



Annual Report

NERC-NEWMOA Joint Strategic Action Plan

Prepared by Lynn Rubinstein, NERC Executive Director & Terri Goldberg, NEWMOA Executive Director
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

Introduction

In June 2017, the NERC and NEWMOA Boards of Directors entered into a Joint Strategic Action Plan to further action on matters of mutual concern. In the fall of 2019, that Plan was updated and expanded to reflect current priorities and activities. Every year NERC and NEWMOA jointly develop a workplan that relates to the priorities outlined in the Joint Strategic Plan. We are pleased to share the remarkable progress that has been made in the fifth year of the joint initiative. After the close-out of each fiscal year (July 1 to June 30), the organizations jointly issue an Annual Report to share their accomplishments. The following outlines joint accomplishments during that period for Fiscal Year 2022.

Priorities for Action

The organizations have identified the following key areas of shared interest:

- Food scrap reduction, recovery, and management
- Improving quality and end-markets for recyclables
- Increasing the use of recycled content in products
- Extended producer responsibility
- Climate change and impacts on the recycling and solid waste infrastructure
- Emerging contaminants in the solid waste stream
- Household hazardous waste
- Bottle bill coordination
- Waste tires
- Construction and demolition (C & D) materials

The collaborative work between NERC and NEWMOA continues to bring tremendous value to the Northeast states. Each organization brings its own unique perspectives and expertise, with the result that their combined strengths provide a rich and varied array of projects, resources, and events that keep stakeholders engaged and push for improvements in the way we think and talk about waste.

Megan Mansfield Pryor, Maine
Department of Environmental
Protection, NERC Board President

The joint Strategic Action Plan includes short and long-term strategies for these important challenges. A summary of fifth-year accomplishments under each topic area are provided below.

TOPIC: Food Scraps Reduction, Recovery, & Management

Task: Joint Food Recovery Workgroup

Accomplishments:

- Held joint virtual meetings of the NEWMOA – NERC Food Recovery Workgroup in October (15 participants) and March (15 participants) to share updates and discuss plans; prepared and distributed notes.

Lead organization: NEWMOA. Josh Kelly, Vermont DEC is the Workgroup Chair.

Task: Webinars

Accomplishments:

- Planned, promoted, held webinars, and posted recordings and slides on NERC and NEWMOA’s websites:
 - “Growing the Food Upcycling Economy”, July 2021 (360 participants/694 registrants) (NEWMOA was the lead)
 - “Avoiding Contamination in Food Waste Feedstock for Composting”, June 2022 (311 participants/521 registrants) (NERC was the lead)
 - “Food Waste Reduction Strategies and Tools for Businesses and Institutions”, April 2022 (340 participants/656 registrants) (NEWMOA was the lead)
 - “End Markets for Finished Compost”, February 2022 (404 participants) (NERC was the lead).
 - “Fate of Non-Organic Packaging Materials from De-Packaging Operations”, November 2021 (359 participants/595 registrants) (NEWMOA was the lead)
- Began planning additional food recovery webinars for FY 2023

Lead organizations: NERC and NEWMOA shared responsibilities.

TOPIC: Improving Quality & End-Markets for Recyclables

Task: Regional Recycling Markets Committee

Accomplishments:

- Planned and held 11 meetings with an average of 16 participants/meeting from state agencies and NERC Advisory members
- Prepared and distributed agenda and invited guest presenters.

Lead organization: NERC. Chaz Miller, NERC Board member, is the Committee Chair.

Task: Publications

Accomplishments:

- Published one update on expansion of announced paper recycling capacity:
 - [Summary of Announced Increased Capacity to use Recycled Paper Updated March 2022](#)
- Conducted quarterly surveys of MRFs in the region and published four reports on the results:
 - [NERC Report on Blended Value of a MRF Ton in the Northeast - August 2021](#)
 - [NERC Northeast Recycling Market Report October 2021](#)
 - [NERC Northeast Recycling Market Report January 2022](#)
 - [NERC Northeast Recycling Market Report April 2022](#)

Through the MRF Quarterly Report and the data on increased recycled paper manufacturing, this Task Force has sustained NERC and NEWMOA’s reputation for national leadership. Task Force members benefit from the monthly markets report and meetings with companies buying or processing recyclables.

Chaz Miller, NERC Ex Officio Board Member, Committee Chair

- Published many NERC Email Bulletin articles and press releases about publications and distributed on listservs

Lead organization: NERC.

Task: Webinars

Accomplishments:

- Planned, promoted, held webinars, and posted recordings and slides on NERC and NEWMOA’s websites:
 - “Jobs & the Economy: Recycling Economic Information Studies”, October 2021 (256 participants/443 registrants).

Lead organization: NERC.

TOPIC: Increasing the Use of Recycled Content in Products

Task: Joint Post-Consumer Mandatory Minimum Recycled Content Model Legislation Workgroup

Accomplishments:

- Held joint Workgroup meetings focused on the development of model legislation: July (7 participants); August (7 participants); October (7 participants), November (7 participants) December (7 participants), April (7 participants), two meetings in May (7 participants), and June (4 participants); prepared and distributed drafts of model legislation.
- Invited guest expert presenters to participate in some meetings.
- Finalized the draft plastics model legislation in January.
- Issued a press announcement; posted the draft model; and solicited comments in January.
- Compiled comments so they were easier to review.
- Reviewed the comments and revised the model based on comments received.

Lead organization: NERC. Cathy Jamieson, Vermont DEC was the Workgroup Chair for part of the year.

Task: Joint Webinars

Accomplishments:

- Planned, promoted, and held webinars and posted recordings and slides on NERC’s and NEWMOA’s websites:
 - “Model Plastic Post-Consumer Recycled Content Legislation Overview”, January 2022 (131 participants/200 registrants)
 - “Recycled Content Mandates: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly”, January 2022 (622 participants/944 registrants)

Lead organization: Both organizations equally.

The joint workplan developed by NERC and NEWMOA is very beneficial to member states that are facing similar materials management challenges. Coordination on a regional level for these key areas helps states to acquire a common understanding of the issues and to develop consistent approaches to the challenges being faced.

Chris Nelson, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), NEWMOA’s 2022 Solid Waste and Sustainable Materials Management Program Chair

TOPIC: Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Task: Joint Northeast EPR Network

Accomplishments:

- Held joint virtual meetings of the NERC – NEWMOA Northeast EPR Network in September (17 participants); December (17 participants) and March (11 participants) and to talk about EPR priorities and ideas for regional coordination; prepared and distributed notes.

Lead organization: NEWMOA. Tom Metzner, Connecticut DEEP is the Network Chair.

Task: Joint Webinar

Accomplishment:

- Planned, promoted, and held webinar and posted recording and slides on NERC’s and NEWMOA’s websites:
 - “EPR for Gas Cylinders” (167 participants/253 registrants)

Lead organization: NEWMOA.

TOPIC: Climate Change and Impacts on the Recycling and Solid Waste Infrastructure

Task: Joint Workgroup and West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum

Accomplishments:

- Participated (NEWMOA) in 9 virtual meetings the West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum to learn about their efforts and to discuss increased coordination.
- Held Climate and Materials Workgroup meetings in November (26 participants); February (17 participants); and June (17 participants) to work on the Consumption Based Emissions Inventory (CBEI) Project; prepared and distributed notes.

Lead organization: NEWMOA.

Task: Joint Webinar

Accomplishment:

- Planned, promoted, and held webinars and posted recording and slides on NERC’s and NEWMOA’s websites:
 - “Achieving Net Zero Greenhouse Gases in the Solid Waste Industry”, October 2021 (319 participants/573 registrants). NERC was lead.
 - “Purchasing Specifications for Low Carbon Concrete”, June 2022 (236 participants/461 registrants). NEWMOA was the lead.

Lead organization: Both organizations equally.

TOPIC: Emerging Contaminants in the Solid Waste Stream

Task: Science of PFAS Conference and Webinars

Accomplishments:

- Collaborated on planning the Science of PFAS Conference
- Convened 5 Science of PFAS Conference Planning Committee meetings to plan the 2022 Conference. Prepared and shared notes on the results of the meetings.
- Communicated with Conference speakers, managed registration, and logistics.
- Held the Conference on April 5 - 6 (540 participants).
- Held follow-up virtual meetings of states and EPA on April 28 - 29 (108 registrants).

- Posted PowerPoint slides on the Conference agenda webpage.
- Posted pictures on the Conference app.
- Shared results of the virtual meetings.

Lead organization: NEWMOA.

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)

Task: Joint Workgroup

Accomplishments:

- Held virtual meetings in October (18 participants) and April (6 participants); prepared and distributed notes.

Lead organization: NEWMOA. Mia Roethlein, Vermont DEC was the Workgroup Chair.

Bottle Bill Coordination

Task: Regional Workgroup

- Led a regional Bottle Bill Committee that meets regularly. The group focuses on sharing information and strategies. Several years ago, this effort was led by NYSDEC and involved both NEWMOA and NERC. Starting in 2022, NERC leads this effort; NEWMOA is no longer involved.

Lead organization: NERC.

Additional: Joint Grant Proposal

Task: Joint Proposal to EPA

- Prepared and submitted a joint proposal to EPA to conduct a compliance assistance and environmental justice (EJ) project for anaerobic digestion operations in the region (will be funded by EPA). EPA Region 2 will be awarding the grant. Revised paperwork submitted, awaiting the official award authorization.

Lead organization: NEWMOA.

Additional: Environmental Justice Workgroup

Task: Regional EJ Workgroup

- Formed a regional EJ Workgroup that started to meet in FY 2022. NERC staff is involved in the Workgroup, and NERC Board members are invited to join.
- Held virtual meetings in July (19 participants), September (15 participants), January (14 participants), and May (13 participants); prepared and distributed notes.

Lead organization: NEWMOA.

TOPIC: Overall Coordination & Management

Tasks: Coordination and reporting on results

Accomplishments:

- Executive Directors spoke numerous times to develop materials and plan activities; exchanged numerous emails.
- Prepared quarterly reports and shared with the NERC and NEWMOA Boards of Directors
- Prepared, distributed, and posted 2021 Annual Report on accomplishments and shared with the NERC and NEWMOA Boards and other state contacts.
- Prepared annual workplan.

Lead organizations: NERC and NEWMOA shared responsibilities equally.

Summary of Accomplishments

Especially given the extraordinary circumstances that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the universal need to adjust how to function as organizations, NERC and NEWMOA's overall achievements during the fourth year of our Joint Strategic Plan included:

- Joint Webinars:
 - Five organics and wasted food reduction and recovery webinars for 1,774 participants
 - Two recycled content standards and programs webinars for 753 participants
 - One webinar on EPR for gas cylinders for 167 participants
 - Two climate and materials webinar for 555 participants
 - Total of 10 joint webinars with 3,249 participants
- Other activities:
 - Science of PFAS Conference in March 2022 for about 540 participants
 - Publication of five resources on markets for recyclables, in addition to webinar resources
 - Successful joint grant proposal to EPA to support a project to promote expansion of anaerobic digestion in the region; project to get underway in July 2022
 - Coordination of and support for six joint Workgroups or Committees with numerous virtual meetings
 - Regular reports for each groups' Board on the status of activities under the Joint Plan, in addition to an Annual Report
 - Regular, at least monthly meetings of the NERC and NEWMOA Executive Directors to coordinate and plan activities

In FY 2022, NERC and NEWMOA built on the momentum that began in 2017 under the Joint Strategic Action Plan. Jointly planning training and information sharing events has resulted in unique and important educational opportunities for significant numbers of participants. We will continue to plan and hold joint webinars and other training activities in FY 2023.

None of the work outlined above would have been possible without the dedication and hard work of the NERC and NEWMOA Joint Workgroup members, including the Food Recovery Workgroup, the Regional Recycling Markets Committee, the Climate and Materials Workgroup, Recycled Content Legislation Workgroup, Household Hazardous Waste Workgroup, and the Regional EPR Network. Their engagement is critical to the success of these initiatives, and NERC and NEWMOA appreciate their ideas and hard work.

About NERC

The Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) is a multi-state non-profit organization whose programs emphasize source reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP), and decreasing the toxicity of the solid waste stream in the 11-state region comprised of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Its *mission* is to minimize waste, conserve natural resources, and advance a sustainable economy through facilitated collaboration and action. For more information, visit <https://nerc.org/>.

About NEWMOA

The Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA) is a non-profit, non-partisan, interstate association whose membership is composed of the state environment agency programs that address pollution prevention, toxics use reduction, sustainability, materials management, hazardous waste, solid waste,

emergency response, waste site cleanup, underground storage tanks, and related environmental challenges in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. NEWMOA' mission is to provide a strategic forum for effectively solving environmental problems through collaborative regional initiatives that:

- Advance pollution prevention and sustainability
- Promote safer alternatives to toxic materials in products
- Identify and assess emerging contaminants
- Facilitate adaption to climate change and mitigate greenhouse gas sources
- Promote reuse and recycling of wastes and diversion of organics
- Support proper management of hazardous and solid wastes
- Facilitate clean-up of contaminant releases to the environment

For more information, visit www.newmoa.org.