



APRIL 2019 - EARTH DAY - SPECIAL EDITION

## RECYCLING IS SINGIN' THE BLUES

The statewide recycling rate dipped from 50% in 2014 to 42% in 2017 and could go as low as 33% should China ban all recyclable paper and plastic exported in 2017. CalRecycle has mounted a \$12.8 million recycling outreach campaign to assist in cleaning up the feedstock and is posting up resources to assist cities and the counties in maintaining a diversion rate to at least comply with AB 939. The industry is adjusting to the new normal with technology, generator education, and rate increases.

AB 1583 (Eggman) is proposing to set up a Statewide Commission on Recycling Markets and Curbside Recycling to elevate the recycling cause.



Assembly member Eggman has been working on landfill tip fee reform for years and plans to add that to AB 1583 in order to raise

revenue earmarked for remanufacturing facilities located in California. Any tax increase requires a 2/3 vote in the Legislature, where transportation and Cap-and-Trade funding became law in previous years and water tax is up this year. Recycling has become passé and should not be passed over once again.

California is poised to meet the renewable energy and greenhouse gas reduction goals in 2020, as the Governor plans to ban diesel pollution and reach the low carbon fuel standard by 2030. Organic waste diversion is further expanding with local markets not tied to China. California is still a leader being green even as recycling is singing the blues.

### AB 1583 (Eggman)

TOPIC: Requires CalRecycle, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to establish a Paper Recycling Incentive Program that makes incentive payments to in-state processors of waste paper and to establish an Organic Waste Recycling Incentive Program that makes incentive payments to in-state organic waste recycling facilities that process organic waste collected from municipal sources. The bill would require CalRecycle to convene a Statewide Commission on Recycling Markets and Curbside Recycling. Tip fee reform may be added to this bill where a landfill tip fee increase and/or a generator fee will be earmark revenue for remanufacturing of recyclables and organics in California.

STATUS: **Referred to Assembly of Natural Resources**

### CalRecycle's Resources

China's recent strict contamination limits and import bans have led to a stockpiling of materials at California solid waste and recycling facilities and declining markets for recyclables. CalRecycle is keeping their web page active on resources available as linked above and working with the LEAs to provide guidance around storage of processed recyclable material. In addition, the CalRecycle is sharing examples of local actions that address changing markets for recyclable materials. See more information about how [California jurisdictions are responding to market changes](#).

### Recycling Outreach Campaign

CalRecycle approved a 3-year \$12.8 million Recycling Outreach Campaign at their March monthly meeting in order to bring a much needed message to the residences and businesses of California. Moving beyond just the 'Cans and Bottles' of yesteryears' statewide campaigns and not preaching wishful recycling to clean up the stream.

### **Statewide Recycling Rate**

Pounds Per Person Per Day (PPD) - CalRecycle

**2012 | 4.3 PPD**  
29.3 million disposal tons  
50% statewide recycling rate

**2013 | 4.4 PPD**  
30.2 million disposal tons  
50% statewide recycling rate

**2014 | 4.5 PPD**  
31.2 million disposal tons  
50% statewide recycling rate

**2015 | 4.7 PPD**  
33.2 million disposal tons  
47% statewide recycling rate

**2016 | 4.9 PPD**  
35.2 million disposal tons  
44% statewide recycling rate

**2017 | 5.2 PPD**  
37.8 million disposal tons  
42% statewide recycling rate

**2020 | 2.7 PPD (AB 341)**  
20.0 million AB 341 disposal tons  
75% statewide recycling rate

**Full China Ban (CalRecycle)**  
33% statewide recycling rate

### State of Recycling - 2017

Each year CalRecycle publishes the **State of Disposal and Recycling In California**, where the statewide recycling rate was 42% in 2017 down from 50% in 2014. The state's waste management system faced some major challenges in 2017 and have continued on in 2018 and 2019 without relief in sight with the National Sword export ban being the new normal. California's exported recyclables have decreased by almost 2 million tons, or about 11 percent, in the last three years. The exact fates of these tonnages is 'uncertain' so CalRecycle says, where most has been sent to landfills on a ton-per-ton basis.