

# Recycling Position Paper: ASTSWMO Addresses Strategies/Recommendations



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08/11/2020

The Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials ("ASTSWMO") issued a Position Paper addressing recycling.

The Position Paper ("Paper") addresses regulatory challenges and recommends changes needed for the recycling system to "survive and be sustainable."

By way of introduction, the Paper notes:

- The United States Recycling System is highly reliant on global markets
- China has vastly reduced or halted its imports of recyclables
- Loss of export market has disrupted the United States recycling programs
- The import issue has illuminated existing problems related to recycling contamination and limited domestic markets
- The collapse of these markets has adversely affected revenues generated for businesses and governments through the sale of these materials
- The cost for recycling has increased in the past ten years
- Circumstances have resulted in some local governments eliminating certain materials from the recycling program or the absence of a recycling program
- Some recyclables are being landfilled due to increased costs or lack of available market

The Paper addresses:

- Environmental benefits of recycling (noting conservation of energy, natural resources and reduction of waste disposal)
- Economic benefits of recycling (creation of jobs and positive economic impact)

Challenges outlined include:

- Improvements needed to existing infrastructure to manage recyclable materials in the U.S.
- Additional infrastructure is needed to meet quality standards for domestic manufacturing
- Upstream solutions need to be explored to ensure products in the market place can be recycled within existing systems
- Secondary markets need to be strengthened including development of domestic markets
- Promote education and outreach
- Enhance measurement: better measurement/data are needed and will assist improvements in the management of recyclable materials

The Paper also includes a number of strategies and positions which ASTSWMO advocates.

ASTSWMO describes itself as an organization representing the fifty states, five territories and the District of Columbia. It characterizes its mission as to enhance and promote effective state and territorial programs and to affect relevant national policies for waste and materials management, environmentally sustainable practices, and environmental restoration.

A copy of the Paper can be found [here](#).