of the county representatives
- Overall, the group was thoughtful about making pragmatic, county-focused recommendations while also keeping an eye on larger systemic changes that may be needed

Action: Research and analysis

- Refine the focus areas down to 2-3 key areas, such as textiles circularity and bulky materials/products
- Develop specific strategies under each focus area, with an emphasis on actions that counties can directly implement
- Provide case studies and examples to illustrate the strategies
- Identify opportunities for regional collaboration versus individual county actions
- Quantify the potential waste diversion, economic, environmental, and social impacts of the proposed strategies
- Investigate successful models for textile recycling, reuse, and repair infrastructure
- Analyze barriers and enablers for counties to implement bulky waste collection, reuse, and recycling programs
- Explore extended producer responsibility policies for bulky items and textiles
- Assess the feasibility and benefits of a "reuse mall" or centralized reuse/repair hub model
- The group emphasized the need to focus the research on actions and strategies that are well-suited to the capabilities and sphere of influence of the participating counties, rather than getting too far upstream or systemic