

CalRecycle names its first packaging EPR advisory board

resource-recycling.com/recycling/2023/07/10/calrecycle-names-its-first-packaging-epr-advisory-board

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July 10, 2023



The board represents a variety of backgrounds and interests, with members coming from industry, manufacturing, environmental groups and municipalities. | Alexander Lukatskiy/Shutterstock

Leaders from Alameda County, Waste Connections and Talco Plastics are among the stakeholders that will oversee California's extended producer responsibility program for packaging and paper.

The Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act, or SB 54, required the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to appoint a producer responsibility advisory board by July 1. Selections were announced June 30.

The 16-person board, tasked with identifying barriers and solutions to a circular economy and giving feedback on the implementation of SB 54, includes representatives from industry, manufacturing, environmental groups and municipalities. It does not have regulatory power, but serves to advise the producer responsibility organization (PRO) and review plans.

“CalRecycle received applications from a diverse group of candidates, and we appreciate the commitment of all applicants to engage in this process,” a press release noted.

The group is also in charge of reviewing a needs assessment and any plans crafted by the state’s PRO, an as-yet-unnamed entity that will help coordinate producers to ensure they meet their obligations under the law.

All members of the advisory board will serve for staggered three-year terms.

Who made the list?

Board appointees who represent segments of the materials recovery value chain include Timothy Burroughs, executive director of Alameda County’s StopWaste; Neil Edgar, executive director of the California Compost Coalition; Christy Pestoni, director of government affairs for Waste Connections; Veronica Pardo, regulatory affairs director of Resource Recovery Coalition of California; and Tedd Ward, director of Del Norte Solid Waste Management Authority.

On the producer side, appointees are Wes Carter, president and co-founder of Atlantic Packaging Corp; Patrick Keenan, associate packaging principal engineer of General Mills; Erin Levine, resource recovery manager of World Centric; and Ajit Perera, vice president of post-consumer operations of Talco Plastics.

Representing environmental interests are Thomas Helme, co-founder and project director of Valley Improvement Projects; Doug Kobold, executive director of the California Product Stewardship Council; and Miho Ligare, plastic pollution policy manager of the Surfrider Foundation.

Other representatives are Fred Briones, CEO of the Native American Fiber Program; Timothy James, director of local government relations of the California Grocers Association; and Rachel Michelin, president and CEO of the California Retailers Association.

There is also a spot held open to represent the PRO, which has not yet been selected by CalRecycle.

Of the 16 people on the board, three are non-voting members: Michelin, James and the PRO representative.

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