

Pathways to Zero Waste

Launching Innovation: Transforming Materials Management in CT

October 4, 2012



CHANGING HOW WE THINK ABOUT OUR RESOURCES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Pathways to Zero Waste

What do we mean?

What is EPA doing?

How can we get there?



CHANGING HOW WE THINK ABOUT OUR RESOURCES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Sustainable Materials Management

Sustainable Materials Management is an approach to serving human needs by using/reusing resources most productively and sustainably throughout their life cycles, from the point of resource extraction through material disposal. This approach seeks to minimize the amount of materials involved and all the associated environmental impacts, as well as account for economic efficiency and social considerations

Source: U.S. EPA www.epa.gov/smm



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Sustainable Materials Management



 **Rethink**

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EPA's Regional Zero Waste Efforts?

- Zero Waste Pilot Communities
- Pathways to Zero Waste – Resource Guide
- Creating an Assessment Tool



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What does zero waste look like?

It is not about getting to zero

It does not accept current disposal processes

It is a commitment to pursue zero waste to be on a path to zero waste.



CHANGING HOW WE THINK ABOUT OUR RESOURCES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Pillars of Zero Waste



Upstream



Downstream



Green Businesses & Jobs

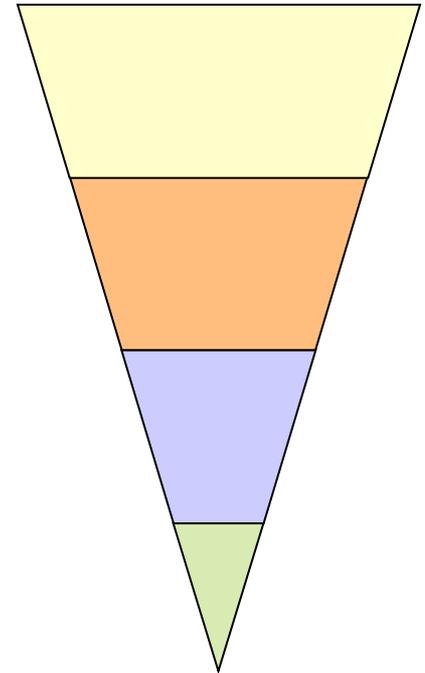


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Pillars of Zero Waste Upstream



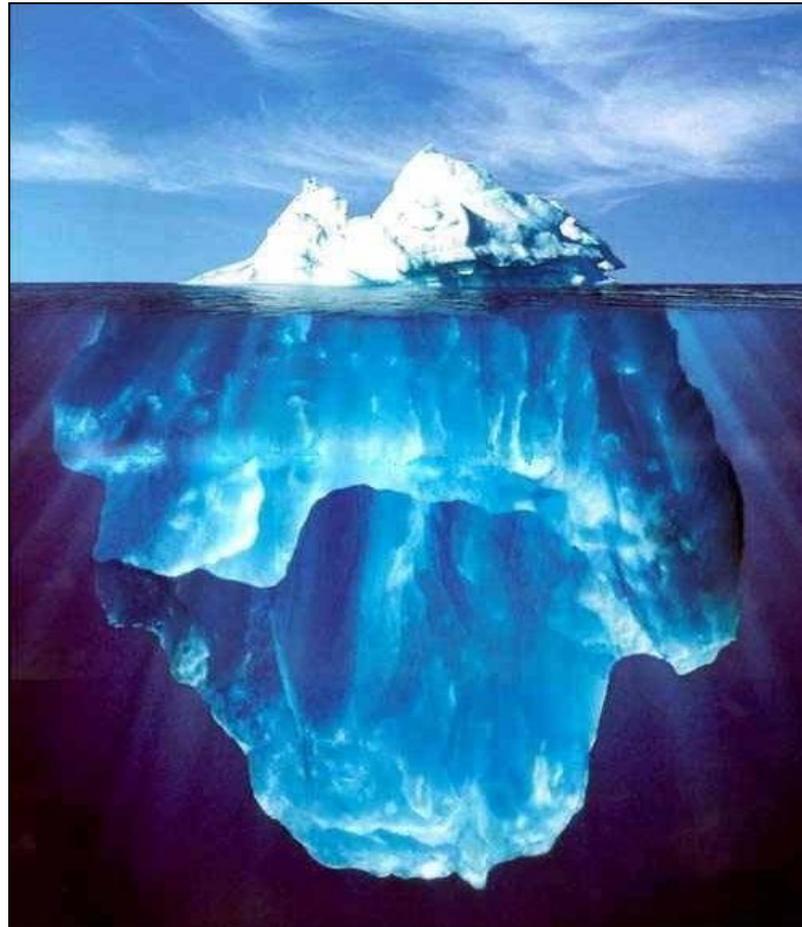
- Up Stream
 - Clean Production
 - Product Redesign
 - Extended Producer Responsibility
 - Product Stewardship



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Upstream = 71 x Municipal Discards



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Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)



- Businesses take back products & packaging at no cost to the public
- Advocate for state and national EPR policies
- Incentive to redesign products to be less toxic and easier to reuse and recycle
- Don't export harm and properly reuse, recycle or compost



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Reduce First!



- Design out waste
- Waste is not inevitable
- Businesses save the most by eliminating inefficient practices
- Refuse and return
- Takebacks



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Downstream



- Ensure the **highest and best use** of products and packaging at the end of their useful lives
- **Reuse** products and packaging, retaining their **original form and function**
- Recycle or compost materials that are not reduced or reused



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Pillars of Zero Waste – Green Businesses & Jobs

- Recycling Industry = Size of Auto Industry
- 10,000 tons of Municipal Discards =
 - Landfill - 1 job
 - Composting – 4 jobs
 - Recycling – 10 jobs
 - Reuse – 75 to 250 jobs

Source: Institute for Local Self-Reliance, www.ilsr.org



CHANGING HOW WE THINK ABOUT OUR RESOURCES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Pieces of Zero

- Comprehensive recycling programs
 - Multi-material
 - As convenient as trash
 - Available to all generators
- Organics diversion
 - Yard trimmings
 - Food scraps
 - Compostable paper
- C&D diversion programs
 - Generator and Hauler -based
 - Facility-based



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More Pieces of Zero

- Zero waste policies
 - “New rules”
 - Disposal bans
 - Mandatory recycling
 - Product stewardship
 - Comprehensive outreach and technical assistance
- Zero waste infrastructure
 - Neighborhood scale
 - Reuse and recycling
 - Materials recovery
 - C&D processing
 - Organics processing



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