



Post-consumer recycling overview for 2023

Focus on recycled content requirements

Plastic pollution is not just an issue for our oceans. It is a climate and human health issue. The air pollution generated when producing virgin plastic materials is much greater than producing post-consumer recycled materials. The post-consumer recycled content (PCRC) law, [chapter 70A.245 RCW](#), aims to reduce the production of new plastics. It supports end markets for Washington's recycled plastic by requiring the producers of many everyday consumer items to include a minimum percentage of PCRC in their plastic packaging. We refer to these consumer items as "covered products."

Covered products required to meet recycled content minimums are,

- plastic beverage bottles (except for dairy and 187ml wine, phased in at a later date),
- plastic trash bags,
- and plastic bottles for household cleaning and personal care products.

Exempt producers make up 60% of registered plastic producers in Washington

All producers offering to sell or distribute covered products in Washington must register with Ecology annually. In 2023, 245 producers registered with Ecology, of which 146 met de minimis conditions.

De minimis producers either sell less than a million dollars of a single covered product category in Washington or sell less than one ton of a single covered product category in Washington. De minimis producers are not required to meet the minimum PCRC requirements or pay annual fees to Ecology. In 2023, 60% of all registered producers were exempt from the requirements.

Covered producers must pay fees to cover Ecology's costs to oversee the PCRC program and meet the minimum PCRC requirements.

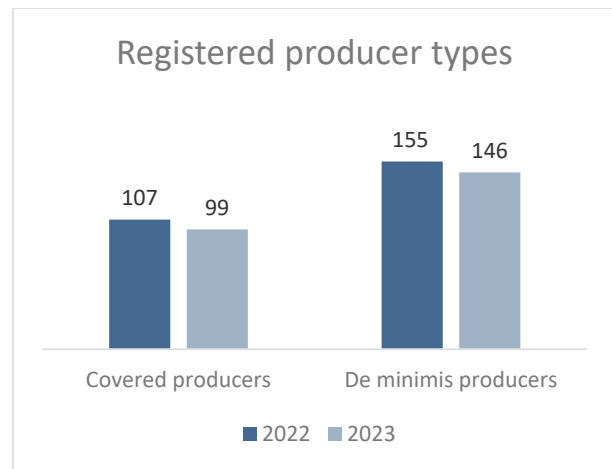


Figure 1 De minimis producers make up more of the registered producer types than covered producers.

Decreases in plastic packaging sold in Washington

Producers reported that in 2022 a total of 196,888,431.89 pounds of plastic containers and trash bags were sold in Washington. This is equal to the weight of 14 Jumbo Mark II ferries, the largest ferries used in Washington.

We saw an overall reduction of 15,307,238.62 pounds from 2021, with the most significant decrease in household cleaning and personal care product packaging.

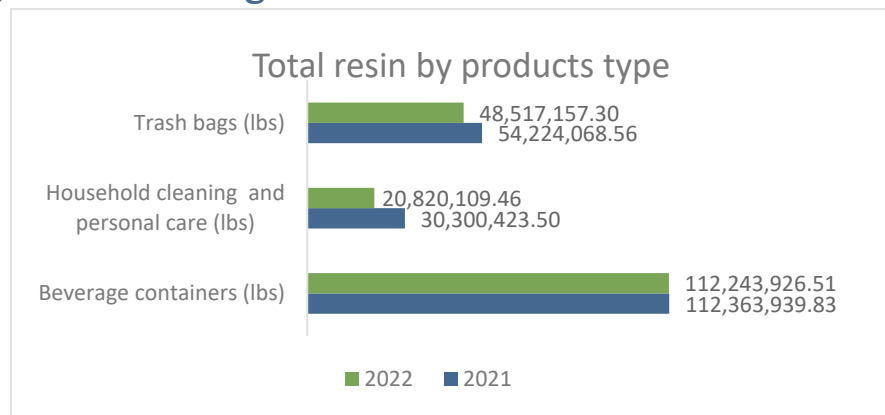


Figure 2 From 2021 to 2022, we have seen an overall reduction in plastic packing sold in Washington state.

Recycled content requirements for covered products phased in through 2036

The law requires the amount of PCRC in containers to increase over time.

2023

15% PCRC – Most plastic beverage containers and trash bags

2025

15% PCRC – Household cleaning and personal care products in plastic containers

2028

15% PCRC – Dairy containers and wine sold in 187 ml plastic bottles

Minimum recycled-content phases

Year	Plastic trash bags	Beverage containers*	Household cleaner and personal care	Plastic wine container (187 milliliters)	Dairy milk container
2022					
2023	10 percent	15 percent			
2024					
2025	15 percent		15 percent		
2026		25 percent			
2027	20 percent				
2028			25 percent	15 percent	15 percent
2029					
2030					
2031		50 percent	50 percent	25 percent	25 percent
2032					
2033					
2034					
2035					
2036				50 percent	50 percent

*Excluding plastic wine and milk containers.

Post-consumer recycled content rule proposal

Rulemaking ensures a transparent process to interpret the new PCRC regulations and allows affected parties to offer input on the final rule before its adoption.

Washington has accepted input to draft rule language for the PCRC law since 2022. The proposed rule clarifies definitions, outlines annual registration and reporting requirements, and establishes annual fee distribution methods. The rule will take effect in January 2024 following the comment period and final agency review.

Interested parties may also provide verbal input, learn more about the rule, or ask questions at one of two online public hearings in June.

Register for virtual public hearings in advance using the links below.

- [June 8, 10:00 a.m. \(PST\)](#)
- [June 15, 1:00 p.m. \(PST\)](#)

Between now and July 1, 2023, anyone may submit written comments in the following ways.

- Filling out the [online comment form](#) (until 11:59 p.m. PST on July 1, 2023).
- Sending mail (postmarked by July 1, 2023) to,

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To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-409-6900 or email at Mark.Hayes@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY, call 711 or 877-833-6341