

Recycling Education Committee (REC): Team Charter

Last edit: 1.10.2022

Team Purpose: The purpose of the group is to improve the quality of recycling while increasing recycling participation and capture rates. REC works to do this by building consensus on what is universally acceptable/not acceptable for recycling across Minnesota and agreeing on consistent messaging to communicate in an efficient and coordinated fashion. REC can help identify recycling contamination and problem-materials that are challenging the industry (like plastic bags) and communicate uniform resistance on such products. REC is also a forum to share information amongst stakeholders about current recycling issues and acceptable/not acceptable materials including: a given material's impact on operating costs; availability; market value; potential quantity; and environmental and social impacts.

REC equips recycling professionals with the tools and planning needed to disseminate recycling messages to their communities, customers, and regulators. REC does not interact directly with the public. Rather, REC makes content that recycling professionals can use as-is (or edit to better fit their programs) on a variety of different communication platforms. Examples of tools include: communications calendar, newsletter content, social media posts, signs, cart tags, etc.

REC has four main subgroups:

1. **Communications Calendar and Toolbox**
2. **Outreach Guide**
3. **Haulers**
4. **Wishcycling Solutions**

1. **The Communications calendar and toolbox group mission:** to curate tools in REC's community drop-box; plan the yearly calendar that highlights one "main" and at least one "secondary" topic per month, and publish a monthly email to REC's listserv with links to upcoming topics and communications strategies. The purpose is for recycling educators to push out the same content to the public.
2. **The Outreach Guide group mission:** to periodically update REC's outreach guide so that it reflects current recycling conditions across the state. This involves taking into consideration responses to an annual Material Recovery Facility (MRF) survey on what materials are problematic in the system and what they can actually market for recycling. The guide also includes resources for reuse when available.
3. **The Haulers group mission:** to reach consensus among haulers and maintain good consistency/communication as a unit, across the state. Haulers may discuss best management practices (BMPs), pertinent issues and problem solving. The haulers will especially focus on productive messaging for all recyclers with a special initiative to better communicate with multi-unit housing.
4. **The Wishcycling solutions group mission:** to identify materials in the marketplace that are mislabeled or questionable (like recyclable plastic bag liners). If needed, the group will advocate for their removal from Minnesota businesses' shelves. This relies on the

consultation of all REC members for coordinated responses and leveraging members' connections.

Duration and Time Commitment: REC strives to include an assortment of voices from industry, state, county, and municipalities throughout Minnesota. Not all general members are required to serve on a subcommittee. Any significant changes made in subcommittees will need to be brought before the REC steering committee and then the general committee for discussion. Every REC steering team member is required to serve on at least one REC subcommittee.

The REC General meetings will take place a minimum of three times per year, with at least one meeting of the subgroups between general meetings. Meetings will be about 90 minutes long. REC general meetings will sunset when a majority of REC members determine that REC is no longer serving its purpose.

In scope: Recycling, recycling markets education, behind the scenes at a MRF, how recycling works, recycling behaviors/motivations, product stewardship, recycling MSW, stop wishcycling, recycling/deconstruction for C&D, serving as a sounding board for general recycling system improvements which could also potentially inform policy.

Out of scope: Recycling market development (in terms of operational upgrades, economics, or trades). Recycling market development will be a topic of conversation only so much as it impacts education changes. Compost is not a main topic, unless considering whether or not composting is an acceptable way to handle a non-recyclable material. Lobbying is also not in scope.

Members and Responsibilities: Any person from any organization or individual may become a member of REC at no cost. REC membership means that person is on REC's listserv, receives all REC general communications, has access to REC's memberclick's discussion platform (hosted by Recycling Association of Minnesota), and is invited to every REC General meeting. Any REC member may volunteer to work on a REC subgroup.

Supporting Resources: REC owes a great deal to the Recycling Association of Minnesota and Minnesota Waste Wise for developing and hosting a Dropbox account (asset library), which includes the Recycling Outreach Guide and the Toolkit of materials previously developed by The Recycling Partnership (thanks in part to a grant from MPCA and the Environmental Protection Agency).

Deliverables:

- REC White Paper
- Recycling Outreach Guide
- REC monthly email
- Communications calendar and plan for distributing materials to members
- Accessible Dropbox of materials
- Accessible Toolkit of resources developed in part, by The Recycling Partnership
- REC Memberclicks forum access

Processes:

Gaining membership access: New members may sign up by contacting MPCA staff (kayla.walsh@state.mn.us). Membership consists of meeting notifications, notes, and interim access to discussions via the RAM Memberclicks platform.

Decision-making: The general REC group makes consensus-based decisions. Consensus means that we aim for all parties to agree to a decision, but REC will support a position if 75% or more of the voting members vote in favor of the issue.

In the case of making changes to the Recycling Outreach Guide, a consensus means that 90% or more of MRFs in Minnesota either accept or do not accept a material in order for it to be listed as “always or never” in an appropriate category. In order for a material to be listed as “Accepted for recycling at the majority of MRFs, but one or more MRFs do not accept them” or “ NOT accepted for recycling at the majority of MRFs, but one or more MRFs do accept them” 75% or more of MRFs in Minnesota must be in agreement. MRF survey data will inform the consensus, but where data is not available, REC will gather as much anecdotal evidence as necessary to inform a decision.

Leadership: REC’s evolving priorities will be determined, annually, by the REC Steering Team. The Steering Team must have representation from at least one of each of the following demographics: municipality; city; county; state government; haulers; and material recovery facilities. Membership should be geographically representative of the entire state.

Recycling Education Committee STEERING TEAM: Team Charter Sections

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Team Purpose: REC steering team members determine REC priorities for the coming year, annually, and ensure those priorities are met through organizing and attending regular subcommittee meetings.

Duration and Time Commitment: REC steering team members make a commitment to two years of serving on the steering team. This involves quarterly meetings (approximately 90 minutes long) and work between meetings. REC steering team members are required to serve on at least one subcommittee and actively recruit new REC members.

Members: There will be a set minimum of 7 members and a set maximum of 12 members. The steering team could decide to change the maximum and minimum based on need, if there is a consensus to do so. Members may self-appoint (or accept a nomination from fellow members) to join the steering team. Any person from any organization may become a member of the REC steering team. The Steering Team must have representation from at least one of each of the following demographics: municipal, city, county, state government, haulers, and material recovery facilities. Membership should be geographically representative of the entire state.

Responsibilities: Steering team members will be called upon to host REC general meetings. Hosting responsibilities include: setting the agenda, coordinating presenters if needed, sending out the agenda and meeting invite, providing the necessary space and/or technology for the meeting, and facilitating the meeting. Steering team members will also work to promote REC and increase membership via active recruitment. Every REC steering team member is required to serve on at least one REC subcommittee.

Processes: Gaining membership access: When the REC steering team seeks new members, the call will be open to all REC members. If there are more candidates for the steering team than there are available

openings, the REC general group will vote to select steering team member(s). The candidate(s) receiving the most votes will be appointed to the REC steering team. A set number of appointees will be determined ahead of time, by consensus of the steering team. Only one vote is cast, and members are appointed in order of popular vote, until the steering team is full. A term is two consecutive years. Members may not serve two consecutive terms, but there is no lifetime cap on number of terms served.

Decision-making: The REC steering team will require a group consensus before making any decision that directs REC or otherwise affects REC as a whole. The steering team will first seek a 100% consensus decision, but the REC Steering Team will support a position if 75% or more of the voting members vote in favor of the issue. REC steering team will seek input regularly from the greater REC group and REC subcommittee meetings.