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## SSRC bash convenes State & local officials, lawmakers, vendors

MassDEP **Commissioner Martin Suuberg** headlined at the SSRC's 17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event on April 7. Nearly a hundred movers, shakers and decision makers were in attendance.

The zero waste event promised the opportunity to “**eat, meet, learn and laugh**” with colleagues in waste reduction/management at the Jones River Trading Company in Kingston. Feedback indicated that we delivered, and all look forward to attending the next Event.



The topic of the day was the growing problem of unaccepted materials being mixed in the recycling stream. This has resulted in degradation of quality for end users. Combined with low oil prices, a strong dollar, and shifts in packaging and print materials, the value of recyclables

has declined, and costs to municipalities have risen above \$30/ton for single stream recycling. Commissioner Suuberg and **Keefe Harrison**, the dynamic Director of **The Recycling Partnership**, announced a project in which MassDEP and TRP are testing new outreach tools in an effort to re-educate consumers about how and what to recycle. Due to the increasing use of single stream recycling, the proliferation of new, non-recyclable forms of packaging and other factors, residents are confused, and often do what Harrison referred to as “wishful recycling” (see [related article](#)). TRP is conducting audits and pilots in three diverse communities in Mass., and will develop a Toolkit, which will be available to all municipalities.

MassDEP awarded the SSRC an \$82,000 grant to hire a contractor, in part to implement this toolkit. The intent is that each town will work with the field staffer for several weeks to conduct direct communication and outreach to residents. We await the assignment of grant manager.

“Frugal Comedian” **Paul Gilligan** moderated the discussion, providing both amusing and relevant questions to the speakers, then entertained the crowd with a colorful performance.

Dignitaries in attendance included **State Representatives Thomas Calter, Josh Cutler, and Mathew Muratore; Senator DeMacedo’s** chief of staff Lance Lambros; MassDEP’s Southeast Regional Office Director and Deputy Director **Millie Garcia-Serrano** and **Maria Pinaud**, and MassDEP Division Director **Greg Cooper**. Several local elected officials also attended.

Seventeen [service partners](#) who exhibited and sponsored covered the costs of the Event, notably **Covanta SEMASS**, which paid for the entertainment. Our Event Committee and volunteers – **Alexis Andrews, Janine Delaney, Ellie Donovan, Claire and Jan Galkowski, Lorraine Mavrogeorge, Mary Snow, Sharon White, and Gene Wyatt**- took care of planning and logistics. **Plymouth Bay Catering** provided another delicious luncheon, and **Seone’s Landscaping** provided spring centerpieces at wholesale cost.

**95.9 WATD fm’s Bobbi Clark** broadcast a story about the event [here](#).

Photos [here](#).

## March Board Meeting notes and news

Health Angels, I mean Agents **Alexis Andrews, Janice McCarthy** and **Sharon White** cooked up a delicious breakfast for our packed Board meeting in Abington last March. What a welcome surprise!

**HHW contract extended**– Director Galkowski visited Stericycle’s Providence facility to meet with the regional sales rep, contract manager **Amanda Wuoti** and other staff. We discussed issues around the new contract, which they bid very tightly. Our costs per car are 10% less than with the



previous contract. The Director requested a contract extension proposal, which arrived after the Board meeting.

The Board voted unanimously to extend the contract for one year if the proposal is within the allowed 2.5% increase and contained no other changes. The proposal met the criteria, so the contract with Stericycle for HHW collections will be extended through FY 2017. We look forward to another good year of keeping hazards out of the environment with Stericycle.

**Dues adjustment** – SSRC dues have been the same since 2008. Director Galkowski proposed that dues be raised a small amount to cover cost increases. Sponsors may be getting fatigued; markets are stuck in a rut. Budgets have already been submitted for this year, so the Board recommended that we consider a FY18 increase in September, to give towns time to incorporate in budgets. Director will provide a comparison of expenses going back a few years.

**Textile RDP bonus grants:** Towns that qualify for Recycling Dividend Program grants (most of our Members) are eligible for a Textile Bonus Point. To get it, they must complete 3 or 6 (depending on households served) activities to provide and promote textile recycling. Director reviewed the [criteria and activities](#), and can assist in getting the point.

- She updated the [Holey Socks](#) article and will release it to all local newspapers (one activity).
- She will also set up your towns' textile box locations on DEP's Beyond the Bin locator [link](#). Towns that post the link on their recycling web pages can then check off another activity.
- Ms. Donovan will look into poster template.



Activities must be completed/in place by grant deadline **June 15** to receive RDP funds in the fall.

Related article [here](#).

**Strategies to reduce rising recycling costs:** With commodity prices for recyclables stuck at the low end of the curve, mixed material (i.e. comingled and single stream) costs are rising. Towns that still have residents sort are getting the best value.

To get best pricing, material must be as free of unaccepted materials as possible. DEP is developing a toolkit with The Recycling Partnership to help municipalities re-educate residents about how to recycle the proper materials. An **\$82,000 grant** from MassDEP to the SSRC will provide a staff person to each town for several weeks to conduct direct communication and outreach to residents. We are awaiting assignment of grant manager. ([See lead article](#))

**Website woes-** RIP **Richard Rogers**, our second web designer, who died in a car crash on March 11. He was about 1/3-1/2 done, but all work was in his personal computer. Since the meeting, we have engaged **Karen Quigley Designs**, recommended by Vice Chairman Merle Brown and Treasurer Mary Snow, to update and redesign the site. Target date to launch is June

15, in time for our next Board meeting.

**Recycler of the Year**- Director Galkowski was selected to receive **MassRecycle's Individual Recycler of the Year Award**, presented at their R3 Conference on March 29 in Quincy. Sydney Hausman-Cohen from Product Stewardship Institute submitted the nomination. Other winners included The Boston Red Sox (business), the Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea (Municipality), and mattress recycler UTEC Lowell (Institution).



## PAYT on Kingston Town Meeting warrant

A non binding article on the June 11 Town Meeting warrant will ask Kingston residents if they favor shifting from a flat fee to a lower flat fee plus volume based disposal program ("Pay as you Throw") to cover the cost of running the Transfer Station.

Under the current flat fee system, the annual cost will rise to cover higher tip fees for disposal. If the article passes, the Selectmen will consider reducing the flat fee significantly, and charging separately for special trash bags to cover the cost of disposal. This system generally reduces the overall amount of disposed waste by about 40%, as well as costs for those who choose to be mindful of how they purchase products and manage their waste.

The SSRC Director has been assisting Kingston officials with data, outreach, and planning of two forums, one which took place last year, the other to be scheduled for early June.

## DEP Grant applications due June 15

There is lots of grant money available through the MassDEP **Sustainable Material Recovery Program (SMRP)**. Last year our Member towns and the SSRC were awarded **\$652,131** in SMRP grants. The Director can help our Member towns understand and apply for these grants.

The written guidance is [here](#).

**Webinar 1:** Drop-Off Programs: [Play Back Here](#) | [Download the Presentation](#) 

**Webinar 2:** Curbside Programs: [Play Back Here](#) | [Download the Presentation](#) 

The easiest grants to apply for and spend are the **Recycling Dividend Program** grants, for which our towns have potential to earn **\$120,000** this year. The RDP worksheet is [here](#).

The applications are available on [ReTrac](#), deadline is June 15. [Related article](#)

## Win with Textile Toolkit

Textiles compose 5% of our disposed trash. To help reduce that number, a **Textile Recovery Media Toolkit** is now available on MassDEP's [Textile Recovery webpage](#).

Developed by the Secondary Materials & Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) for the **MassDEP Textile Recovery Initiative**, these materials are designed to help cities and towns promote textile recovery and stage successful textile collection events.

The Toolkit consists of a Media Relations Guide and several templates to use for developing media advisories, news releases, op-eds and public service announcements to promote your local textile recovery events.

These materials may be used to earn the bonus point available in the **Recycling Dividends Program** (see [related article](#))



## Dozens of legislators engaged at Paint Advocacy Day

The SSRC Director and ten colleagues from the **Mass. Product Stewardship Council**, **MassRecycle**, and **Product Stewardship Institute** visited 30 Reps at the State House on April 13. We explained why our organizations and municipalities support the **Paint Stewardship bill, S2109**, which passed in the Senate and is now in House Ways and Means.

S2109 provides convenient and environmentally preferable outlets for unwanted paint, stain and deck sealer. A small advance recovery fee on those products would be collected and disbursed by a paint stewardship non-profit (currently PaintCare) to collect and recycle or dispose of products returned by residents and businesses. Retailers and municipalities may serve as collection points at their discretion.

The hazardous waste and disposal costs currently borne by municipalities, estimated at **\$85,000/year** for our SSRC Member towns, would be shifted to the paint industry.

The message was reinforced by letters of support from municipalities, Covanta, MMA and several other organizations. Many who called and emailed their reps that day gave the effort added impact. MHOA and MAPC are in the process of adding their voices.

## MassPSC taking a giant step

The **Mass. Product Stewardship Council (MassPSC)**, which advocates for policies and legislation that shifts end of life management costs from taxpayers and municipal governments to producers and consumers, is on the verge of reaching the next level. Two sessions at the March 29 **MassRecycle R3 Conference** were dedicated to MassPSC and paint stewardship legislation.



**Sydney Hausman-Cohen** and Director **Scott Cassell** at **Product Stewardship Institute** have been organizing and hosting monthly web-calls since November. We have had 15-30 people on each call. Sydney also coordinated last month's **Paint Advocacy Day** (see [previous article](#)).

Barnstable County, Lowell and SSRC provided some funds through membership dues, which are now depleted, but PSI sees value in continuing to support MassPSC.

Planning is underway for MassPSC to become an independent council under the auspices of **MassRecycle**, a 501(c) (3) organization. The Board would be predominantly municipal representatives. MR Director **Edward Hsieh** is investigating necessary insurance and legal adjustments, and has written a first draft of Bylaws based on the NYPSC. PSI would continue to serve as facilitator / contractor through an MOU with MassRecycle.

Member towns will be asked to pay a nominal fee to cover administrative costs. DEP folks are investigating whether Recycling Dividend Program funds could be used for the dues.

After the Paint bill passes, MassPSC will look at e-waste again, and possibly packaging.

To join the MassPSC contact [Director Galkowski](#).

## State contract for Bins, Carts, Containers, Compactors renewed

**FAC87**, the state contract for recycling bins, wheeled carts, home composting bins and buckets, public space recycling containers, roll-off containers, compactors and rain barrels has been renewed and is effective through Jan. 31, 2017.

For vendor, product and pricing information, see the FAC87 Master Price File [here](#). This is a multi-page Excel worksheet. The first sheet contains vendor contact information, and each additional sheet lists the vendors, products and pricing on contract for each category. Consult the sheet for the type of items you are seeking, then contact the vendors directly for additional information or to place orders.

## Down with smelly trash1: Use the Save the Food campaign

15% of our disposed trash is wasted food.

The **National Resources Defense Council** has engaged the **AdCouncil** to produce a powerful ad campaign aimed at food waste prevention, called "[Save the Food](#)". It aims to reverse the cultural acceptance of food waste behaviors, specifically the large and growing portions, the huge inventories in grocery stores and fridges, and the quest for perfection. Their target audience is moms and millenials.



Focus group research indicated that most people don't believe they waste food. However, such habits as "aspirational shopping" (buying what we should eat, but not eating it), impulse purchases, which are often wasted, making too much food to try to please everyone (guilty), and host generosity add up to the wasting of 40% of the food we produce in the US, at an average cost of \$1500/household/year.

["The Extraordinary Life and Times of Strawberry"](#) is a two minute video chronicling the journey from field to trash can. A thirty second version will run as PSAs on cable.

The two year campaign also provides outreach materials for municipalities to use, including print materials, posters, and stencils for trucks and trash bins. Contact [savethefood@nrdc.org](mailto:savethefood@nrdc.org).



## Down with smelly trash2: Sell low cost compost bins

15% of our disposed trash is food. Spring is a good time to encourage people to compost.

**Ann McGovern**, DEP's Compost Queen, encourages you to use the Targeted Small Scale Investment Grants, and/or Recycling Dividend Program funds, available through the [Sustainable Materials Recovery Program Grants](#), to subsidize the cost of more bins, which you can sell in your community at cost.

The state contract prices are still half of the retail cost for these products, at \$43-60 each. See the [previous article](#) for more information about FAC87.

The SSRC Director can send a press release/op-ed to the local press to help promote the program.

Contact: Trudy Wood Tel: 508-998-3111 Email: [nep126@aol.com](mailto:nep126@aol.com) (New Age Composters)

Sharon Ramroop Tel: 888-675-2878, ext.7167 Email: [sharon.ramroop@orbiscorporation.com](mailto:sharon.ramroop@orbiscorporation.com) (Earth Machines and Kitchen Collectors)

[Video](#) on how to set up the New Age Composters. [Video](#) on how to use them at schools

## 15 packaging materials that vex recycling facilities

By Jared Paben, Plastics Recycling Update (excerpts)

Consumers should leave caps on their empty plastic bottles because when caps are taken off, they often fall through screens, contaminating glass cullet streams. Bottles without caps are also more likely to be flattened and sorted incorrectly.



Those are a few conclusions from a report examining the top 15 packaging challenges at materials recovery facilities (MRFs). Released in late March, the analysis was conducted by Pac Next, part of the industry-funded Pac Packaging Consortium.

The report updates a late-2014 iteration examining the following 10 difficult-to-recover packaging types: **black plastic containers, colored opaque PET, compostable plastics, corrugated trays with plastic film around them, full shrink wrap labels, hot beverage polycoated cups, metallized tubes, multi-layered laminates, non-PET clamshells and single-serve coffee pods.**

The 2016 report also adds five: **caps on plastic bottles, glass containers, labels on PET thermoforms, plastic film and polycoated containers.**

The 30-page study examines problems associated with sorting various packaging types, explores efforts to improve recoverability and provides recommendations for various stakeholders. It was authored by a team co-chaired by Lantz and Keith Fanta, section head for packaging sustainability at Procter & Gamble.

[More](#)