EPR IN THE US
WHAT’S WORKING AND WHY
Northeast Recycling Council Fall Conference
November 13, 2017
Are you ready to effect change?

since 1986
SINCE 1986, RRS has expanded its services throughout the value chain:

- Planning/Implementing recycling and composting programs.
- Planning/Implementing materials management and zero waste solutions.
- Waste and compliance training.
- Developing/Facilitating collaborations to increase commodity recovery.
- Analyzing the recyclability and compostability of packaging.
- Evaluating anaerobic digestion and biomass facilities.
- Food waste prevention and organics recovery planning.
- Reviewing/Negotiating hauler and MRF contracts.
- Designing/Permitting MRF and composting sites.
- Developing/Implementing multi-stakeholder communications and outreach.

Much of our work is customized to the client’s situation. Talk to us to see if we are the right fit to help you effect change.
**WHO WE ARE**

- **30** years in recycling and managing resources
- **40** employees in 3 countries
- **660** years combined field experience
- **1,000** projects across 9 markets
A TIMELINE OF EPR IN THE US

1987
NERC founded

1990
Thomas Lindqvist coins the phrase EPR in report
to Swedish Government

1991
German Packaging EPR/
Green Dot

1994
EU Directive
on Packaging
& Packaging
Waste

1996-2006
OECD Analyses/ reports on EPR

1996-1998
US President’s Council on Sustainable Development Explores EPR

1980s
Beverage Container
Deposits

1994-1996
Rechargeable Battery EPR

2006-2013
Thermostat EPR

2009-2016
Flourescent Light Bulb EPR

2009-current
Paint EPR

2012 - current
Pharmaceuticals
EPR

2013
Mattress EPR

2014
VT Single Use
Battery Recycling
EPR

2003-2014
E-Scrap EPR

2002-2006
Mercury Switch EPR

2009-current
CA Carpet EPR
Maine EPR Framework

2010
VT Single Use
Battery Recycling
EPR

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WHY CHOOSE EPR?

- Increase diversion and recovery
- Reduce cost to government
- Incorporate the cost of recycling / end-of-life management in the cost of the product
- Improve the design of products to reduce environmental impact
CHALLENGES IN EVALUATING EPR PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

• Pre-program data not available in most states, so before and after comparisons are difficult

• Little data available on recovery of most EPR target products in non-EPR states

• Limited visibility into local government budgets, pre- and post-EPR implementation to evaluate cost savings
DOES EPR ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES?

- Increase diversion and recovery
- Reduce cost to government
- Incorporate the cost of recycling/end-of-life management in the cost of the product
- Improve the design of products to reduce environmental impact
DOES EPR INCREASE RECOVERY? CT EXAMPLE

CHANGE IN E-WASTE COLLECTED

MATTRESSES RECYCLED & DISPOSED: 2010-2015

Source: Product Stewardship Institute for CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
DOES EPR INCREASE RECOVERY? CT EXAMPLE

TRC CT THERMOSTAT COLLECTIONS, 2008-2015

LATEX AND OIL-BASED PAINT COLLECTED: 2008-2016

Source: Product Stewardship Institute for CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
DOES EPR INCREASE RECOVERY? PAINT EXAMPLE

PAINT COLLECTED PRE- AND POST-EPR

Pre-EPR = first full year of data after EPR implementation
Note that in 2016 some total collections decreased slightly, but sales were also lower and so the recovery rate may have increased.

Source: PaintCare Annual Reports
DOES EPR SAVE GOVERNMENT MONEY? CT EXAMPLE

TOTAL STATE & LOCAL GOV’T PAINT MANAGEMENT COSTS

Source: Product Stewardship Institute for CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL EPR PROGRAMS

• Convenient collection
• Dedicated funding streams
• Clear responsibility & accountability
• Performance standards (convenience or “rates & dates”)
• Incentives
• Oversight & enforcement
OTHER CONTRIBUTORS TO SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

• Transparency / reporting requirements
• Environmental management standards
• Disposal bans
• Education & outreach
DOES EPR INCREASE RECOVERY? E-SCRAP EXAMPLE

PER CAPITA E-WASTE COLLECTION, 2015

*State has an e-waste landfill ban
**Data is for a different year (Delaware 2016, Kansas 2013, South Dakota 2011)

Note: This chart presents available data on program performance, but does not provide an “apples to apples” comparison as the covered products and entities (e.g., residents, businesses, schools, etc.) vary from state to state.

Source: ERCC (EPR States); State websites (non EPR states)
EPR
CHALLENGES: CHANGING ROLES

• Appropriate roles for state and local governments
• Proper balance of responsibility & authority
DRIVERS FOR EPR MOVING FORWARD

• Government budget challenges continue
• Market challenges / export restrictions hamper growth in recovery
• Circular economy capturing attention of business leaders