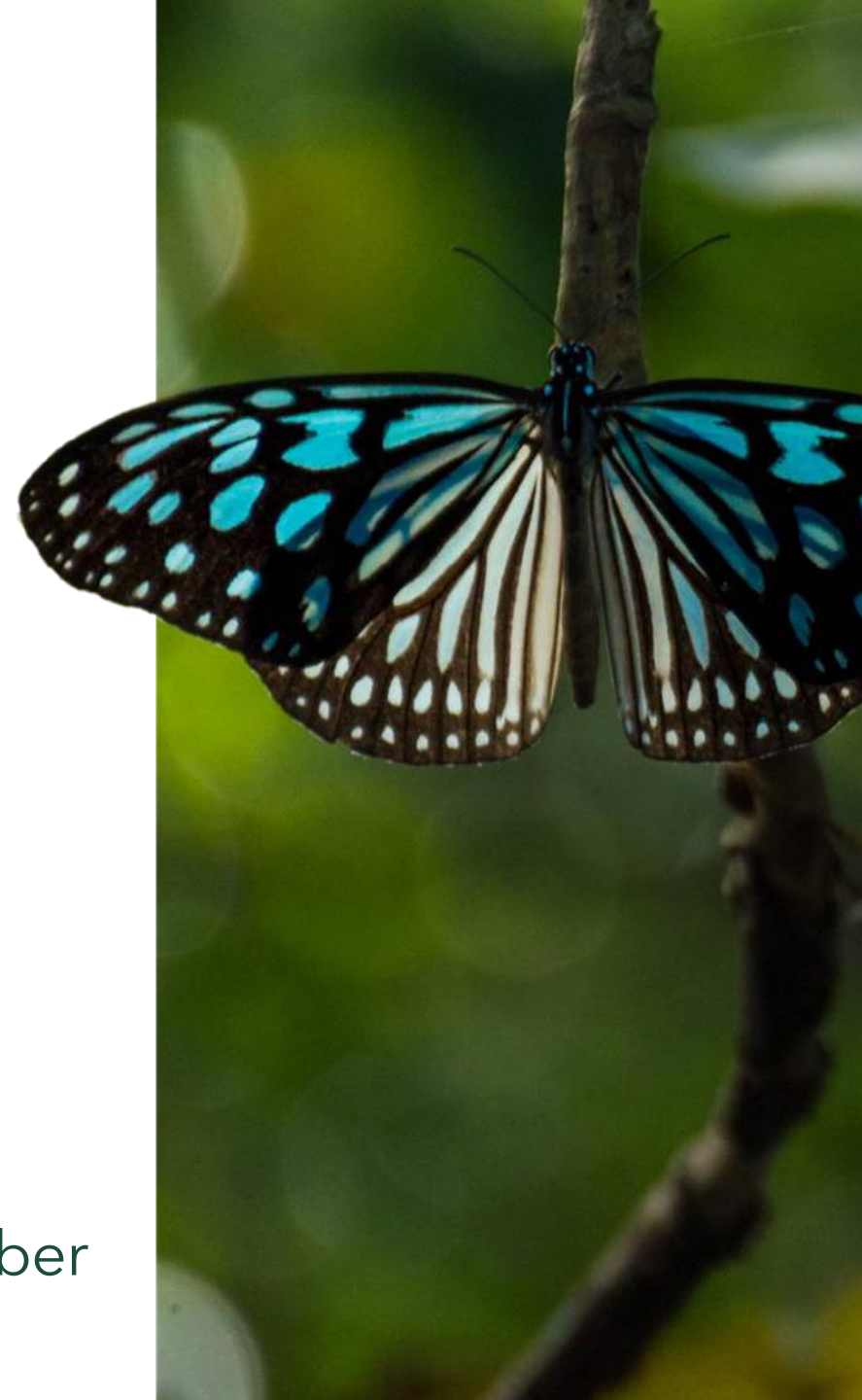


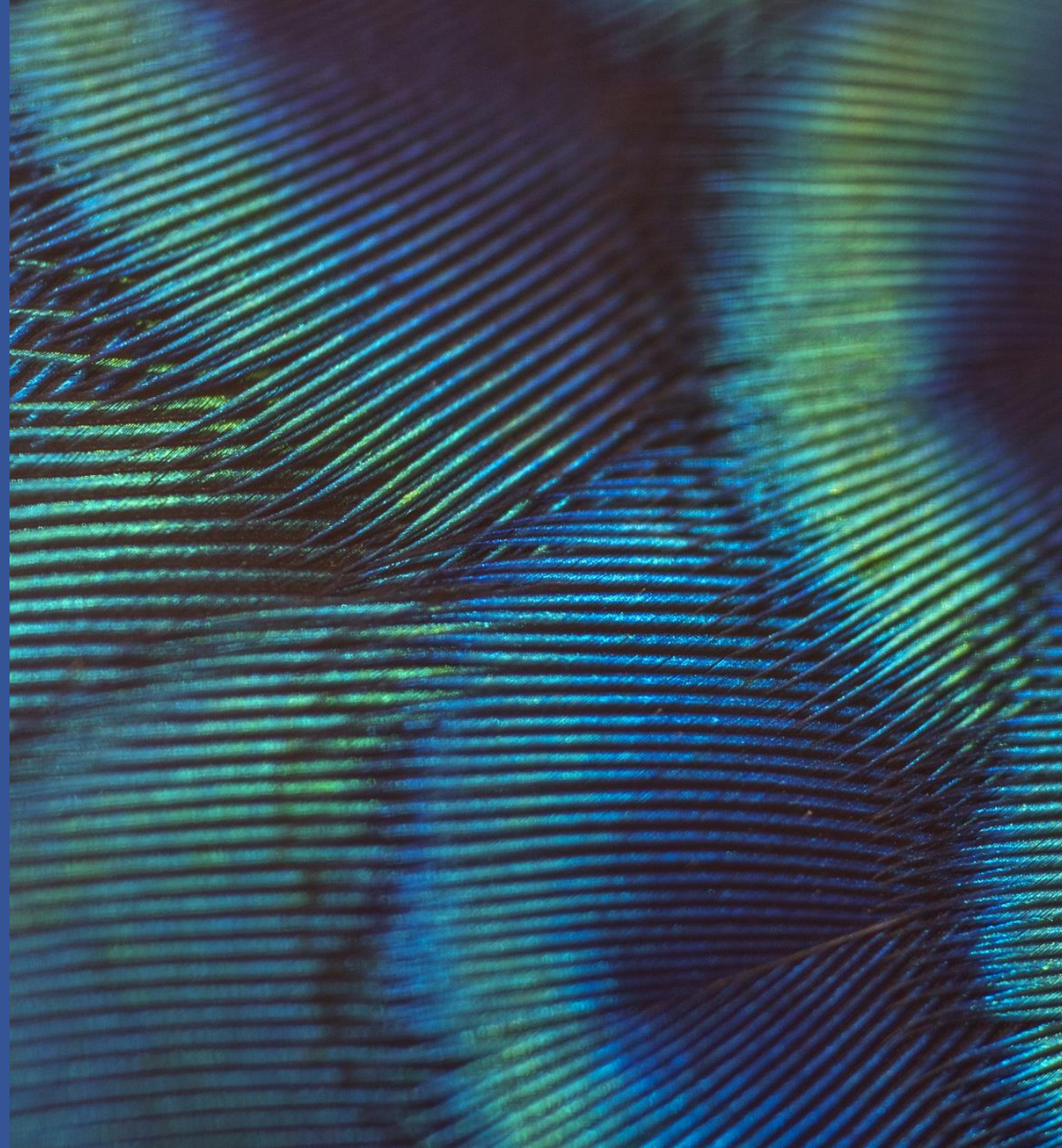
Call to Action



Terri Goldberg, MassRecycle Board Member

Overview

- MassRecycle –Why?
- Strategies
- Examples
- Resources
- Future

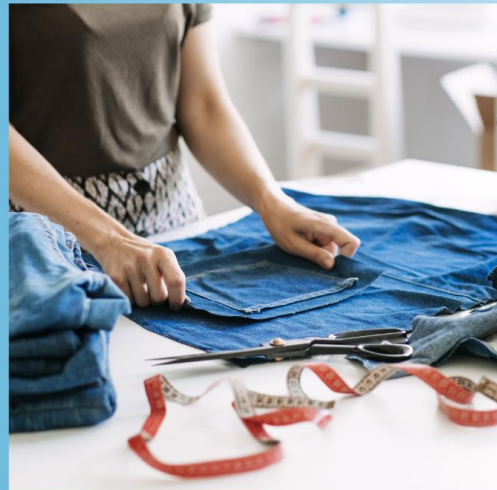


MassRecycle White Paper

A Call to Action on Materials Management & Climate Change



Approved by the MassRecycle Board of Directors
February 4, 2025





White Paper:

<https://massrecycle.org/massrecycle-white-paper/>

Podcast:

<https://massrecycle.org/podcast/episode-51-the-hidden-carbon-cost-how-our-stuff-fuels-climate-change-and-what-we-can-do-about-it>

White Paper – [Read Here](#)

Podcast – [Listen Here](#)



Materials Management and Climate Change

[Home](#) / [Materials Management and Climate Change](#)

[Massrecycle.org/materials-management-and-climate-change/](https://massrecycle.org/materials-management-and-climate-change/)



**CBEIs show
that biggest
GHG ↓ s are
from
preventing
waste**



Strategies

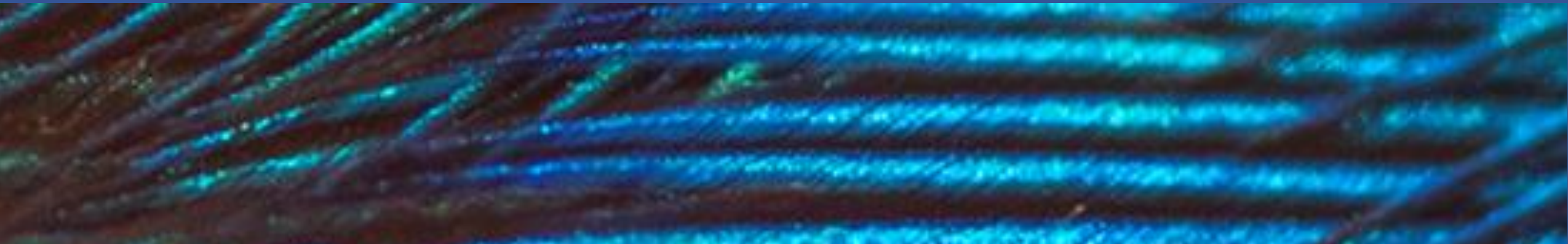


Prevent – Reduce

- Rethink
- Reuse
- Refurbish
- Repair
- Restore
- Revamp
- Recondition
- Repurpose
- More Re's...
- Upcycle
- Donate
- Share
- Borrow

Material Targets

- Wasted Food
- Construction and Demolition
- Paper, Cardboard, Plastic, Metal, Glass
- Refrigerants
- Renewable Energy Tech





Recycling

- Recycling often has positive impacts on GHGs
- But it can depend on how the material is handled & the recycling process
- Needs more analysis

28 Actions

- Educate
- Measure
- Legislate
- Collaborate
- Invest



Example: Glass

Mixed glass use in Pozzolans
found to have  GHG benefits

Strategies:

- Develop state EPP guidance for construction projects
- Enact EPR for packaging
- Modernize bottle bill
- Mandate PCRC
-  Reuse options
- Educate



A close-up photograph of vibrant green leaves, likely from a plant like basil, showing detailed vein patterns and a slightly glossy texture. The leaves are layered, creating a sense of depth.

Example: Wasted Food

Significant life cycle GHG impacts

Strategies:

- Educate with a focus on reduction
- Mandate date labeling consistency
- Expand diversion requirements
- Support technical assistance

NERC & NEWMOA - EDUCATION

https://www.newmoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/ClimateChange_brochure.pdf



We hear news almost daily about the impacts of climate change on many aspects of our lives – weather, property, livelihood, health, the environment. We hear about what we can do to reduce these impacts by using energy-efficient appliances and weatherproofing our homes. We also hear about the benefits of driving fuel-efficient or electric cars, sharing rides, and using public transportation. But there are other important things that we can do to live more sustainably, such as focusing on the products and materials that we all rely on and enjoy because these also contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.

Reducing the climate impacts from our purchases can take us into an exciting future, as our buying habits evolve and help protect the earth from climate change. Reducing the impacts on our climate from the things that we buy can help everyone achieve a better and safer future. Fortunately, we already know many of the solutions.

What are Greenhouse Gases & How Do They Relate to Climate Change?

The U.S. Global Change Research Program defines **greenhouse gases** as those that absorb heat in the atmosphere near the Earth's surface preventing it from radiating away into space. If the atmospheric concentrations of these gases rise, the average temperature of the lower atmosphere will gradually increase, a phenomenon known as the greenhouse effect. Research has found that:

- Carbon dioxide is an important greenhouse gas that is released when fossil fuels – such as coal and gasoline – are burned to produce energy.
- **Methane gas is a potent greenhouse gas.** According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, pound for pound, its impact is more than 28 times greater than carbon dioxide over a 100-year period.
- Greenhouse gases emitted by human activities explain the **world's observed warming** over the past century.
- **Reducing the amount of greenhouse gases** emitted can reduce future warming and associated impacts.

The scientific basis for greenhouse gases as a cause of climate change is covered in detail by the Reports of the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change**.



Making & Consuming

Americans consume a lot of things; by one estimate more than **23.6 tons of material consumption per person per year**. This includes food, clothing, building materials, household items, phones, electronics, toys, furniture, cars, recreational equipment, and much more.

It takes a significant amount of energy to extract and process the raw materials to produce and transport these products and to

NERC & NEWMOA - EDUCATION



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10 Things You Can Do to Make a Difference

Here are some ideas for actions we can all take to decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

1. BUY WHAT YOU NEED & BUY FOR DURABILITY.

When you are shopping in a store or buying things online, ask yourself what you need. Consider how well-made the product is and whether it will last.



2. BORROW & SHARE.

If you need something for a project or task, see if you can borrow it from a neighbor, family member, or friend, rather than purchasing it new. For example, if you need a tool, like a drill or electric saw, and you don't have one, see if someone nearby can lend it to you. Offer to share your tools and mobile appliances with family, neighbors, and friends if you know they could use them, so they don't have to buy their own.

3. REUSE.

Consider repurposing a product or packaging instead of throwing it out when you are finished with it. For example, when giving a gift, think about whether you need to buy something new or whether an antique or something that you already have would be more personal and meaningful. If it has to be wrapped, consider using a reusable gift bag instead of single-use wrapping paper. In other words, ask yourself whether there are reusable or secondhand alternatives that can express your feelings as a giver.

4. REPAIR IT.

If something you own breaks, try having it repaired. There may be a repair shop, a pop-up local repair event (sometimes called a repair café or fix-it clinic), or service provider in your area that can help. If repairing isn't an option, consider buying a used or refurbished replacement.

5. BUY RECYCLED.

Many products made with recycled materials have a lower carbon footprint than comparable products made without recycled content. As we buy more products with recycled content, the market for these products will grow, and suppliers will tend to produce them instead of non-recycled products.



6. DON'T WASTE FOOD.

Buy only what you plan to eat and keep track of what goes to scrap. Use U.S. EPA's [Food Too Good to Waste tool](#) for tips on shopping, food storage, and use habits.



7. KEEP FOOD OUT OF DISPOSAL.

Send food scraps for animal feed, energy production, or composting. If your community offers access to commercial or municipal composting or anaerobic digestion, see if you can send your food scraps to these service providers or try composting at home. Fats, oils, and grease that are left over from cooking can be poured into a container and dropped off to make biofuel, if there is a service provider in

?



Laws/Policies:
EPR
PCRC mandates
Date Labels
Truth in Labels
Modernize BB
EPP



Next Steps – What Do You Think?

- Hold podcasts/blog/webinars
- Create materials that help make the message more accessible
- Develop template articles that can be customized for publication in local outlets
- Reach out to climate change organizations to discuss ways to partner on policies & programs related to reducing consumption-based emissions
- Identify priority policy actions & reach out to agencies
- Other ideas?

Contact

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