



LD 1631: An Act to Provide Leadership Regarding the Responsible Recycling of Consumer Products

Get Hazardous Materials out of Community Landfills

Maine people value good health and a healthy environment.

Many consumer products contain toxic materials, which are dangerous when disposed of in incinerators or landfills.

- Hundreds of products make our lives easier, until we don't need them anymore. Then, if they're not disposed of responsibly, the acids, toxic chemicals, mercury and other heavy metals they contain become a danger to our health and the environment.¹



While most consumer products can be recycled, the vast majority end up in the trash, wasting valuable resources and threatening our health and the environment.

- Each person in the United States creates 4.5 pounds of garbage a day. That is twice what we each generated thirty years ago.²
- Manufactured products and associated packaging make up 75% of what we throw away.³
- We're missing a tremendous opportunity to make today's waste tomorrow's products.

Municipalities need help affording the growing cost of consumer product waste.

- As more and more products are identified as potentially hazardous, they are rightly banned from disposal and instead required to be recycled or disposed of as hazardous waste.
- These disposal bans must be enforced by local governments and this can increase municipal costs to operate local solid waste facilities.
- Without additional financing, municipalities are left without the resources to protect people and the environment.



Maine already has the roadmap to solve this growing problem: Maine's product stewardship laws for electronic waste, mercury thermostats and lamps are innovative and effective success stories that are now national models.

- These laws direct producers to fund the collection and recycling of their products at the end of the product's useful life, promoting the sustainable reuse of materials and preventing the release of hazardous chemicals into the environment.
- These laws reduce costs for local governments and taxpayers and create jobs through the collection and recycling of formerly discarded products.

Maine needs to establish a framework to systematically expand partnerships with manufacturers to increase the collection and recycling of consumer products. The bill would:

- Direct the state to systematically evaluate which products are most appropriate and top priorities for product stewardship recycling systems.
- Develop rules to create producer-financed, shared responsibility recycling systems subject to review by the public and oversight through the Board of Environmental Protection.

Pass the Responsible Recycling Bill and help get hazardous materials out of community landfills

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Get Hazardous Materials out of Community Landfills

LD 1631: An Act to Provide Leadership Regarding the Responsible Recycling of Consumer Products is supported by the:

Environmental Priorities Coalition

We are 26 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations who have joined together for a sixth consecutive year around a Common Environmental Agenda. We represent over 100,000 members in Maine who want to protect good health, good jobs, and the quality of life that our environment provides for all of us.

Coalition partners include:

American Lung Association of Maine
Appalachian Mountain Club
Atlantic Salmon Federation
Bicycle Coalition of Maine
Conservation Law Foundation
Environmental Health Strategy Center
Environment Maine
Environment Northeast
Friends of Casco Bay
Maine Audubon
Maine Center for Economic Policy
Maine Congress of Lake Associations
Maine Council of Churches
Maine Council of Trout Unlimited
Maine League of Conservation Voters
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Maine People's Alliance
Maine Rivers
Natural Resources Council of Maine
Northern Forest Alliance
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Maine Chapter
RESTORE: The North Woods
Sierra Club, Maine Chapter
The Ocean Conservancy
The Wilderness Society
Toxics Action Center

References:

¹ "The Problem: Manufactured Product Waste." California Product Stewardship Council – "a coalition of local governments and their associations related to solid waste, recycling, resource conservation, environmental protection, water quality, and other cross-media issues (Associates)." <http://www.calpsc.org/solution/problem.html>

² "Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling and Disposal In the United States. Facts and Figures for 2007." US Environmental Protection Agency. <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/nonhaz/municipal/pubs/msw07-fs.pdf>

³ Ibid.