

Glass Recycling: Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin Report Recommending Actions to Enhance Recovery Rates

Arkansas Environmental, Energy, and Water Law Blog



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The Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin ("AROW") issued a report that recommends options for enhancing the recovery/reuse rates for glass in the state.

Glass is a recyclable commodity that tends to be more challenging to cost-effectively recycle.

AROW provides an example of the challenges posed to cost-effectively recycle glass noting:

Wisconsin's public and private MRFs produce over 100,000 tons of container glass per year for recycling. While there are benefits from using recycled glass feedstock, including reduced energy consumption and emissions, MRF revenue from the sale of recycled glass typically does not cover the expense of processing and transporting it to a secondary processor or end user.

AROW assembled a group of public and private industry leaders to discuss both the challenges and benefits of glass recycling. This "Glass Taskforce" developed a report providing recommendations and implementation strategies for market-based, technical strategies on regulatory solutions for glass recycling.

The AROW Glass Taskforce notes that the glass industry prefers programs that result in contaminant-free recycled glass. As a result, it further states that while curbside collection of glass can generate large amounts of recyclables, drop-off and commercial collection programs tend to yield higher quality recovered container glass.

The Glass Taskforce researched and evaluated cullet and non-cullet glass recycling and developed "several recommendations on market-based, technical and regulatory solutions along with the implementation strategies." The recommendations include the areas of:

- Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) Technology
- Industry Standardization and Specifications
- Non-Cullet Uses (Including beneficial reuse)
- Regulatory and Legislative
- Partnerships

Not surprisingly, the report concludes that while it contains regulatory recommendations. . . "supply and demand within the free market system, along with quality, will dominate glass recycling in the foreseeable future." Nevertheless, the report contains useful information about various aspects of this recyclable.

[A copy of the report can be downloaded here.](#)

