

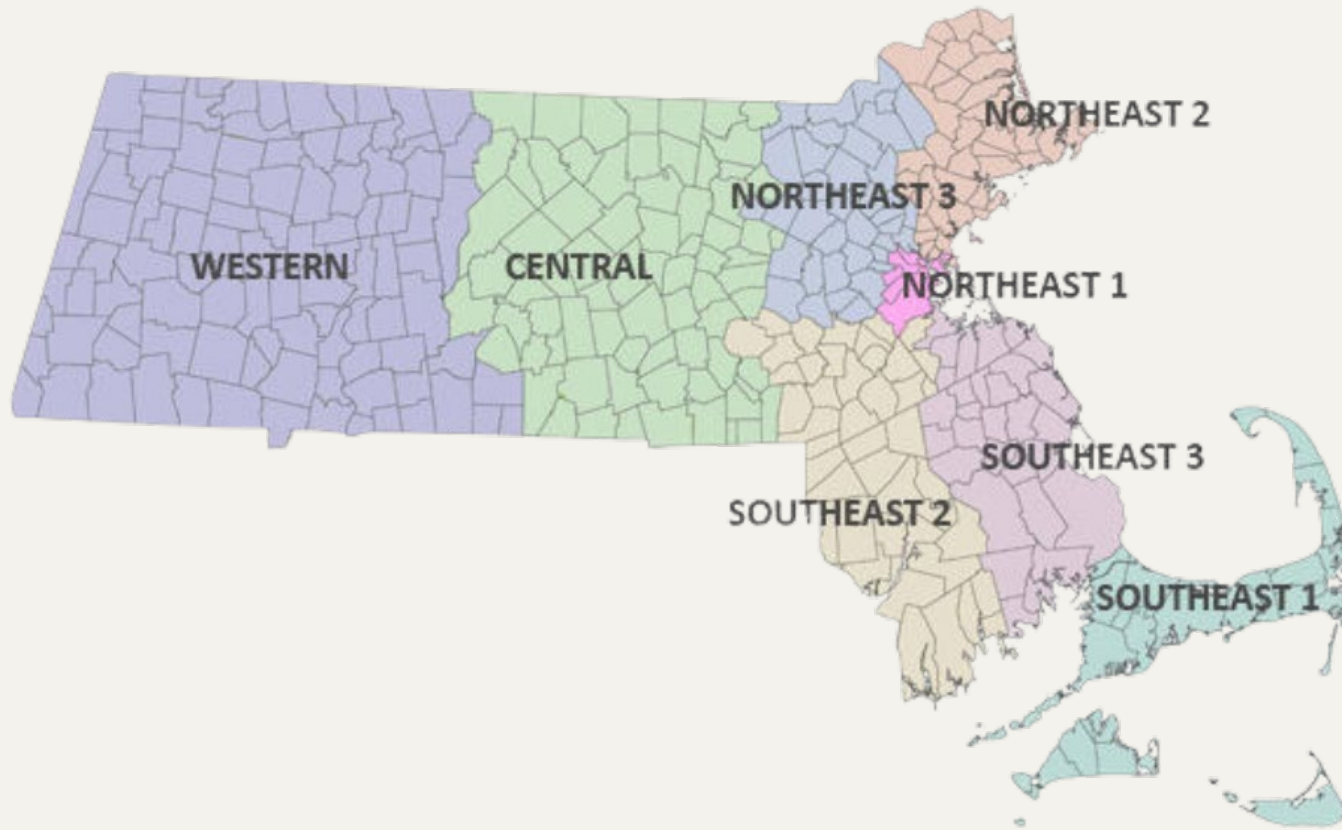
# Massachusetts' Reduce & Reuse Efforts



**MassDEP**  
Department of Environmental Protection

NERC Material Reuse Forum 11  
December 2, 2025

# Massachusetts: Who We Are



- Small state in New England
  - Population of around 7.1 million.
  - Dense population to the east, more rural to the west.
- 351 cities and towns
  - Commonwealth: a lot is driven at the local level.
- Border five states:
  - NH, VT, RI, NY, and CT
- Lots of colleges and universities, biotech, and research.

# 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan

Reduce disposal statewide by 30% (5.7 million tons to 4 million tons) by 2030.



Organics Action Plan

Construction & Demolition Action Plan

Reduce & Reuse Action Plan

Recycling Market Development

# Waste Disposal Bans

- First ban in 1990 with the state's first Solid Waste Master Plan.
- Now over a dozen materials.
- Most recent bans:
  - 2014: Commercial food material (ton/week)
    - 2022: Lowered to half ton/week
  - 2022: Mattresses and textiles



## Materials Currently Banned from Disposal or Transfer for Disposal in Massachusetts

- Asphalt pavement, brick and concrete
- Cathode ray tubes
- Clean gypsum wallboard
- [Commercial food material](#) (lower threshold effective November 1, 2022)
- Ferrous and non-ferrous metals
- Glass, metal, and plastic containers (bottles, cans, jars, jugs and tubs)
- Lead acid batteries
- Leaves and yard waste
- [Mattresses](#) (effective November 1, 2022)
- Recyclable paper, cardboard and paperboard
- [Textiles](#) (effective November 1, 2022)
- Treated and untreated wood and wood waste (banned from landfills only)
- White goods (large appliances)
- Whole tires (banned from landfills only; shredded tires acceptable)

# Municipal Waste Reduction Branch

## What We Do:

Grants and financial incentives

Technical assistance

Education and outreach

Network-building

## Commercial Waste Reduction Branch

- Sister branch supporting businesses and institutions.

# Our MassDEP Reduce & Reuse Team



Kathi Mirza  
Branch Chief  
Municipal Waste Reduction  
MassDEP





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Municipal Waste Reduction  
MassDEP

# Reduce & Reuse (R&R) Action Plan

- R&R Working Group established in 2020:
  - Series of 12 stakeholder meetings (2020-2021).
  - Over 400 participants.
  - Shaped framework/content of the action plan.
- Published R&R Action Plan (Dec. 2021).
- Guides our reuse work.

Action	Timeframe	Status	Notes:
Provide local businesses, NGOs, and municipalities financial assistance for waste reduction and reuse projects			<p>Mass DEP supports NGOs and municipal waste reduction projects through the Sustainable Materials Recovery Program.</p> <p>MassDEP's <a href="#">Reduce, Reuse, Repair Micro-Grant</a> provides funding for businesses, NGOs and eligible municipalities for short-term waste reduction and reuse projects.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Recycling Business Development Grant</a> can target reuse activities for specific materials. For example, furniture reuse has been an eligible grant category in past years.</p>

Find the plan on  
[MassDEP's Reduce & Reuse  
Working Group website](#)

# Barriers



Cultural (individuals)



Access (individuals)



Infrastructure (reuse organizations)



Policy (the system)



Market driven (trends and product design)

# Strategies



Education / behavior change



Tools, resources, and technical assistance



Grants / financial incentives



Job training / workforce development



Networking



Legislation



Procurement

# Priority Materials



Single-use  
Packaging



Building  
Materials



Textiles &  
Clothing



Electronics



Household  
Durable Goods



Business & Institutional  
Furniture, Fixtures and  
Equipment

# Grant Programs

- **Reduce, Reuse, Repair Micro-Grant**
  - \$3K – \$10K for reuse and repair projects.
  - Available to municipalities, for-profits, and nonprofits.
- **Sustainable Materials Recovery Program**
  - For cities and towns.
    - Recycling Dividends Program
    - Waste Reduction Project Grants – \$20K - \$100K.
- **Recycling & Reuse Business Development Grant**
  - For businesses and nonprofits.
  - \$25K - \$400K for reuse, recycling, composting infrastructure (processing and collection).
- **Waste Reduction Innovation Grant (NEW)**
  - Award determination in process.



UMass Amherst New2U



Re:Dish



Swap Shop/Shed



Boston Building Resources

# Technical Assistance

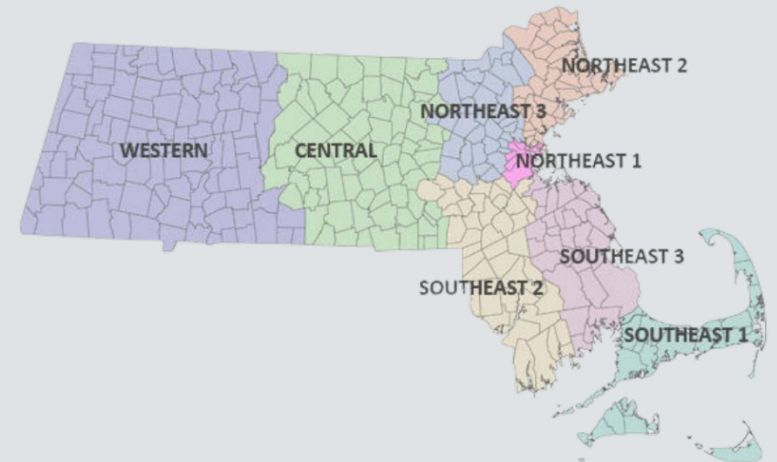
## RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts

- Free technical assistance to help businesses and institutions improve their reuse, recycling, and food recovery programs.
  - Online guides and resources.
  - Direct technical assistance.
  - Searchable database for reuse and recycling outlets.



## Municipal Assistance Coordinators (MACs)

- Support city/town waste reduction programs and services.
  - Advise on roll out of new programs.
  - Connect municipalities to grant opportunities.
  - Help with contracts and regulations.



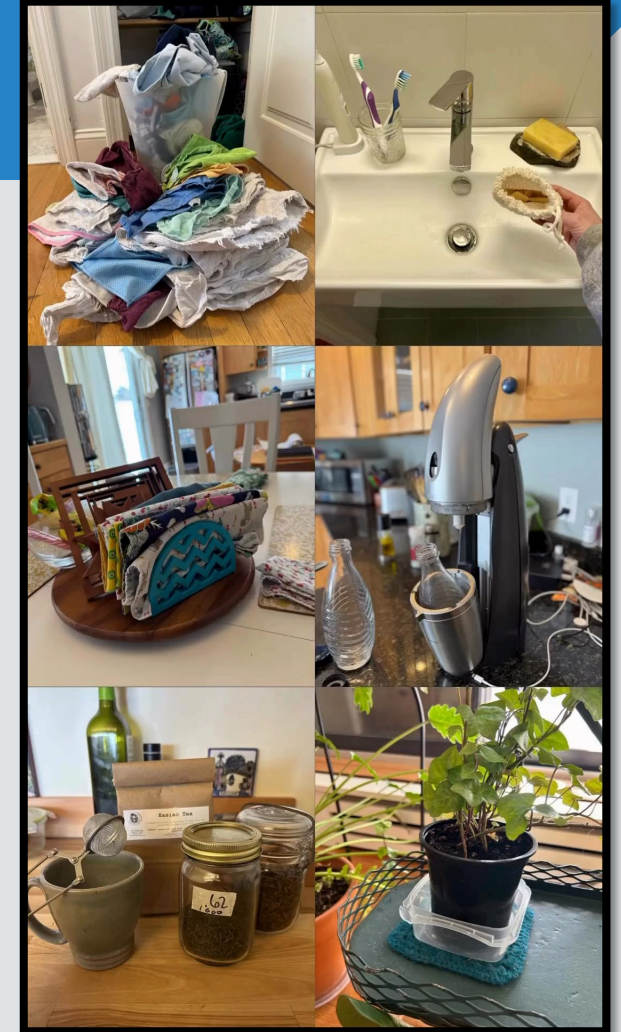
# Education & Outreach

## Recycle Smart MA (general public)

- More than just recycling – reuse/repair topics and tips too:
  - Social media posts, newsletter deep dives, webinars, videos and more!

## RecyclingWorks in MA (businesses & institutions)

- Case studies, newsletters, blogs, events and workshops.



# Building a Network

## Reduce & Reuse Working Group

- **680 members** spanning a wide variety of sectors (cities and towns, businesses, nonprofits, academic institutions, etc.).

## Deconstruction Workgroup

- Focused on building material reuse and deconstruction.
- **700 members** (general contractors, designers, building officials, historic preservationists, etc.).



# Reusable Foodware (single-use packaging)

## Best Management Practices for Reusable Takeout Containers (BMPs)

- Published November 2024
- Guidance for food establishments interested in replacing single-use takeout containers with reusable service ware.
  - Covers inspection, returning, washing, rinsing, sanitizing, tracking and storage.
  - Vetted by the MA Department of Public Health.



# Textiles

- Nov. 2022, textiles added to waste disposal bans.
- Annual Textile Summit.
- Continuing to measure progress in textile recovery.
- [Clothing and Textile Recovery](#) website provides resources, including a model donation bin ordinance.



# Building Materials

- Deconstruction Workgroup
- Seven webinars (2022-2025)
  - Topics from reuse markets for building materials to workforce development.
  - All recordings and presentations available on the [Reduce & Reuse \(R&R\) Working Group & Deconstruction Workgroup Archive](#)
- In-person Deconstruction Workshop
  - Facilitated by Sustainable Performance Institute.
  - Held on Oct 23, 2025, in Boston.
  - Report with recommendations in early 2026.



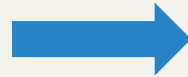
Deconstruction site in Seaport District, Boston



In-person Deconstruction Workshop

## 2025 Review and Assessment of Action Plan

- Three meetings, each focused on different priority materials.
  - Status updates on key strategies outlined in the plan.
  - Opportunities for stakeholder feedback.
- Recordings available on our website.



## Feedback



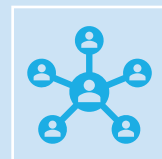
### Strategic outreach

How are we reaching people?



### Storage, storage, storage

Using the state's underutilized square footage as a temporary storage space for bulky items and construction materials.



### Regionalization

Creating regional programs to connect more people and organizations to surplus items.

# Priority Materials: Next Up



Single-use  
Packaging



Building  
Materials



Textiles &  
Clothing



Electronics



Household  
Durable Goods



Business & Institutional  
Furniture, Fixtures and  
Equipment



# Collaboration is Key

Across sectors

Other state agencies

- Operational Services Division
- Department of Public Health
- Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance
- Executive Office of Economic Development

**Connect  
with us!**

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Learn more and find previous meeting recordings:  
[MassDEP Reduce & Reuse Working Group](#)