

# Focus on: The Recycling Development Center



Facility line workers hand-sort material collected for recycling.

## More information

Check out the Recycling Development Center efforts by visiting the [website](#). You can also sign up for [email updates](#). Or contact Ecology's Recycling Development Center Coordinator.

## Contact information

### Recycling Development Center Coordinator

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## Special accommodations

To request ADA accommodation including materials in a format for the visually impaired, call Ecology at 360-407-6381 or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. People with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. People with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.

## The Recycling Development Center

In 2019, state law established the [Recycling Development Center](#) (Center) at the Washington Department of Ecology to facilitate research and development, marketing, and policy analysis to bolster recycling markets and processing in Washington. The Washington Department of Commerce will provide business, marketing, and technical assistance to support the public and private sector.

At the start, the Center will focus on overcoming barriers that prevent full and productive use of secondary materials diverted from the waste stream in the public and private sectors. The Center will also encourage and expand use of secondary materials and subsequent products. The Center will focus on businesses that transform or remanufacture waste materials into usable or marketable materials or products for use, especially those using mixed waste paper and plastics.

The Recycling Development Center advisory board will meet in 2020 to review proposed work and advise Ecology and Commerce. These meetings are open to all interested parties. For more information:

Advisory board website:

<http://bit.do/RecyclingDevelopmentCenterAdvisoryBoard>

Advisory board email list:

<http://bit.do/RecyclingDevelopmentCenterAdvisoryBoard-Listserv>

## Contamination crisis led to recycling crisis

For years, China was the main destination for the world's recyclables, but those recyclables were heavily contaminated with materials not intended for the market where they landed and created vast amounts of waste. China's government cracked down on the problem through a restrictive initiative known as China National Sword (formally Blue Sky 2018), which had worldwide repercussions. The fallout from these restrictions led to a significant issue facing solid waste management. The effects of this recycling crisis were felt especially hard in Washington because more than 60 percent of our recycled material was previously shipped to China.

## Check out what else we're doing:

### Contamination Reduction and Outreach Plan (CROP)

Ecology is developing the statewide plan to reduce contamination in recycling by July 1, 2020, and will then partner with local governments to develop their own CROP. Contamination occurs when non-recyclable materials, unaccepted materials or food and liquids are put in a recycle bin.



### Plastic Packaging Study

A new law—*Responsible Management of Plastic Packaging*—requires Ecology to evaluate and assess the amount and types of plastic packaging sold into the state as well as the management and disposal of plastic packaging. A report will be available by October 2020.



### Food Waste Prevention

Wasted food is a major environmental problem. To meet this challenge, we're developing a Plan to reduce food waste and wasted food in Washington by 50% by 2030, based on the new *Reducing the Wasting of Food in Order to Fight Hunger and Reduce Environmental Impacts*. Find more information on our [food waste prevention webpage](#).



### Recycle Right

Download the free [Recycle Right partner toolkit](#) and join communities across the state to improve the quality of Washington's recycled material. The toolkit includes website headers and banners, print materials and multimedia, including the radio and television ads featured in the Recycle Right campaign. This material is available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).



### Paint Product Stewardship

The paint stewardship law requires paint producers to plan and operate a program to collect leftover architectural paint from individuals and businesses for reuse, recycling, energy recovery, or safe disposal.



### 1-800-RECYCLE

1-800-RECYCLE is both a hotline and an [online tool](#) that connects you or your business to recycling services across Washington. Call 1-800-RECYCLE or 1-800-732-9253.



[1800RECYCLE.WA.GOV](http://1800RECYCLE.WA.GOV)

### Litter

Littering, illegal dumping, and driving with uncovered loads are all-punishable under Washington state law. Each year, 12 million pounds of litter is dropped on Washington's roads and highways. About 40 percent of that trash comes from unsecured loads, leading to 400 traffic accidents per year. To learn more, visit the [litter law webpage](#).

