

# Recycling Updates

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

April 2024

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## Reminder: RU Annual Report Due April 30



**The 2023 responsible unit (RU) annual report is due April 30.**

Instructions have been sent to the RU representatives. RUs needing to submit the report should review the emailed instructions and begin the process as soon as possible to ensure it is submitted on time.

Failure to submit the report jeopardizes an RUs eligibility for state recycling grant money.

View the [Annual Reports for Responsible Units and Materials Recovery Facilities webpage](#).

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## WM Celebrates \$38 Million Renovations With Open House

WM (formerly Waste Management) held an open house on April 19 at their materials recovery facility in Germantown. The facility has undergone a \$38 million dollar renovation to increase processing capacity and sorting ability. An advanced fire detection system was also installed.

Several speakers, including DNR Deputy Steven Little, gave remarks at the event. Participants toured the facility and learned about their recycling process.



Visit [WM's website](#) to learn more about the Germantown MRF and WM's overall operations.

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## Resources For International Compost Awareness Week, May 5-11

International Compost Awareness Week May 5-11 provides an opportunity to celebrate and promote composting in Wisconsin.

There are over 200 licensed composting facilities operating in the state that compost a total of nearly 300,000 tons of yard waste every year. Add in all the farms, homes and small-scale facilities that also compost yard waste, animal bedding, food waste and more, and the amount becomes even more impressive.

There are many free resources that can be linked to, shared or distributed to help teach others about composting and keep the community growing.

Here are a few:

- [International Compost Awareness Week 2024 outreach resources](#) created by the Compost Research & Education Foundation
- [DNR composting and yard care publications](#)
- [Infographics and posters](#) produced by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance
- [UW-Extension composting publications](#)
- [U.S. EPA social marketing toolkit](#) on composting food scraps in your community



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## EPA Launches Webpage On Household Medication Disposal



The EPA's new [Household Medication Disposal webpage](#) describes how to properly store and dispose of leftover medications, including how to use pharmaceutical take-back programs. There are also resources for take-back program operators and other non-households.

Looking for Wisconsin-specific information? Check out:

- [How to Safely Dispose of Household Pharmaceutical Waste](#)
  - [Dose of Reality: Drug Take Back Day](#)
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## Barron County Incinerator Featured On WPR

Barron County's Waste to Energy facility is one of the few licensed incinerators operating in the state. They have the capacity to burn up to 100 tons per day of municipal solid waste.

A recent episode of Wisconsin Public Radio's "The Morning Show" discussed the facility's unique operation.

[Access the story on WPR's webpage.](#)

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## Introducing Ruth O'Donnell, DNR Organics Waste Management Specialist



The Waste and Materials Management Program welcomed Ruth O'Donnell as the new organics waste management specialist on April 22. She is based out of Madison.

This new project position is funded by the federal Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant and will focus on prevention and best management of food and organic waste.

Ruth may be a familiar face to some. She previously worked for the DNR's beneficial use and hazardous waste programs from 2013 to 2020.

Welcome back, Ruth!

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## Available Federal Grants

### USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Grant Program Closes June 28

The national Community Foods Project Food Loss and Waste Training and Technical Assistance Grants Program are offering grants to entities implementing outreach, training

and technical assistance efforts related to food loss and waste. Each SARE region will receive \$2 million in funding. Wisconsin is part of the North Central SARE region.

[Read the full Call for Proposals.](#)

### **Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grant Program Closes Nov. 21**

The purpose of the Community Change Grant Program is to assist community-driven projects that address climate challenges and reduce pollution while strengthening communities through thoughtful implementation. Approximately \$2 billion will be awarded.

[Learn more about the Community Change Grant Program.](#)

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## **Upcoming Webinars, Online Conferences And Events**

### **Plastics and Your Health (Webinar)**

May 2, 6 p.m. CST  
Hosted by Beyond Plastics

[Register online](#)

### **Safe Collection, Storage and Transport of Small-Format Batteries (Webinar)**

May 14, 1 p.m. CST  
Hosted by U.S. EPA

[Register online](#)

### **Coalition Building for EPR for PPP (Webinar)**

May 28, 1 p.m. CST  
Hosted by Signalfire

[Register online](#)

### **Past Webinars**

### **NERC/NEWMOA Anaerobic Digestion Series (Four Webinars)**

Hosted by Northeast Recycling Council

[Access recordings](#)

Several webinars can be found on the websites of the [Public Resources- Product Stewardship Institute](#), the [EPA's Sustainable Materials Management Program](#) and the [Northeast Recycling Council](#).



### **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

You are subscribed to the Recycling Updates from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. These updates are now available only through periodic email newsletters. For information on past updates or to share new information, please contact Jennifer Semrau at [Jennifer.Semrau@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Semrau@wisconsin.gov).