

Packaging

The Problem

According to CalRecycle, one third of the 66 million tons of solid waste generated by Californians each year is packaging. For many products, packaging is important, as it helps contain and preserve the product and protect it during transportation. Even so, excessive packaging needs to be replaced with more lightweight, reusable packaging designs. Packaging often ends up as litter, harming our environment and oceans. In the US, over 41 million tons of paper and paperboard packaging [were generated in 2017](#), while 14 million tons of plastic packaging were generated that same year.



The Solution – Extended Producer Responsibility!

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws requiring that packaging manufacturers manage their products' waste at end-of-life have been implemented throughout the world. California passed [SB 54 \(Allen\)](#) in 2022 which established the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act and created the strictest plastic reduction targets in the country. The act will mandate all single-use packaging and food ware to be recyclable or compostable by 2032, and 65% of covered plastics to be recycled by 2032. Learn more about the programs on the CalRecycle website: <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/packaging/packaging-epr/>

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Safer Consumer Products

The Safer Consumer Products (SCP) program uses a four-step process to reduce toxic chemicals in the products that consumers buy and use. DTSC identifies specific products that contain potentially harmful chemicals and reviews safer alternatives. Food ware treated with PFASs are potential long-term sources of widespread human and ecological exposures to this class of chemicals. On January 14, 2020, DTSC hosted a day-long public [workshop on perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances \(PFASs\)](#), and their alternatives, in food packaging. The meeting included presentations and panel discussion showing the evident dangers of PFAS and the availability of safer alternatives already on the market. San Francisco Department of the Environment [shared results](#) from a study testing food ware packaging for PFAS and several testing PFAS free, supporting the producers making food ware packaging without harmful chemicals.

- [Coalition Letter of Support for DTSC Listing Foodware as a Priority Product](#)
- [Coalition Letter of Support for DTSC PFAS in Fiber Food Packaging](#)

Research & Relevant Articles

- [Beach Clean Up Report](#) – Surfrider Foundation, 7/2022
- [Maine Recycling Law Could Spark Wave of Policies Across US](#) – Law360, 7/28/21
- [Deep Dive into Plastic Monomers, Additives, and Processing Aids](#) – Environmental Science & Technology, 6/22/21
- [What We Waste](#) – ReLoop, 4/2021



- [Rethinking and optimising plastic waste management under COVID-19 pandemic: Policy solutions based on redesign and reduction of single-use plastics and personal protective equipment](#) – Science of the Total Environment, 6/30/20
- [Reusable containers safe during Covid-19 pandemic, experts say](#) – The Guardian, 6/22/20
- [\(EPR\) model approach](#) – Resa Dimino and Bryce Hesterman, Recycling Today, 5/18/20
- [With EPR bills frozen due to coronavirus in many states, proponents still see path forward](#) – Waste Dive, 4/24/20
- [To Fix America's Broken Recycling System, State Want Companies To Foot The Bill](#) – Time, 2/26/20
- [Recycling won't save us. Let's phase out the source of plastic pollution](#) – Sacramento Bee, 4/22/19

Links

- [Packaging Materials Management](#)
- [Closed Loop Fund](#)
- [Ameripen](#)
- [UPSTREAM](#)