

Northeast Recycling Council Webinar

Building Better Systems:
Infrastructure That Drives Recycling Behavior



Infrastructure Shapes Behavior



Make the right action easier

Make the wrong action harder

Participation, Quality, Accountability

Policy and service matter, but they are only the start



Huge variations across Europe

UK residential recycling and organics

Access alone doesn't guarantee participation

Systems produce the behavior they are designed for



Trash chute - easiest option

Recycling often requires extra effort

The stream that's frictionless usually wins

Ease drives participation



Co-locate trash, recycling, and organics

Clear graphics and intuitive openings

Reduce lifting and unlocking

Control drives quality



Open systems invite contamination

Aperture design helps guide correct use

Access control improves accountability

Data turns infrastructure into a managed system



Identify where participation is weak

Target outreach where it matters

Improve quality over time

For participation, reduce friction For quality, add the right controls



Education and service matter

Infrastructure determines whether behavior changes stick