



# Fostering Reuse: Support for Reuse at the State Level

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*Protecting Maine's Air, Land and Water*

# State Government's Role

Support development of a sustainable, economically viable system that directs resources inherent in waste into a “circular economy” while protecting public health and the environment.

- Bringing together private and public partners to work on local initiatives that support a circular economy
- Educating and influencing people to make purchases with “reduce, reuse, recycle” in mind
- Catalyzing private sector solutions to materials management challenges
- Working to ensure that the environmental costs of managing unwanted products are not externalized to municipalities



# State Materials Management Plan

The Department has a responsibility to analyze and plan for managing, reducing, and recycling of solid waste. This plan is revised every five years, and it must:

- Be based on the waste hierarchy and recycling goals
- Provide guidance and direction to municipalities in planning and implementing waste management and recycling programs

Revisions to each new plan must incorporate changes in waste generation trends, changes in technologies, development of new waste generating activities and any other relevant factors affecting solid waste management.

**Next plan will be published in January of 2024**



# Snapshot of Actions to Support Waste Reduction - 2019 Plan

- ✓ Support local initiatives to reduce wasted food through technical assistance and grant funding prioritization
- ✓ Specify reuse and repair infrastructure and program development as eligible activities within competitive grant opportunities
- ✓ Develop strategies and supporting educational materials for municipalities to reduce consumption through community sharing arrangements (tool and equipment lending libraries, repair cafes, school “share tables”, and swap shops, etc.)
- *Work in progress:* Promote economic incentives for businesses and organizations that focus on reuse of consumer goods



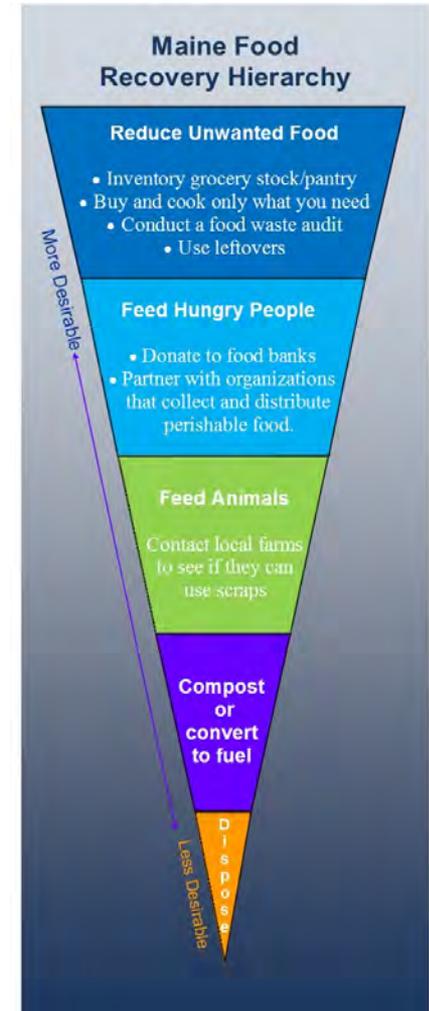
# Maine's Solid Waste Management Hierarchy

- Adopted in 1989
- Adherence to the waste hierarchy is used as a review criterion for licensing solid waste facilities
- Source reduction and reuse are prioritized
  - Reusing goods and reducing purchases of new items means avoiding consumption of resources
- Recycling has many environmental benefits, but is an energy-intensive process
  - Making new products, even from recycled material, consumes resources and generates emissions



# Maine's Food Recovery Hierarchy

- Food donation addresses food insecurity and ensures resources are not wasted.
  - ***“Maine has the highest rate of food insecurity in New England with 1 in 5 Maine children being food insecure and 1 in 8 adults.”***  
(Quote from the [Food Rescue ME Website](#))
- Composting produces valuable soil amendment but the resources that go into producing food (land, water, energy) are not fully utilized when food is not eaten



# Why Prioritize Reduction?

Below are EPA's Waste Reduction Model (WARM) tool estimates for **GHG emissions prevented** in different scenarios.



## *Waste Prevention*



## *Recycling & Composting*



50 tons of waste (food)

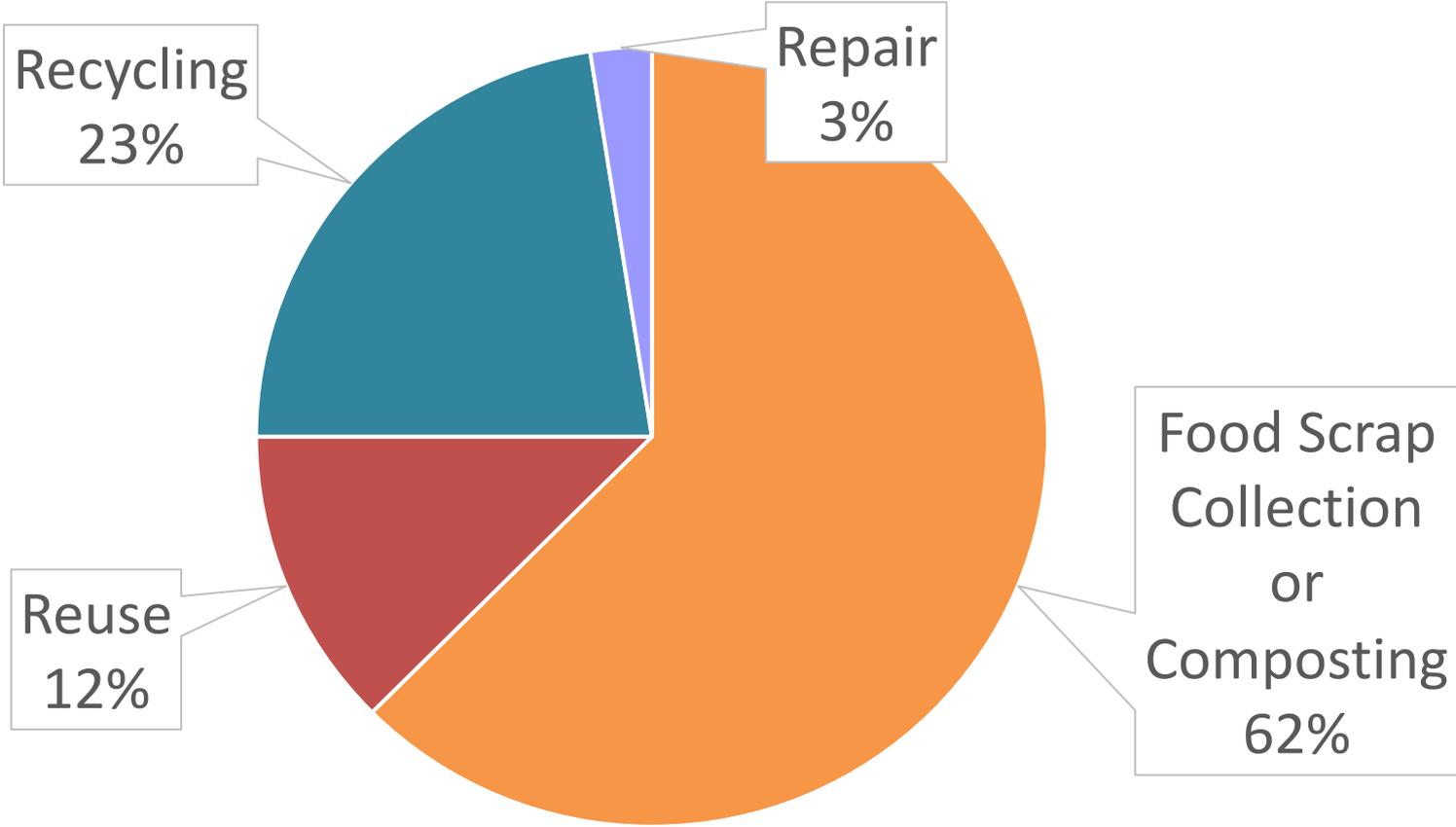
50 tons of waste (household)

# Maine's Waste Diversion Grants

- Open to public and private entities
- **High priority:** Proposals from municipal or regional associations
- **High priority:** Increasing removal and recycling of organic materials from municipal waste streams
  - Underserved areas
  - Waste prevention: food donation, gleaning, reuse, repair, lending libraries, etc.
  - Education and outreach
  - Addressing a statewide need
  - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
  - Expanding the type of materials recovered



# Snapshot of Projects Funded



■ Food Scrap Collection or Composting ■ Reuse ■ Recycling ■ Repair



# State Laws to Reduce Single-Use Plastics

## *Plastic Bag Reduction Law*

- Bans single-use plastic carry-out bags (grocery, retail, restaurant)
- Paper bags & reusable bags allowed
- Establishes a \$0.05 minimum fee
- Some exemptions (produce bags, deli wrap, seafood, etc.)

Learn more at

<https://www.maine.gov/dep/waste/recycle/plastic-bag-film.html>



## *Disposable Food Service Container Law*

- Bans polystyrene foam food service containers and service ware
- Includes almost all public eating arenas (not just restaurants)
- Exempts hospitals and meals on wheels programs

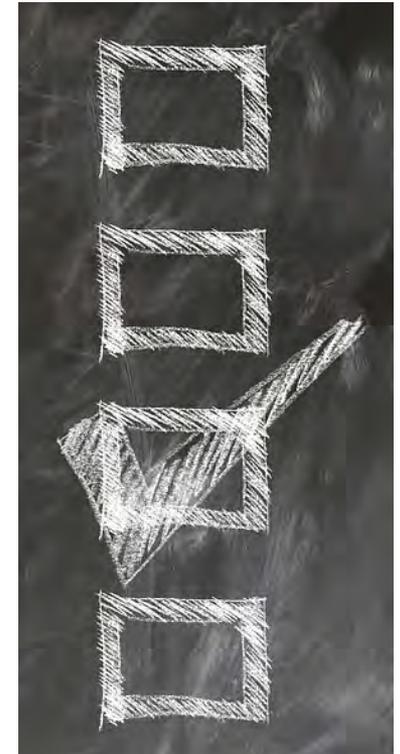
Learn more at

<https://www.maine.gov/dep/waste/recycle/polystyrene-foam.html>

# Product Stewardship Framework

Maine's product stewardship framework uses the following criteria to determine whether a product is a good fit for EPR:

1. Other countries, provinces, or states have successfully implemented EPR for the product
2. Contains toxics that pose health and environmental risks if improperly managed
3. EPR can reduce the financial burden on taxpayers and municipalities
4. The existing voluntary programs are inadequate
5. EPR would increase recovery of materials



# Maine's Product Stewardship Recycling Programs

- Architectural paint (latex or oil based) in liquid form
- Mercury thermostats
- Mercury-added light bulbs: fluorescent, neon, UV, HID
- Electronic waste
- Rechargeable batteries and cell phones
- Container redemption program
- **NEW: Pharmaceuticals and packaging**



Find drop-off locations:

- Paint: [paintcare.org](http://paintcare.org)
- Mercury thermostats, mercury lamps, or electronic waste: [thermostat-recycle.org](http://thermostat-recycle.org), [lamprecycle.org](http://lamprecycle.org), or [maine.gov/dep/helpmecycle](http://maine.gov/dep/helpmecycle)
- Batteries and cell phones: [call2recycle.org](http://call2recycle.org)

# Snapshot of NEW EPR Programs

- 38 MRSA §1612 Drug take-back stewardship program
  - Drug manufacturers required to run or participate in a DEP approved stewardship program



- 38 M.R.S. §2146 “Stewardship Program for Packaging” was enacted in July 2021 to reduce the volume and toxicity and increase the recycling of packaging material
  - Producers of products will pay into a fund based on the amount and the recyclability of packaging associated with their products
  - Municipalities will be reimbursed for recycling and waste management costs; some funds will go to infrastructure and education



# Lead by Example Report 2021

Sample of target actions to reduce emissions include green procurement and waste reduction for state institutions:

- By 2025, state institutions will purchase at least 20 percent of their food and food products from local producers
- By 2023, the state will set targets that lead to healthier workplaces and that reduce solid waste from state-owned facilities



These efforts will reduce emissions *and* save taxpayer money





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