

# Recycling Updates

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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## In This Issue

- [Wisconsin MRF Battery Fires Focus Of Webinar](#)
- [E-Cycle Wisconsin Releases New Battery Video](#)
- [Resources Available For Creating A Storm Debris Plan](#)
- [Free Hazardous Materials Training Available For Local Governments](#)
- [Wisconsin Composting Efforts In The News](#)
- [Federal Grant Opportunities Addressing Pollution Available](#)
- [Drug Take Back Day Is April 27](#)
- [Upcoming Webinars, Online Conferences And Events](#)

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## Wisconsin MRF Battery Fires Focus Of Webinar



The Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin is hosting a lunch & learn webinar on fires at materials recovery facilities and their impact to operations. The March 12 webinar is open to non-members with a registration fee of \$25. The webinar is from noon to 1 p.m.

City of Milwaukee and Waukesha County staff will provide an overview of their 2023 MRF fire, which shut down their facility. The DNR will share regulatory information and resources for these situations.

The webinar will also cover:

- Managing recyclable material in a region with reduced processing capacity;
- Messaging and communications;
- Next steps; and
- Lessons learned.

[Register for the webinar.](#)

Photo Credit: City of Milwaukee

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## E-Cycle Wisconsin Releases New Battery Video

The DNR's E-Cycle Wisconsin Program released a new video on how to safely store and dispose of used batteries to reduce the risk of fire. It shares how single-use alkaline batteries are safe to put in the trash, but rechargeable batteries should be taped or bagged and dropped off at collection site.

[View, share or link to the video on YouTube.](#)



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## Resources Available For Creating A Storm Debris Plan

Creating a plan for managing storm debris can help ensure a smooth cleanup after a storm event and potentially save a community money. There are state and federal resources to help with the planning process.

[Debris Management After Storms And Disasters \(WA-601\)](#) describes common types of storm debris and the best practices and regulations for managing it, including:

- Designating a temporary staging area;
- Arranging for the transportation and transfer; and
- Disposal options.

Establishing contractors for the various aspects of a cleanup can reduce costs when services are in high demand after a storm event. Communities may also be able to apply for financial assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The U.S. EPA also has tools to assist communities in their planning process.



- [Managing Materials And Wastes for Homeland Security Incidents](#)
- [Disaster Debris Recovery Tool](#)
- [All Hazards Waste Management Planning Tool](#) and [Guide](#)
- [Equitable Resilience Builder](#)

Learn more helpful tips on the DNR's [Cleaning Up Storm Debris webpage](#).

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## Free Hazardous Materials Training Available For Local Governments



The Wisconsin Department of Administration is sponsoring a series of free training sessions on requirements and best management practices for waste handling, storage, disposal and recycling. They are open to state, municipal, public school and tribal government employees.

Two in-person trainings are still available:

- March 13 at UW-Superior, 8:15 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.
- March 27 at the DNR Milwaukee office, 8:15 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.

A four-part online training session is also being held in April.

- April 2, 9-11 a.m.
- April 4, 9-11 a.m.
- April 9, 9-11 a.m.
- April 11, 9-11 a.m.

The training is provided by Veolia. View a full description of the class and register on [Veolia's website](#).

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## Wisconsin Composting Efforts In The News

### **Community Composting In Dane County**

Dane County and Purple Cow Organics announced a program to increase composting services in Dane County. The pilot phase will start late 2024. After a year, the program hopes to accept up to roughly 22,000 tons of leaf, brush and yard waste and up to 1,200,000 pounds of food waste per year. The city of Madison is participating.



[Read the press release of the announcement.](#)

### **Eau Claire Area Schools Compost Food Waste**

Six Eau Claire area elementary schools have teamed up to reduce food waste in their cafeterias. The schools received a \$1,000 grant from the county and put out bins to collect liquids and unwanted food. Earthbound Environmental Solutions is taking and composting the waste. They calculated that one week's worth of food saved more than five tons of greenhouse gasses that would have been generated had the food gone to the landfill.

[Read a news article about the effort.](#)

*Photo Credit: Purple Cow Organics*

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## **Federal Grant Opportunities Addressing Pollution Available**



### **Source Reduction Assistance Grant Closes April 15**

The U.S. EPA's FY24-25 Source Reduction Assistance Grant Competition is open for applications until April 15, 2024. In Region 5, a total of \$240,000 will be split between one and four projects.

The grant is intended to support pollution prevention (referred to as P2 in the grant information) including research, investigation, experiments, surveys, studies, demonstration, education and/or training using source reduction approaches.

[Learn more about the Source Reduction Assistance Grant program.](#)

## [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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## Drug Take Back Day Is April 27



Wisconsin consistently tops the nation with the number of collection sites and total weight collected during the fall and spring Drug Take Back Days. Last fall, Wisconsin hosted 304 sites and collected a total of 53,122 pounds of unwanted prescriptions drugs.

This year's spring Drug Take Back Day is April 27. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services provides a list of accepted/not accepted materials on their [Dose of Reality: Drug Take Back Day webpage](#). They also post an interactive map of the participating collection sites no later than April 1, as well as a search function to find a permanent collection site.

*Photo Credit: Wisconsin DNR*

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## Upcoming Webinars, Online Conferences And Events

### **7th Annual Reported Waste And Recycling Facility Fire Report (Webinar)**

March 12, noon CST  
Hosted by Fire Rover

[Register online](#)

### **Siting Considerations for Anaerobic Digester (Webinar 2 of a series)**

March 13, noon CST  
Hosted by Northeast Recycling Council

[Register online](#)

**Tackling Tire Waste (Webinar)**

March 20, noon CST  
Hosted by Northeast Recycling Council and Product Stewardship Institute

[Register online](#)

**Past Webinars**

**Anaerobic Digestion And Other Solutions For Wasted Food (Webinar 1 of a series)**

Hosted by Northeast Recycling Council

[Access recording](#)

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).