



Workshops Takeaways Education & Outreach Needs

- Low participation and awareness consistently ranked among the top barriers to waste diversion, and contamination was identified as one of the biggest challenges that private stakeholders face
- Effective approaches identified to increase waste diversion and diversion include toolkits with templates, best practices and strategies, and community events

"Consistent education has helped increase tonnages of recyclables" - Private Sector Rep.

"Education paired with processes that make diversion an easy, clear consistent choice. Even the very best education is ineffective without clear, consistent, accessible, easy options for people to divert materials. Thus, pairing infrastructure with education, and standards that are consistent for people across the state will help all communities" - Public Sector & Tribal Rep.

"Hands-on training and education on backyard composting through a collaboration with Santa Fe County has helped set people up for success" - NGO & Educational Institution Rep.

Resource Recovery
REUSE REPAIR



NMRC
NEW MEXICO RECYCLING COALITION

Recycling & Circular Economy Update

Sarah Pierpont, Exec. Director,
NM Recycling Coalition
September 28, 2026

New Mexico Recycling Coalition



Who we are

Member-supported, statewide nonprofit organization with 15 board members

Mission

Inspire New Mexicans to rethink, reduce, reuse, and recycle

Members

212 Members representing municipalities, tribal governments, federal entities, businesses and more state



NM Recyclers Annual Meeting – May 28, 2026

What strategies from the State's updated SW Management Plan stood out as priorities to you?



- 82 attendees representing over 30 towns and counties throughout the state
- 6 Native American Communities represented



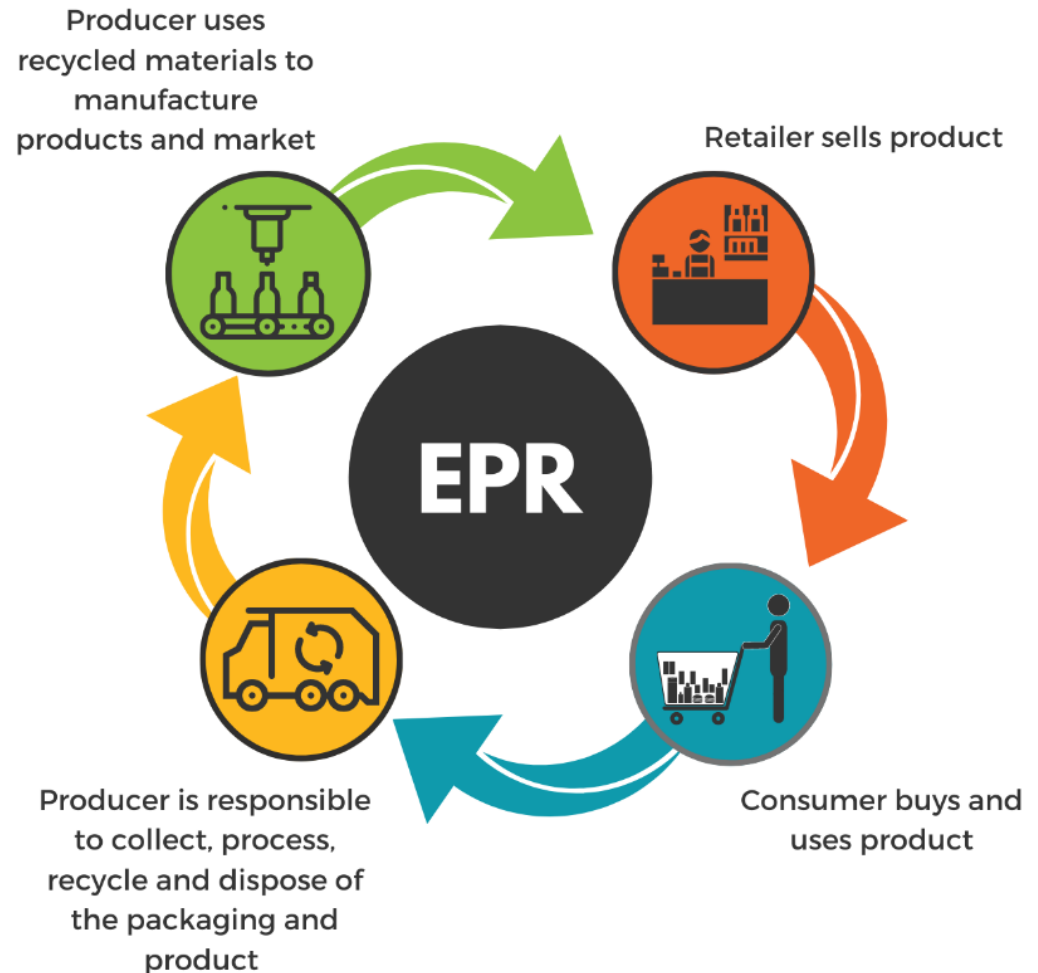
NM Recyclers Annual Meeting – May 28, 2026

What steps should our state take to reach its diversion goals?



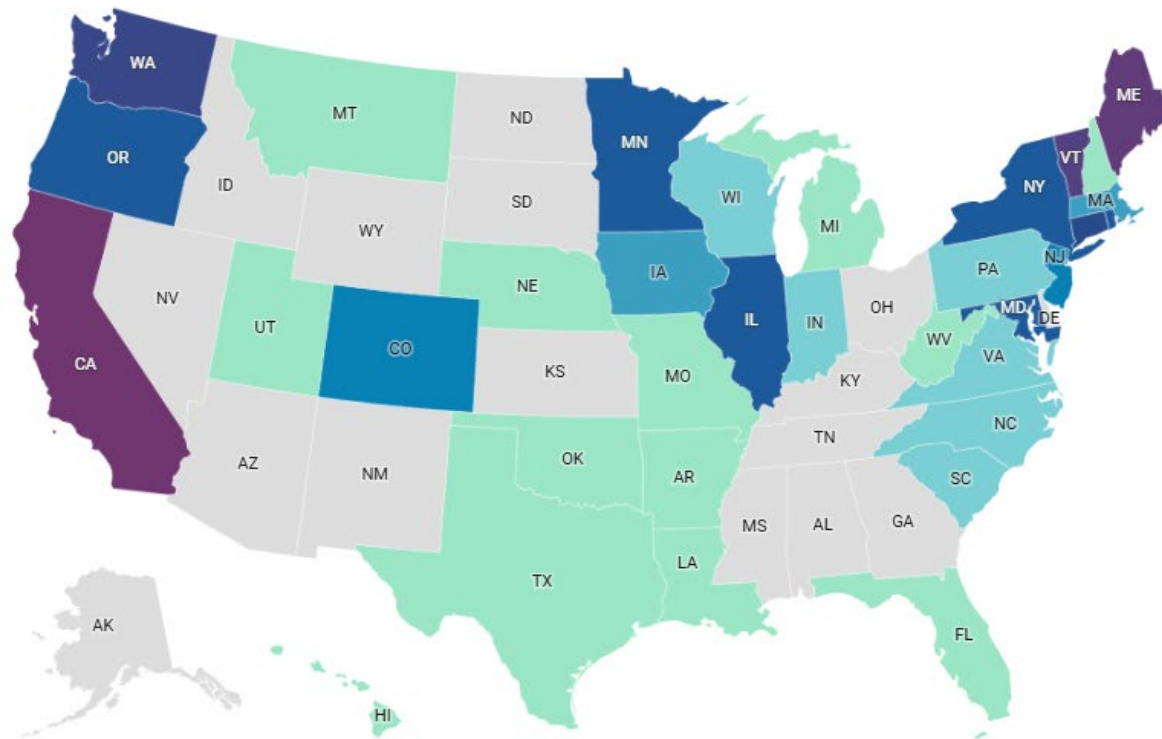
Policy & Pathways to Circularity

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
- Hard to manage product bans
- Recycling Incentives (education, data gathering, landfill bans, recycled-content requirements)
- Recycling Market/Circular Economy Development





EPR & Circularity – EPR Laws by state



Number of State EPR Laws

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

EPR BY PRODUCT

VAPES
BATTERIES
CARPET
ELECTRONICS
GAS CYLINDERS
HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW)
JUNK MAIL
LIGHTING
MATTRESSES
MEDICAL SHARPS
MERCURY AUTO SWITCHES
MERCURY THERMOSTATS
MOTOR OIL
PAINT
PACKAGING
PESTICIDES
PHARMACEUTICALS
PHONE BOOKS
RADIOACTIVE DEVICES
REFRIGERANT-CONTAINING APPLIANCES
SOLAR PANELS
TEXTILES
TIRES

Hard-To-Manage Items Bans & Circularity

SMALL CHOICES. BIG ENERGY SAVINGS.

Each year Bernalillo County's Ordinance 2019-15 has the following impact:



AVOIDING THE USE OF:



11,020,221
SINGLE-USE
PLASTIC BAGS
avoided



3,063,000
POLYSTYRENE
CUPS
avoided



750,000
POLYSTYRENE
FOOD CONTAINERS
avoided

TOTAL ENERGY SAVED

 **2.0 MILLION**
KILOWATT-HOURS (kWh)

THAT AMOUNT OF ENERGY IS
EQUIVALENT TO POWERING

ABOUT
190 AVERAGE
U.S. HOMES
FOR ONE YEAR 

THAT AMOUNT OF ENERGY IS EQUIVALENT TO:



DRIVING AN
ELECTRIC VEHICLE ABOUT
6.6 MILLION
MILES
That's like driving from
Los Angeles to New York
more than 250 times!



RUNNING A HOUSEHOLD
REFRIGERATOR
CONTINUOUSLY FOR ABOUT
2,300
YEARS



POWERING ABOUT
190
AVERAGE
U.S. HOMES
FOR ONE YEAR

ENERGY SAVINGS BREAKDOWN

ITEM AVOIDED	QUANTITY AVOIDED	ESTIMATED ENERGY SAVED (kWh)
 SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS	11,020,221 avoided	≈1.47 MILLION kWh saved
 POLYSTYRENE CUPS	3,063,000 avoided	≈190,000 kWh saved
 POLYSTYRENE FOOD CONTAINERS	750,000 avoided	≈334,000 kWh saved

TOTAL  **≈2.0 MILLION kWh**
of energy saved



These estimates reflect the fossil fuel energy required to extract raw materials, manufacture resin, and produce the final disposable products.

Sources:

1bagatime.com/learn/plastic-bags-petroleum
U.S. Department of Energy, Franklin Associates, and other
life cycle assessment studies on plastic and polystyrene products.

Education & Information as part of Circularity

Recycling Facility Operator Cert Courses

- June 9-11 within the auditorium at the Harold Runnels Building (1190 St. Francis Dr) in Santa Fe. 30 attendees
- December 1-3 in Albuquerque



2026 Compost

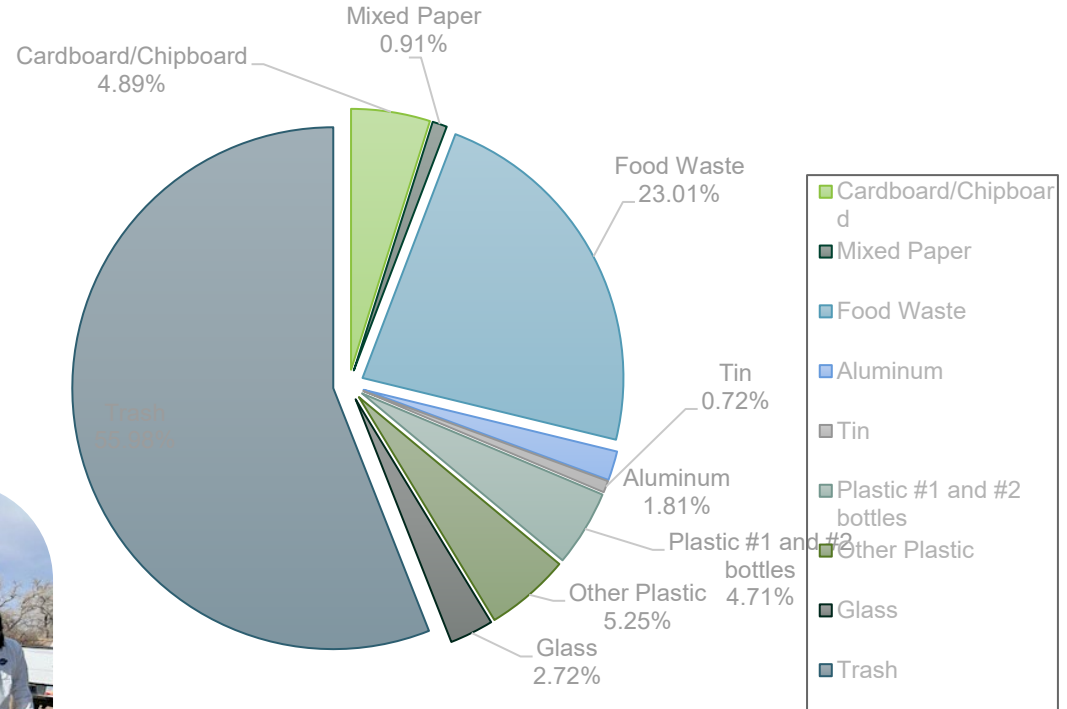
Compost Facility Operator Cert Courses

- April 14-16 within the auditorium at the Harold Runnels Building (1190 St. Francis Dr) in Santa Fe. 19 attendees
- **October 13 - 15** Village of Los Ranchos Ag-Center



Santa Ana Pueblo Waste Audit

SANTA ANA PUEBLO TRANSFER STATION MSW WASTE CHARACTERIZATION - BY WEIGHT





Recycling Market Development as part of Circularity

New Mexico

- Current Circular Economy RFP!
- Updates to RAID Act to include Circular Economy
- State's first Circular Economy Plan!

Colorado

- **Colorado Circular Communities Enterprise** (2024) to award grants and technical assistance to local governments, nonprofits, for-profits, schools, and universities for waste diversion and circular economy initiatives. Funded through solid waste disposal fees.
- **Circular Economy Development Center** (2022) established to grow existing markets, create new markets, and provide infrastructure, systems, logistics, and marketing for a sustainable circular economy for recycled commodities and compost. Funded through Front Range Waste Diversion Cash Fund and the Recycling Resources Economic Opportunity Fund



Thank you!

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