

TUESDAY, May 13



REGISTRATION OPEN 7:30 A.M. (OPEN TO 6:00 P.M.)

TRAINING A 9:00 A.M. – NOON

Meeting Masterfully: Planning for and Running Effective Meetings

Sierra Schuetz, Ottawa County Department of Public Health

Let's break the habit of low-energy, unproductive meetings, and tense team discussions. This training will equip you with the tools and outlook you need to lead great meetings. Shift from routine agendas to intentional preparation to get the results you need. Shift from "having a meeting" to facilitating engaging discussions that lead to action. Learn how to navigate team power dynamics, build trust, and turn debates into connection and collaborative decision-making. Join us to transform the way you communicate, collaborate, and lead.

OR

TOUR 1 9:00 A.M. – NOON

Goodwill Muskegon Store and Donation Center & PADNOS Muskegon Recycling Center

The Goodwill Outlet Center in Muskegon receives unsold merchandise from nearby Goodwill locations, serving as one of the final stops for thousands of pounds of donated goods. Learn how the Outlet Center applies the waste management hierarchy by first prioritizing the resale of donated items at affordable prices for the community, and then as needed, shifts towards salvage and recycling to transform potential waste into valuable resources. Tour the facility and engage in a thoughtful discussion with attendees and members of the Goodwill team.

With 29 other locations in Michigan, PADNOS Muskegon boasts a state-of-the-art facility to engage with the full life cycle of multiple commodities, handling the processing and marketing of durable goods, paper, metals, plastics, and electronics. By engaging with both a facility tour and an on-bus visual presentation, attendees will gain knowledge about the crucial points and processes that recovery facility operators need to keep in mind - from densification ratios to processing capabilities and environmental impact data.

Vests and safety glasses will be provided as needed, and attendees are required to wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes and be prepared for inclement weather, such as rain.

LUNCH NOON – 1:00 P.M.

Provided to Tour, Training & Work Day participants only.

TRAINING B 1:00 – 5:00 P.M.

From Trash Talk to Viral Triumph: Mastering Social Media for Recycling

Jessica Shrout, Circle Three Branding

Ready to turn your recycling messaging from "meh" to magnetic? Social media isn't just for cat videos—it's a game-changer for educating, inspiring, and mobilizing communities to recycle smarter. Learn more about how social media is evolving and how you can develop a plan for generating a powerful social media strategy for your brand (or even yourself). In this hands-on workshop, you'll craft a real-world social media strategy for a loved recycling organization - think MRC & Recycle, Michigan. Through this example, you will learn how to leverage your brand identity, capture attention, spark engagement, and measure impact. With interactive exercises, smart templates, and a bit of digital magic, you will walk away with a strategy that's both practical and powerful to implement in your community. Whether you're a social media newbie or a seasoned pro looking to up your game, this workshop will help you clean up your content, not just your recyclables!

OR

TOUR 2 1:00 – 5:00 P.M.

Kent County Recycling and Education Center & City of Grand Rapids Compost

The Kent County Recycling and Education Center is a unique materials recovery facility that combines waste diversion with a robust educational center and program to educate residents on safe, environmentally sound management methods for everyday packaging and products. Get an inside look at their state-of-the-art



The MRC Conference App gives you access to the schedule, session and speaker information, exhibitor and sponsor information, and more. Get notifications, provide feedback on sessions, connect with attendees and share pictures. Get the "Michigan Recycling Coalition" in the App store.



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technology, including AI-powered sorting robots, and learn how these insider tools can enhance educational opportunities and promote positive recycling behavior. Attendees will also visit the SafeChem building next door, a facility explicitly designed for household hazardous waste collection.

The City of Grand Rapids' Denali-operated facility has been producing compost for the city since 2020, transforming municipal organic debris into valued compost. Learn how they embrace circularity by using both windrows and static piles to process organic waste from Grand Rapids residents and businesses. Attendees will remain seated on the bus for this tour, allowing for an in-depth, safe look into Denali's everyday compost operations.

Vests and safety glasses will be provided as needed, and attendees are required to wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes and be prepared for inclement weather, such as rain.

OR

AFTERNOON OF SERVICE PROJECT 1:00 – 4:00 P.M.

Great Lakes Plastic Cleanup: Litter Capture Technology & The Clean-up Club

Meijer and the Council of the Great Lakes Region have partnered to deploy innovative litter cleanup technologies in the Great Lakes. The BeBots and Pixie Drones, two types of robotic cleanup devices, are helping to remove a portion of the 22 million pounds of plastic that pollutes the Great Lakes each year. In West Michigan, Grand Valley State University operates these devices, collecting and characterizing waste found on the shorelines of Lake Michigan. See the Be-Bot in action and then participate in The Cleanup Club. This Michigan-based nonprofit is dedicated to educating communities on Great Lakes plastic pollution while having fun through cleanups, collaborations, conversations, and creativity, making art with collected material.

WELCOMING RECEPTION 5:00 – 6:00 P.M.

RRS invites attendees to kick off the networking fun with a quick refreshment and good company. Take a few moments to meet and greet other community and program leaders, equipment suppliers, manufacturers, material processors, and recycling professionals. We look forward to learning about your recycling goals and how we can build a strong circular economy in Michigan.

GRUB CRAWL 6:00 – 10:00 P.M.

Always a highlight of the MRC Conference, join fellow attendees to mix and mingle at a couple of fun venues in downtown Muskegon. We'll take a quick walk to vibrant downtown locales. Maps will be available. Light food will be provided at two chosen locations. You bring the conversation and fun! Thank you to Spurt Industries for sponsoring this fun event.



WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

REGISTRATION 7:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

BREAKFAST 8:00 – 9:00 A.M.

WELCOME & KEYNOTE PRESENTATION 9:10 – 10:00 A.M.

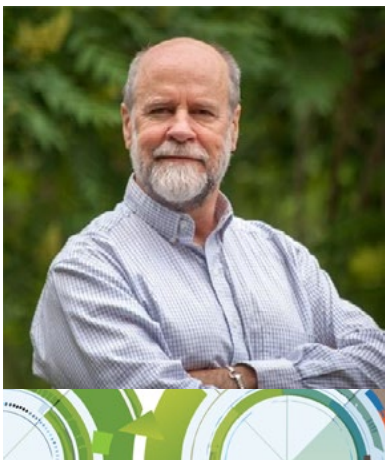
Michigan's Recycling Evolution – Progress, Challenges, and the Road Ahead

Jim Frey, CEO and Co-Founder of RRS

For decades, Michigan has been at the forefront of recycling and materials management, evolving from early planning efforts to today's ambitious circular economy initiatives. Jim will reflect on recycling's transformation and how policies, funding mechanisms, and public-private partnerships have shaped Michigan's recycling landscape. Drawing on his deep industry experience and national best practices, Jim will highlight key milestones—including Michigan's first curbside recycling program, NextCycle Michigan, and the launch of Materials Management Planning to bring focus to the next frontier for our materials management policies and programs. Gain insight into the opportunities ahead: strengthening infrastructure, securing sustainable funding, and embracing collaboration to accelerate Michigan's circular future.

Jim Frey co-founded RRS in 1986 and has served as CEO since its inception, bringing over 41 years of experience in developing sustainable systems for a waste-free future. His expertise in strategic planning, business economics,

Jim Frey



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and public policy helps drive action-oriented decision-making for both public and private sector clients. Jim specializes in high-impact consultancies, focusing on cost-effective strategies for system planning, risk assessment, and sustainability initiatives. His current work advances green supply chain infrastructure, zero waste strategies, and public-private partnerships. Jim holds an MBA from the University of Michigan Ross School of Business and is actively involved in nonprofit leadership.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS 10:10 – 11:00 A.M.

Cracking the Code on MRF Glass

Branden Stansley & Jim Richey, Recycle Services; Lindsey Walker, Emmet County

As a bottle bill state, Michigan already supplies valuable container glass for bottle-to-bottle markets. But the challenges of recycling the remaining MRF glass can seem insurmountable. The broken glass and contamination in the recycling stream and the cost to transport glass to market make it a breakeven proposition at best. Explore how glass is differentiated by type and quality for recycling, as well as what the best reuse opportunities are for this material. Understand the current infrastructure and markets in the Great Lakes region, get your questions answered, and be a part of identifying a set of solutions to get this material recycled while minimizing impact on your bottom line.

Advancing Recycling in Detroit through Delegation & Capacity Building

Kamryn Gardner & Justine Abbo, Green Living Science

Participation in the City of Detroit's recycling program has increased from 4% to 40%. As the primary educational contractor for the city, Green Living Science (GLS) bridges the gap between municipal programs and community engagement, by delivering tailored education strategies to residents, schools, and businesses. This session will share the recent history of solid waste and recycling management in the city, including the grassroots origins of Recycle Here! and the city's transition to an opt-in curbside residential program. Learn how GLS uses other innovative approaches, such as recycling ambassadors, youth engagement, K-12 school programming, and integrated workplace and multi-family recycling to grow recycling program participation.

Residential Food Waste & Municipal Drop-Off Programs

Jennifer McCullen, My Green Michigan

Food waste is estimated to make up almost 24% of Michigan's municipal solid waste, with a significant portion coming from the residential sector. One way to capture and recycle this valuable resource is through community drop-off programs which offer a proven path to introduce food waste recycling to residents. Learn about developing and existing programs, and explore the challenges and opportunities of these efforts. Understand how these types of programs can serve as pilots and be used to foster potential investments into expanded curbside collection.

What to Expect from Facility Permitting and Inspections

Phil Roycraft & Noah Rubio, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

With updates to Part 115, recycling and composting facilities will be required to notify, register, and/or apply for operating permits. Get an overview of these new authorizations and the underlying regulations for covered materials management facilities. Learn about the purpose of these changes, the permitting requirements, the inspection process, and the potential consequences or corrective actions necessary if facilities fail to meet compliance standards.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS 11:10 A.M. – NOON

Drop-Off & Multifamily Recycling Education & Opportunities

Samantha Longshore, Cassandra Ford, Jill Martin – The Recycling Partnership

After over 5 years and more than 400 projects in Michigan, The Recycling Partnership has researched, tested, and implemented dozens of strategies to improve recycling in drop-off programs, while also expanding efforts to include underserved populations in multifamily programs. Learn from existing programs about site access and improvements such as in-dumpster cameras, direct site feedback, mail-only behavior change campaigns, and measuring progress. Assess the effectiveness of your drop-off and/or multifamily recycling program, and explore strategies for program improvements with the resources and tools needed to meet diversion and/or material management goals.



This EGLE sponsored accelerator program provides free technical and business support.

Explore NextCycle Michigan opportunities now and at the conference.

<https://nextcyclemichigan.com/>



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EXPLORE the
future of recycling, organics
& sustainable materials
management in Michigan

BENEFIT

from fantastic Networking
Opportunities

LEARN from
thought-provoking Keynotes
and Presentations

MEET with Service
Providers & Product
Manufacturers who can help
you achieve your goals

EXHIBITION HALL

Dedicated Networking Hours
Wednesday, 5/14

Dessert & Coffee 1 – 2:30 P.M.

Reception 5 – 7 P.M.

Exhibition Hall Open 1 – 7 P.M.

How to Scale a Successful Organics Recovery Program

Jamie Zawila, *GT Environmental*

Launching a successful organics recovery program requires more than infrastructure—it demands a vision, strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and community buy-in. Understand the essential steps to developing or expanding organics programs and initiatives, from assessing existing material streams and funding to anticipating and planning for operational challenges. Whether you're building a composting facility, enhancing a collection system, or starting from scratch - seeing the path, identifying practical steps, and knowing the tools available to support you will provide important guidance to begin the work.

Community-Wide Reuse: Helping Those Most in Need While Making Less Trash

Jennifer Petoskey, *City of Ann Arbor*; Bryan Weinert, *Iris Waste Diversion Specialists*

Tired of seeing items in perfectly good condition piling up at the curb on trash day? Whether your community hosts a campus or has a high rental population, every community can support household downsizing and waste reduction. Hear about the City of Ann Arbor's ongoing work to create collaborative reuse opportunities that build on programs that already exist in communities. Learn how you can create synergies, connections, and partnerships to move materials and resources to those who need them. Understand how to craft a compelling story that gets stakeholders and citizens excited to participate in the circular economy.

Bridging the Gaps: Industrial vs. Curbside Recycling

Kari Bliss, *PADNOS*; Jess Loding, *Schupan*; Nadine Dirkse, *PADNOS*

While recycling is often seen as a singular system, industrial and curbside residential recycling systems operate with unique processes, challenges, and opportunities. This session will bring together key voices in the larger recycling ecosystem to examine these differences, identify common goals, and explore pathways to strengthen recycling outcomes statewide. Understand the nuances of service provision among the systems that service commercial, industrial, and residential systems and how these systems can be leveraged to level up recycling in your community.

NETWORKING LUNCH NOON – 1:00 P.M.

MRC Annual Meeting & Annual Report

Hear about MRC's progress this year and plans for next.

EXHIBITION HALL GRAND OPENING 1:00 – 2:30 P.M.

Mix and mingle with conference exhibitors, attendees, speakers, sponsors, and guests. Get a sneak peek at the items donated to the Fund Affair that we'll have for the raffle and silent auction! Bring cash and purchase raffle tickets from Board members or use a credit card to purchase tickets at the registration desk.

REGIONAL MEETINGS 2:40 – 4:00 P.M.

Northern Lower Peninsula

Alcona
Alpena
Antrim
Arenac
Benzie
Charlevoix
Cheboygan
Clare
Crawford
Emmet
Gladwin
Grand Traverse
Iosco
Kalkaska
Lake
Leelanau
Manistee
Mason
Missaukee
Montmorency
Ogemaw
Osceola
Oscoda
Otsego
Presque Isle
Roscommon
Wexford

Upper Peninsula

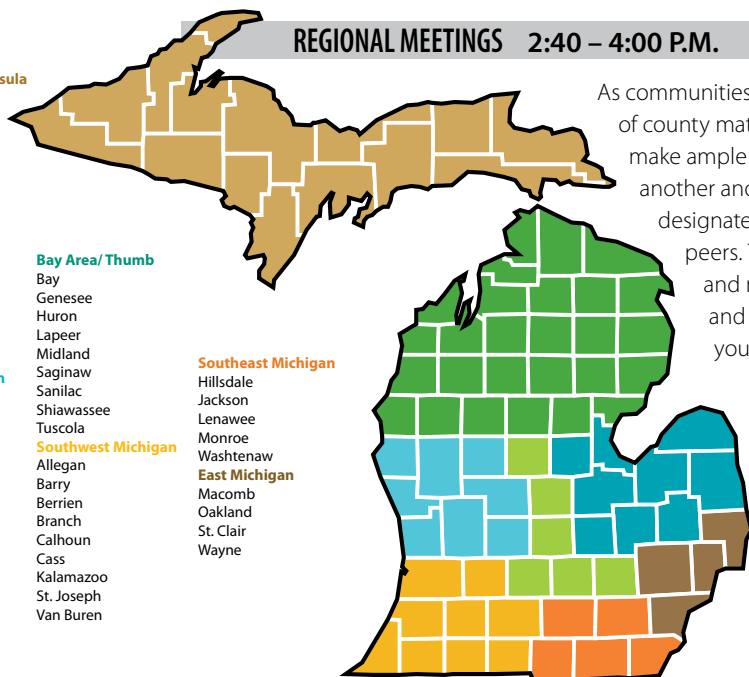
Alger
Baraga
Chippewa
Delta
Dickinson
Gogebic
Houghton
Iron
Keweenaw
Luce
Mackinac
Marquette
Menominee
Ontonagon
Schoolcraft
West Michigan
Ionia
Kent
Mecosta
Montcalm
Muskegon
Newaygo
Oceana
Ottawa
Mid-Michigan
Clinton
Eaton
Gratiot
Ingham
Isabella
Livingston

Bay Area/Thumb

Bay
Genesee
Huron
Lapeer
Midland
Saginaw
Sanilac
Shiawassee
Tuscola
Southwest Michigan
Allegan
Barry
Berrien
Branch
Calhoun
Cass
Kalamazoo
St. Joseph
Van Buren

Southeast Michigan

Hillsdale
Jackson
Lenawee
Monroe
Washtenaw
East Michigan
Macomb
Oakland
St. Clair
Wayne



As communities begin to consider the requirements and opportunities of county materials management planning, it's important that we make ample time and space for potential collaborators to meet one another and begin to discuss priorities. Join colleagues in eight designated MRC regions to share priorities and engage with your peers. The eight regions will convene in four groups to elevate and move local and regional topics in the right direction and influence state issues. Please check the map to find your region and join the conversation to grow recycling.

WED, 5/14 cont.



Your one-stop shop
for recycling information &
expertise!

Participate in informative
Educational & Training Sessions!

Get motivated to make
even more of a difference than
you already do . . . and have fun
doing it!

**FUND
AFFAIR**


CONCURRENT SESSIONS 4:10 – 5:00 P.M.

Where Does Microplastics Monitoring “Fit” in Circular Economy Development?

Dr. Yongli Wager, Wayne State University; Matt Naud, RRS; Jeff Gearhart, Ecology Center

Microplastics in the environment and in packaged food and beverages are a growing concern, sparking discussions around regulation and monitoring. What can the quantities and types of microplastics in water, soil, and air tell us about our current material handling operations and infrastructure design practices? What potential data, materials processing, and mitigation systems could support our goals for circular economies? Understand the challenges of microplastics and hear about an opportunity to confidentially monitor microplastics to inform research and get ahead of the problem.

Clarifying Compostable Labeling to Increase Diversion and Decrease Contamination

Alexander Truelove, Biodegradable Products Institute

States are starting to develop criteria for all products and packaging claiming to be compostable and even reusable or recyclable, in order to provide consumers with consistency and confidence about managing end-of-life products and packaging correctly. The Biodegradable Products Institute, an independent third-party certification entity, is working to support the development of clear labeling standards for compostable products that are certified based on a suite of testing criteria. Understand the roles of BPI, state law, and education when it comes to truth in labeling and explore the lessons learned with a focus on increasing participation and diversion, while decreasing contamination and pollution.

Mixed Dual-Stream Rural Recycling Drop-offs

Matt Biolette, Fleis & VandenBrink; Bill Haagsma, Speed-Tech Equipment; Brenda Taeter, Montcalm County; Chris Wren, Newaygo County

Providing cost-effective and convenient recycling services to rural communities doesn't have to be hard. Learn about the award-winning Montcalm County drop-off approach which Ionia County has recently adopted for two new sites in 2025. See how this low-maintenance, high-impact, mixed dual-stream drop-off recycling system is working, what's required, and how it compares to a traditional drop-off program. Hear from two county administrators about how their drop-off sites are funded and staffed and learn about other important components that make these programs successful.

Advocating for Resource Recovery Projects at the Hyper-Local Level and Up

Matthew Segal, StrategyCorp

Success in advocacy hinges on navigating the complex political landscape. Today, projects face intense public scrutiny from diverse stakeholders across multiple media platforms. Explore effective public engagement and grassroots advocacy strategies to mitigate risk and secure project approvals. Learn how to develop strong community engagement plans that align with your goals and leverage digital tools. Explore successful and unsuccessful approaches, empowering you to influence decision-makers in a rapidly evolving environment.

APPETIZERS & COCKTAILS WITH THE EXHIBITORS 5:00 – 7:00 P.M.

Join exhibitors and attendees for some much-needed networking in the Exhibit Hall. A progressive buffet and cash bar are the backdrop for more networking and professional socializing. Have projects or programs in mind? Find your contacts and get your questions answered here.

The MRC Fund Affair is a fun, fast-paced networking event featuring a range of recycled and useful goodies donated by generous supporters. Join in on the fun that brings in additional funding for MRC's Recycle, Michigan Campaign. Consider contributing a cool reusable or recycled item for inclusion. But whatever you do, bring cash to purchase raffle tickets from MRC Board members or use a credit card to purchase tickets at the registration desk.

EMERGING PROFESSIONALS GROUP NETWORKING RECEPTION 7:00 P.M.

Join colleagues at the third annual U.S. Compost Council Michigan Emerging Professional Group. While this networking opportunity is designed to welcome young professionals and those who are new to the field, ALL are welcome to attend - as the best networking happens when experienced professionals share in the fun, too! Don't miss this opportunity for more networking focused on the upcoming leaders. Location and details to follow.

THURSDAY, May 15



Robert C. Davis



The **MRC** has partnered with **Schupan**, a leader in Michigan's sustainable materials management and event sustainability to move our conference toward zero waste. Please do your part to make our zero waste event a success.



REGISTRATION OPEN 7:30 A.M.

BREAKFAST ROUNDTABLES 8:00 – 9:20 A.M.

Join colleagues for breakfast and conversation around regional projects, opportunities, and challenges or on topics of growing interest. Tables will have topics to get the conversation started.

KEYNOTE 9:30 – 10:30 A.M.

Navigating Toward the Big Opportunities of Planning

Robert C. Davis, Attorney

County Material Management Planning is the updated framework and a key to establishing how Michiganders will manage residential waste, organics, and recyclables. The learning curve may be steep and navigating the requirements may be challenging but once properly in place, this planning process will serve as a valuable tool for each county and the state as a whole. Attorney Robert Charles Davis has historically been involved in planning issues and is currently assembling multi-county agreements to comply with the planning requirements, while also supporting single-county efforts going forward. Learn about the more challenging aspects of the process and the expected benefits. Davis will explore the "lighthouse" opportunities and challenges of facility siting, funding, local zoning and ordinances, and other mechanisms such as authorities and flow control to provide the context needed for exploration and inclusion in a county plan. Understand the mechanisms of control and authority afforded in Part 115 as well as the role of the state, the county, and the municipality in enforcing these provisions.

Robert Charles Davis is a founding member of a firm that specializes in environmental law and civil litigation. He received his Juris Doctor from the University of Detroit. Mr. Davis is a graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy and served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Coast Guard from 1981 to 1986. Mr. Davis' experience includes zoning and land use disputes, environmentally impacted property transactions, religious rights litigation, and all aspects of municipal litigation. Mr. Davis has extensive experience at all levels of the State and Federal Courts of Appeal.

EXHIBITION HALL 10:30 – 11:00 A.M.

Mix and mingle with conference exhibitors, attendees, speakers, sponsors, and invited guests for one last time.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS 11:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

Curbside Recycling Education & Opportunities

Samantha Longshore, Cassandra Ford, Jill Martin – The Recycling Partnership

The Recycling Partnership has researched, tested, and implemented dozens of strategies to improve recycling in community curbside programs. Learn more about the results and pros and cons of curbside recycling projects focused on infrastructure, quality improvement, and participation. Assess the effectiveness of your recycling program, identify the best strategy for improving curbside recycling systems based on previously researched and tested strategies, and see where you can get the resources and tools needed to implement a strategy to effectively meet diversion and/or material management goals.

Construction Debris Management & Your MMP

Dr. Vimala Anishetty, Fishbeck; Kristen Wieland, RRS

The EPA estimates that in 2018, 600 million tons of construction and demolition debris were generated in the U.S., more than twice the amount of municipal solid waste! Finding productive ways to manage and reuse this material stream is important to many large organizations and manufacturers with zero-waste-to-landfill goals. Learn about inspections at several construction sites and observed waste management practices that are leading to insights on policies and practices that drive the highest recycling rates possible. Learn how Materials Management Planning enables counties to integrate C&D debris management into long-term strategies, aligning with Michigan solid waste law. Gain an understanding of market opportunities, policy drivers, and best practices that communities across the country are using to make an impact.



THURS, 5/15 cont.



NextCycle Michigan Mini-Showcase

Details to come

Curious about NextCycle Michigan and wondering what it could do for your program? Haven't attended a NextCycle Showcase but interested in learning more about the types of projects that are being accelerated? Learn more about NextCycle through this mini-showcase session. Five NextCycle Team will "pitch" their initiatives to the audience and the audience will choose their winner. Learn about some of the innovative teams and projects that have benefitted from NextCycle and get your questions about NextCycle answered.

Demystify Your Data and Set Goals for Materials Management

Tracy Tomaszewski, Madi Oppershauser, Aubree Carlisle, Devan Dodge, Jeffry Krcmarik, DJ Droste, Christina Miller, and Amy Karana – Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy

Program managers understand the value of good data to inform their investment in strategic programming. Materials Management Planning will make access to good data even more important. EGLE staff will share available resources and opportunities for stakeholders to begin or enhance data collection efforts that both inform setting a baseline goal and tracking progress toward identified materials management goals. Review the EGLE-provided framework for setting materials management goals and explore key topics to consider in materials management plans.

LUNCH 12:30 – 1:30 P.M.

MRC Awards of Recycling Excellence Presentation

PANEL 1:30 – 2:30 P.M.

Exploring the Future of Michigan's Bottle Bill

Shoshannah Lenski & Tamanna Sengupta, U of M; Erik Petrovskis, Meijer; Conan Smith, Michigan Environmental Council; Anna Lee, Public Sector Consultants

Michigan's Deposit Law is the subject of perennial interest by all involved and this year it's getting extra attention. Historically, Michigan led the nation in bottle redemption, but today the system faces modern challenges such as declining returns and operational inefficiencies at a time of increasing demand for recycled materials. Through this plenary panel, learn about two different research studies being led by the University of Michigan and Public Sector Consultants on Michigan's Deposit Law. Hear preliminary feedback researchers are gathering from stakeholders through interviews and workshops on the bottle recycling ecosystem. Understand the key challenges, policy considerations, and the latest ideas for getting more containers into the circular economy.

EXHIBITION HALL

Dedicated Networking Hours
Thursday, 5/15

Networking 10:30 – 11:00 A.M.

Exhibition Hall Open 10:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

MRC Members Get Preferred Pricing for the Conference.

Become a member now for a conference registration discount and also benefit from weekly newsletters, access to a great network of recycling professionals, and representation at the state level on issues important to the future of recycling - all year long. The online registration form provides an opportunity to become a member. <https://michiganrecycles.org/become-a-member-of-the-mrc/>

Consider Exhibiting & Sponsoring!

The MRC Annual Conference & Trade Show attracts state and municipal recycling representatives, waste, recycling, and composting equipment suppliers, waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and composting professionals in the public and private sectors, recycled product manufacturers and distributors, and other industry stakeholders. There are still a variety of opportunities to support the Conference. Learn more on the MRC website.