

RETHINKING MINNESOTA'S PACKAGING WASTE

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging, Printed Paper and Single-Use Products in Minnesota

A fully producer-funded system to expand recycling for packaging and paper products, ensure accountability for single-use products, and promote reuse in Minnesota, which will build on the state's existing recycling infrastructure while ensuring sustainable funding to offset the costs of collection, expand end-markets, and shift producers to more reusable and sustainable packaging.

OUR WASTE CHALLENGES:

- ▶ More than 40% of municipal solid waste in the U.S. (over 100 million tons per year) is packaging and paper products.
- ▶ Despite increasing public pressure, consumer brands have little incentive to choose more sustainable materials or reduce the amount of packaging and paper products materials they put on the market.
- ▶ With volatile recycling markets, complex materials, and economic impacts like the COVID-19 pandemic, local governments face greater challenges to run recycling programs and increase recycling rates.
- ▶ Local governments are left to manage these complex materials that they have no influence on, and Minnesota communities are left to cover the costs.



THE SOLUTION:

Packaging EPR

Through EPR for packaging, printed paper, and single-use items, brand owners (producers) are incentivized to be part of designing solutions and have responsibility for the costs of collection and recycling of materials they use for products they sell in the state.

EPR will require producers to:

- Invest in recycling equipment and technology to ensure the entire state receives the same services.
- Invest in end-markets for recyclables to reduce volatility and financial risk to local governments.
- Provide consistent recycling messaging across the state, minimizing confusion and helping people figure out what belongs in their recycling bins.

EPR will incentivize producers to reduce packaging waste, making all packaging, paper, and single-use products reusable, recyclable, or compostable by 2032 and increasing the use of post-consumer content.

EPR will increase recycling and composting rates across the state and expand reuse options for consumers.

EPR will shift the costs of recycling to producers, reducing the burden on taxpayers. It will create jobs in recycling, composting, and the emerging reuse sector across the state and protect Minnesota's precious natural resources from plastic pollution.

Contact Us:

info@reducepackagingmn.org

www.reducepackagingmn.org

WHAT DOES THIS LEGISLATION DO?

PRODUCERS



- Brand owners of consumer packaging goods and printed paper products will form and fund one producer responsibility organization (PRO) for the first plan and more may form for future plans.
- PRO(s) will directly fund or reimburse local government for recycling collection, processing, and educational expenses.
- Brand owners can reduce the fees they pay to the PRO(s) by minimizing their packaging waste and making their packaging more reusable and recyclable.
- PRO(s) are responsible for providing written program plans, goals, and results, to be reviewed by the advisory council and approved by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA.)

GOVERNMENTS



- Local government and service providers have the flexibility to choose whether and how to participate in the program.
- MPCA will maintain oversight and enforcement over the program, with stakeholder input.
- An advisory council made up of the waste management industry, packaging trade associations, and community groups will advise both the PRO(s) and the MPCA to provide expertise.

CONSUMERS



- Minnesotans will have a universal recycling list and be provided convenient recycling services, regardless of where they live in the state.
- Producers are required to make packaging more sustainable, leading to more recyclable packaging and providing residents with more options for reusable packaging that can be returned and refilled.
- Residents are unlikely to see a cost increase for the goods they buy and will have their recycling costs covered by the PRO(s).

Proven EPR Success

Minnesota is no stranger to product stewardship bills and has programs for electronics, paint, rechargeable batteries, and pesticides. EPR for packaging and paper products has been successfully implemented for decades, and as a result in these places consumer recycling rates have tripled. Recycling rates have reached 83% in Belgium and 78% in British Columbia, and research on existing programs has found no increase in the price of consumer goods.

Contact Us:

info@reducepackagingmn.org

www.reducepackagingmn.org

