



Zero Waste Workshop

ChesterPaEJ.org

@Chester_EJ



The logo for Mother Compost, featuring a stylized circular emblem with three curved segments in shades of grey and white, positioned behind the text.

Mother Compost

ROT ROCKS!

COMPOSTING:

WHAT IT IS, WHY IT MATTERS & MC'S WORK

- What Is Composting?
- Why Do It?
- Who We Are
- Our Work



WHAT IS COMPOSTING?



In its simplest form, composting is nature's way of recycling.

WHY COMPOST?

To Move Away From A Linear Waste Stream

- The US throws out 40% of our food supply - roughly 148 billion pounds - every year.
- 76% of US landfills are currently closed & active landfills are facing capacity limitations.
- Organics in a landfill environment breakdown without the presence of oxygen through a process called anaerobic digestion. This produces a byproduct of methane gas - a greenhouse gas 28x more potent than CO₂.



Every year, U.S. landfills and trash incinerators receive **167 MILLION TONS** of garbage.

> 50% of typical municipal garbage set out at the curb is compostable.

Landfills and incinerators are dangerous.
Every bag thrown out contributes to:



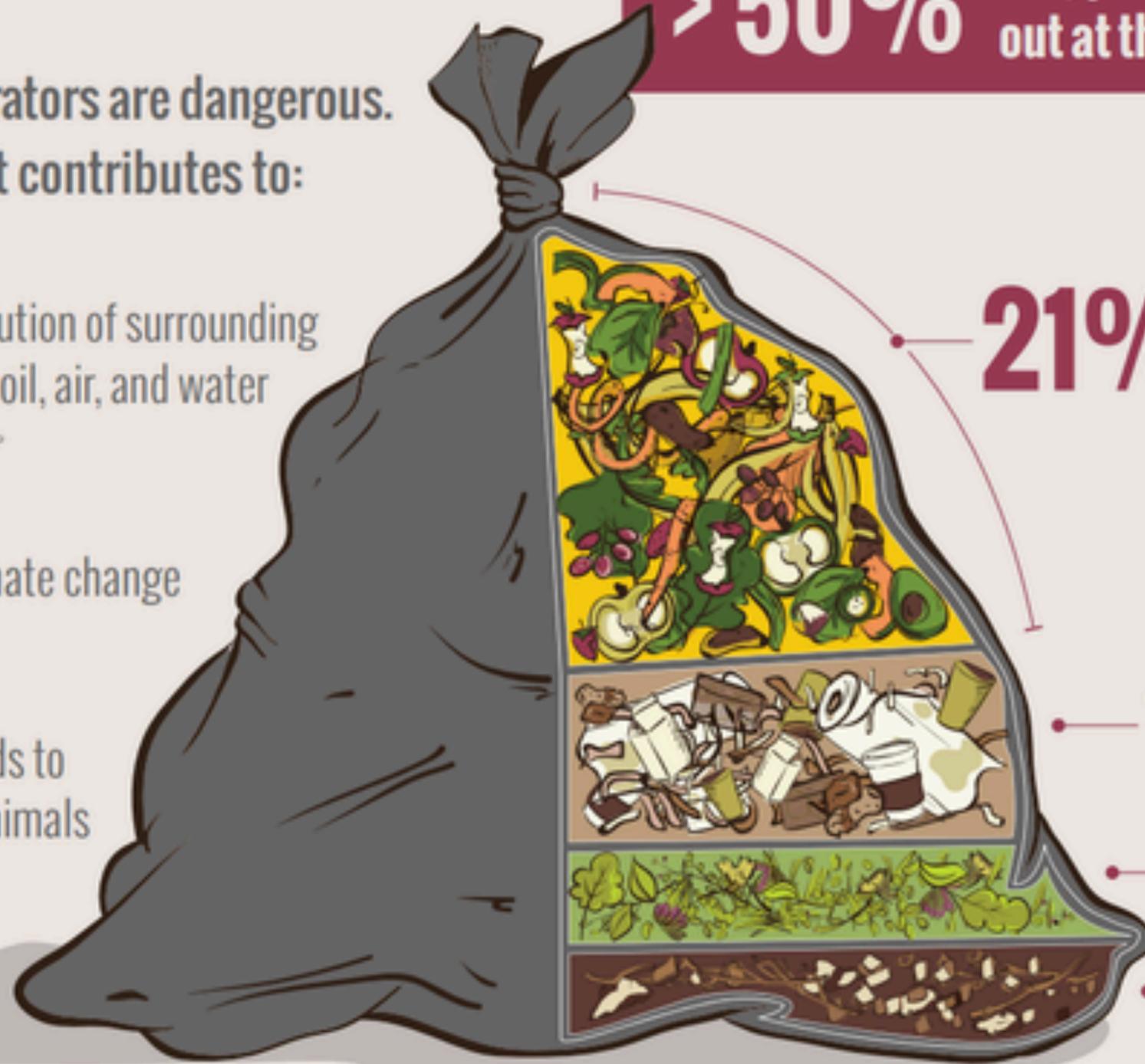
Pollution of surrounding soil, air, and water



Climate change



Health hazards to humans and animals



21% is food scraps alone

15% paper/paperboard

8% yard trimmings

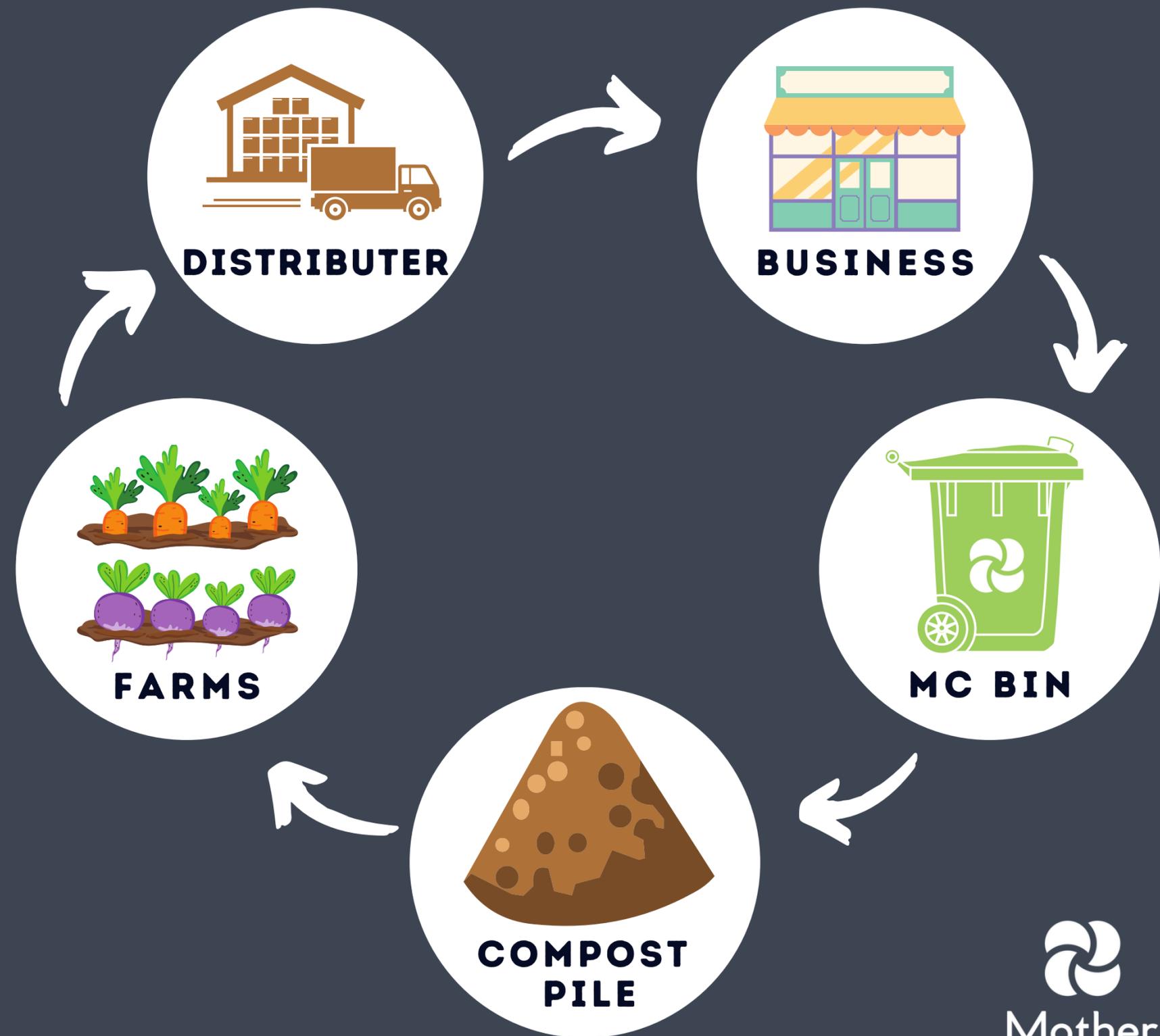
8% wood waste

“The following comes from the Institute for Local Self-Reliance (www.ilsr.org), a national nonprofit organization working to strengthen local economies, and redirect waste into local recycling, composting, and reuse industries. It is reprinted here with permission.”

WHY COMPOST?

To create a *Circular Waste Cycle*

- Composting recycles nutrients and microbes back into the soil to be used to grow healthier food.
 - Nutrient rich soils also suppress plant disease.
- Compost can hold 5X it's weight in water. Soils amended with compost can retain more moisture, helping prevent erosion & reducing stormwater runoff.



When added to soil, compost can filter out urban stormwater pollutants by **an astounding 60-95%**



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SOIL

COMPOST improves biological, chemical, and physical characteristics of soil.

Protects against soil desertification and soil erosion

Enhances plant disease suppression

Increases resilience to floods and droughts

Increases soil fertility

Reduces need for chemicals

Converts nitrogen into a more stable and less mobile form and phosphorous into a less soluble form

Increases microbial activity

Improves water retention

Improves soil structure

Improves ability to store nutrients (such as cation exchange capacity)

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ORGANICS DISPOSAL | Laws & Regulations

Be on the forefront as more states start adapting laws to support organics recycling.

Washington - HB 1799

Requires diversion of organic materials away from landfills, towards food rescue programs & organics management facilities.

California - SB 1383

People and organizations are required to separate organic material from other garbage.

Massachusetts - 310 CMR 19.000

Regulations ban disposal of food and other organic wastes from businesses and institutions that generate more than one-half ton of these materials per week.

Vermont - ACT 148

Bans disposal of food scraps in the trash or landfills.

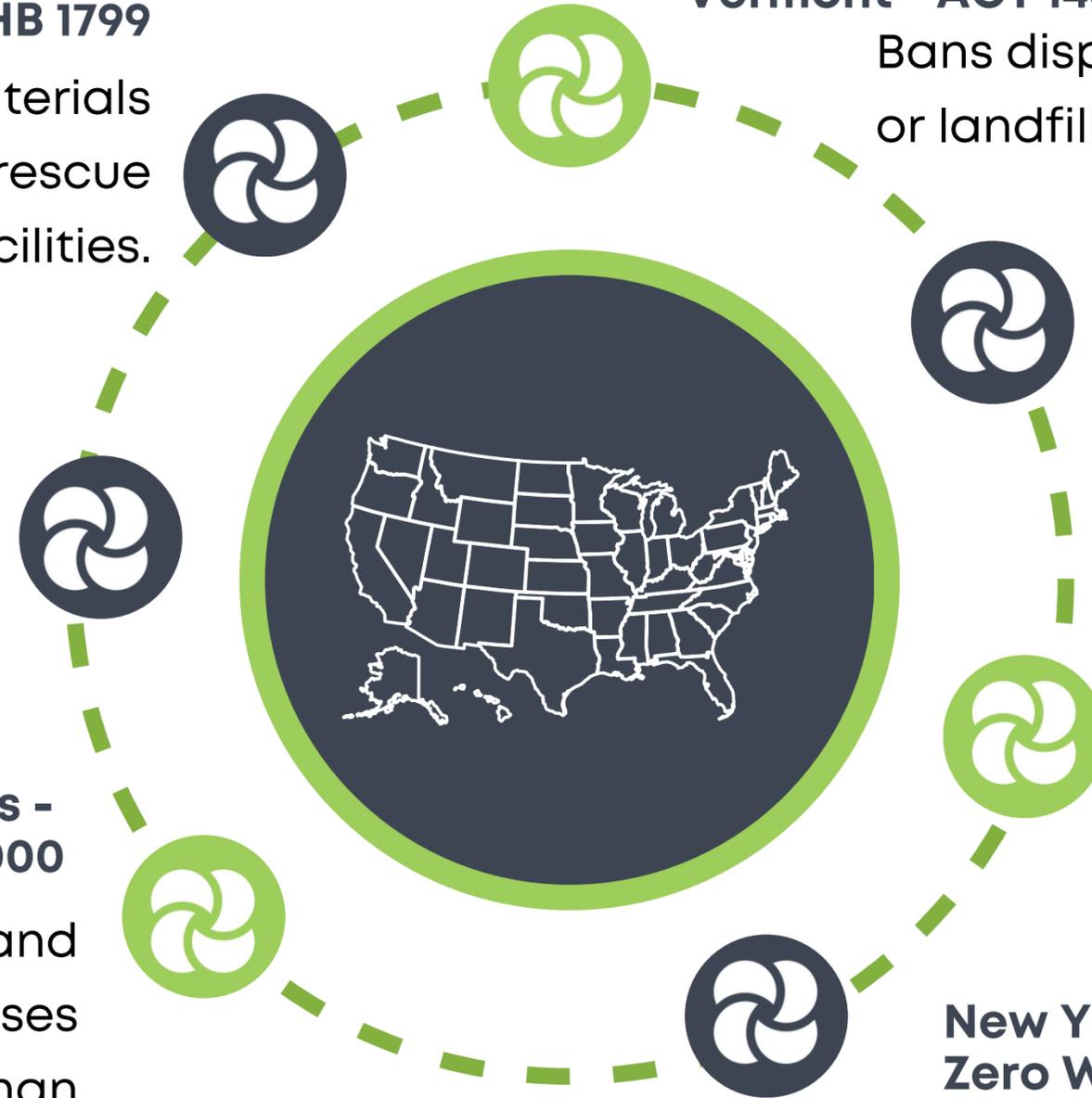
Maryland - HB264

Requires entities generating 1+ tons per week to compost or otherwise divert food scraps

New York State- Requires institutions generating an average of 2+ tons of food waste per week to donate what they can & compost/recycle the remainder.

New York City - Zero Waste Act

Composting now mandated throughout New York City effective January 2024.





MORE ABOUT MC



WOMAN OWNED & LED:

Certified Women's
Business Enterprise

Founded in the fall of 2018

- POUNDS COMPOSTED: 5,424,194 pounds
- COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS: 52 businesses and two municipalities
- Residential Members: 1398
- Community Bin Members: 229

OUR MISSION

To make
composting so easy
everyone will do it.

OUR VALUES

Grit

We show up — in the rain, snow, and heat. We find a way forward and don't quit when the work gets messy.

Purpose

Every bucket, route, and conversation connects to something bigger: restoring soil and reshaping our region's relationship with waste.

Integrity

We do the next right thing — especially when it's the hard thing. Our word matters, and our actions reflect it.

Safety

We look out for our community and each other. We operate with care — on the road, on site, and in how we communicate. We're building a workplace where people feel safe to speak up, grow, and belong.

Joy

We find joy in the work — in the process, the people, and the progress. Even when it's hard, we look for what's good and worth celebrating.

COLLECTION SERVICES

We make composting easy



SIGN UP

Our subscribers sign up for service on a monthly or annual basis.



SORT ORGANICS

Now all food & organic waste will have it's own container. Our team will provide lists to help guide you.



WE COLLECT

We come to clear all materials on a regularly scheduled basis. Service features can include bin cleaning, diversion tracking, reminders & more!



AND REPEAT

With every food scrap you toss, you helping to be the change in your home, business & the world.



DELCO COMPOSTS!

Delco Courthouse

Composting Since
2024

Redirected approx.
30,814 pounds since
starting



A close-up photograph of several hands of different skin tones stacked together in a circle, symbolizing teamwork and collaboration. The hands are positioned in a way that they overlap, with fingers pointing towards the center. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a blue wall and some grey fabric. The text "CLOSING THE WASTE LOOP TOGETHER" is overlaid in the center of the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**CLOSING THE WASTE LOOP
TOGETHER**



NL2W
NOTHING LEFT TO WASTE

CRCQL Zero Waste Workshop

Alex Danovitch
Nothing Left to Waste
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www.nl2w.com

Community Zero Waste

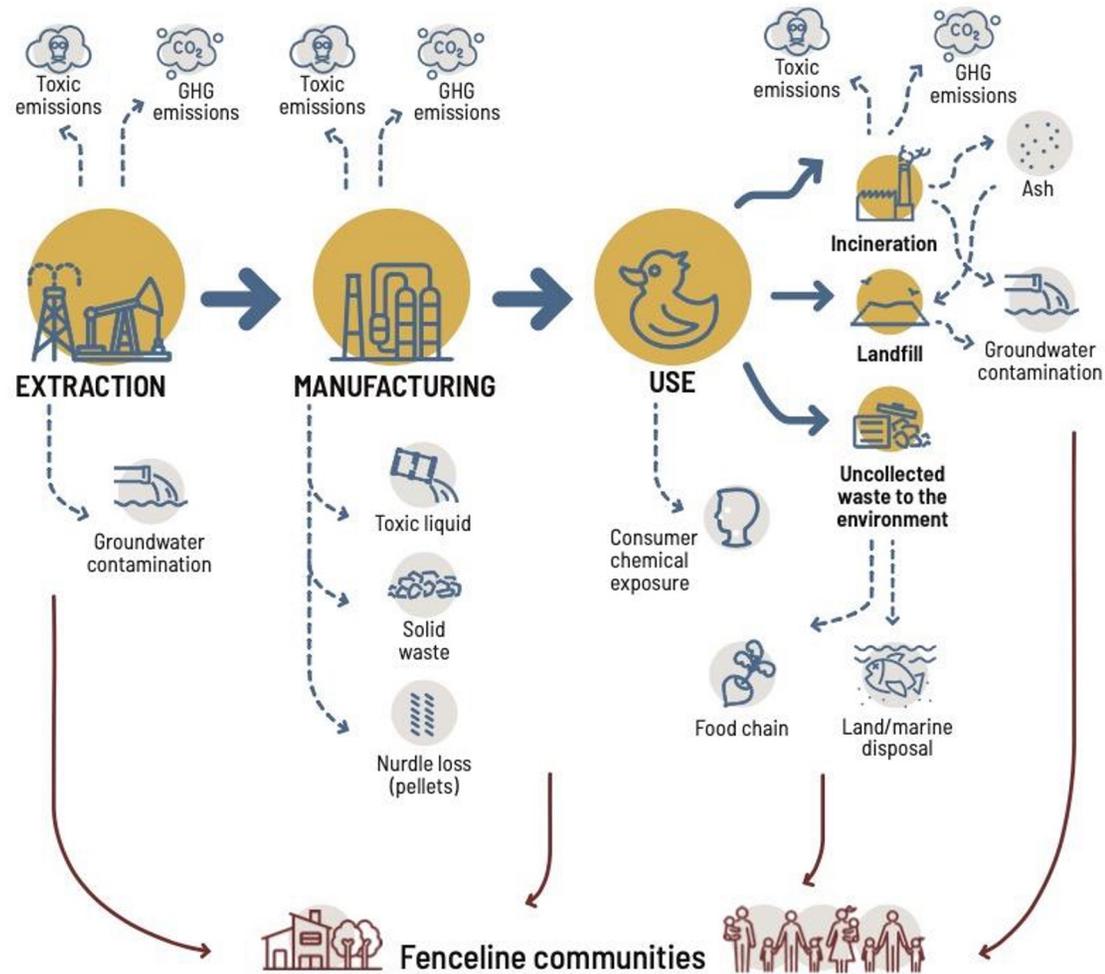
- ❖ Clean Air
- ❖ Clean Water
- ❖ Healthy Planet
- ❖ Equitable, Just and Thriving Communities

Waste Is Not Inevitable.

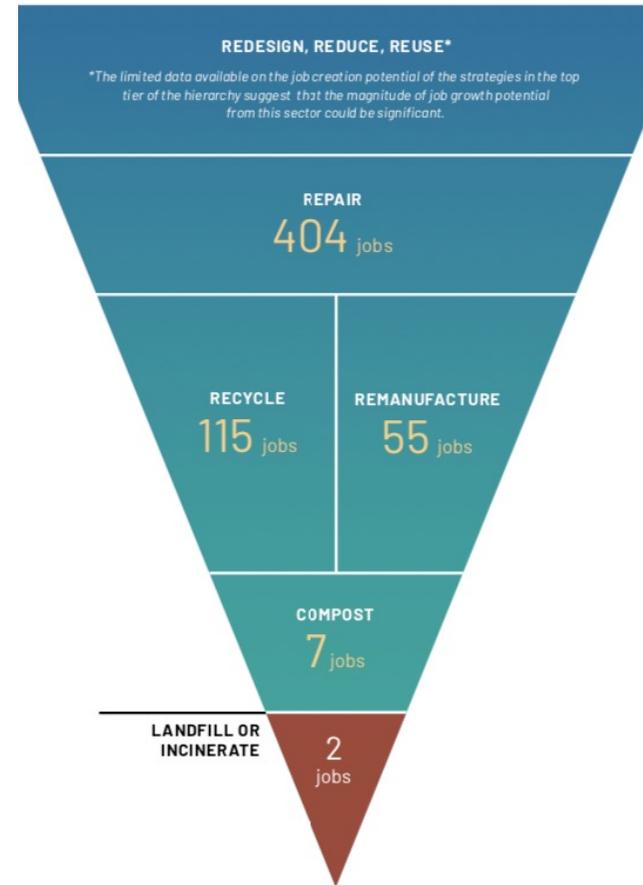
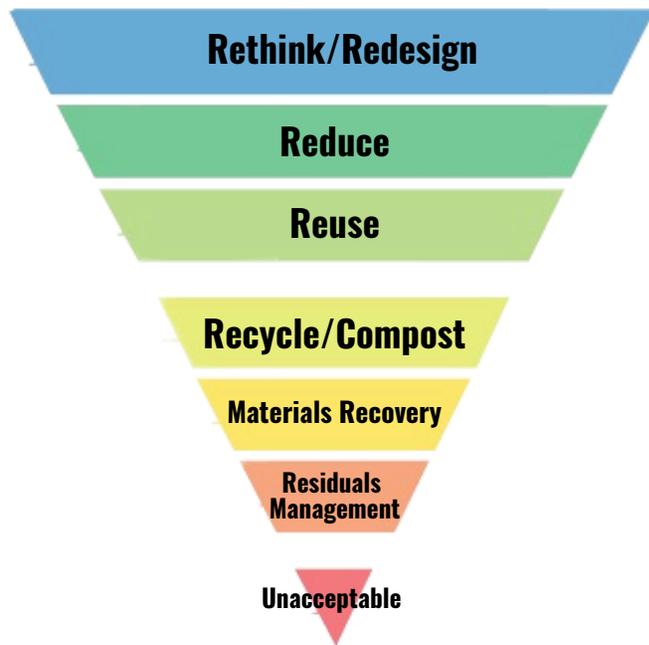
Waste Is Preventable.



Impacts of Plastic Throughout the Lifecycle



The Zero Waste Hierarchy



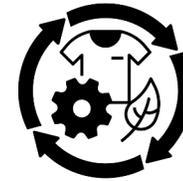
Even if it can be recycled, **SHOULD** we?



**Extraction
Reduction?**



Env Impacts



**Reduction /
Reuse Potential**



Labor



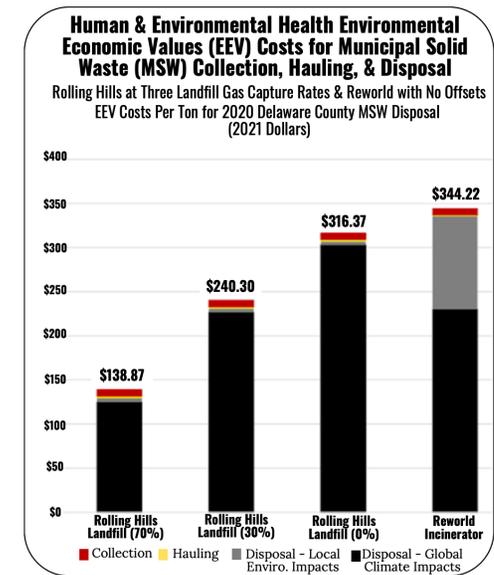
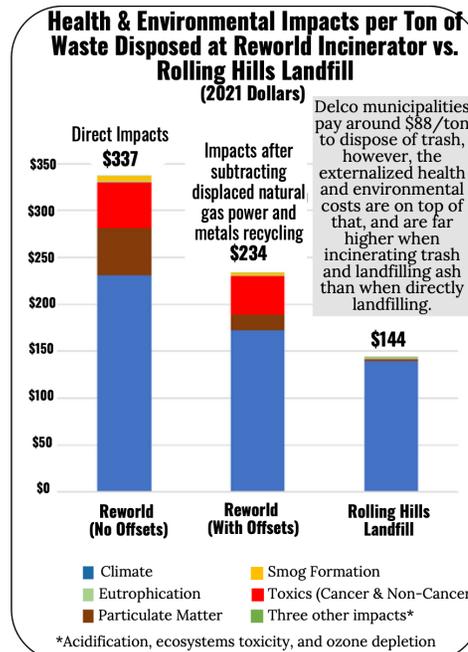
Toxicity



**Environmental
Justice**

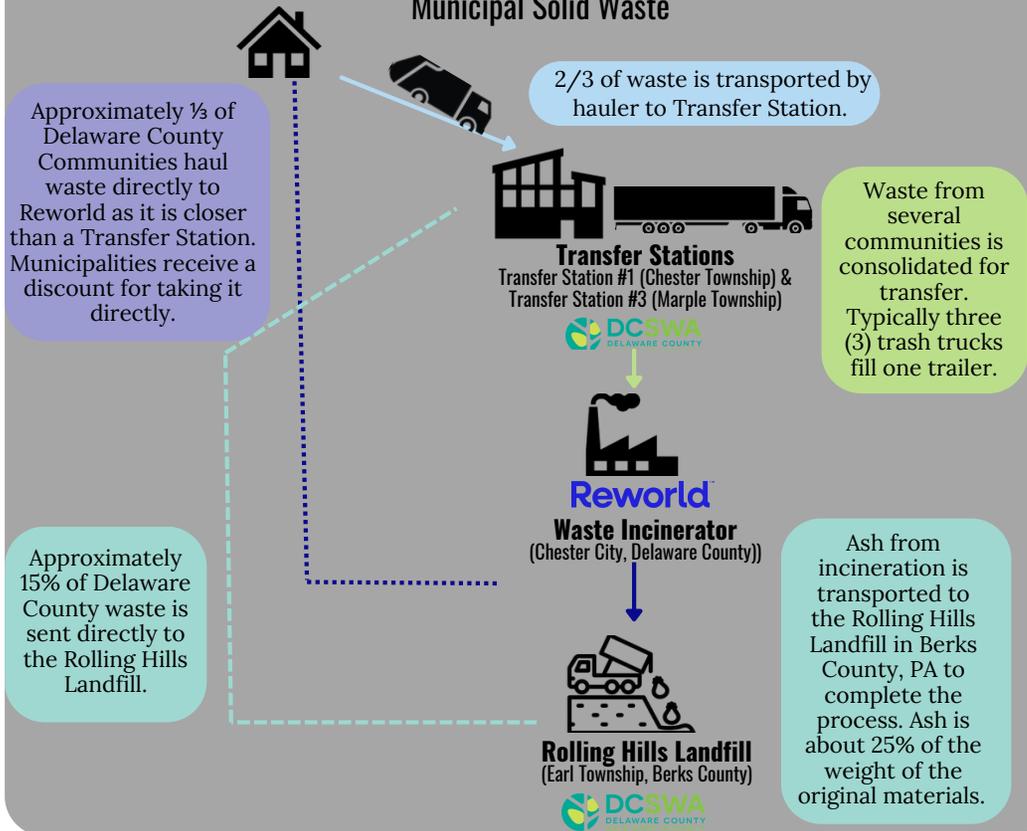
Life Cycle Analysis comparing emissions from Reworld (Covanta) Incinerator to Rolling Hills Landfill:

- Incineration in the City of Chester has \$193 more human health and environmental costs per ton of waste than directly disposing at Rolling Hills Landfill.
- Incineration was 23 times worse than landfilling when looking at human health costs alone.
- Achieving zero waste would avoid approximately 703,000 tons of CO₂e

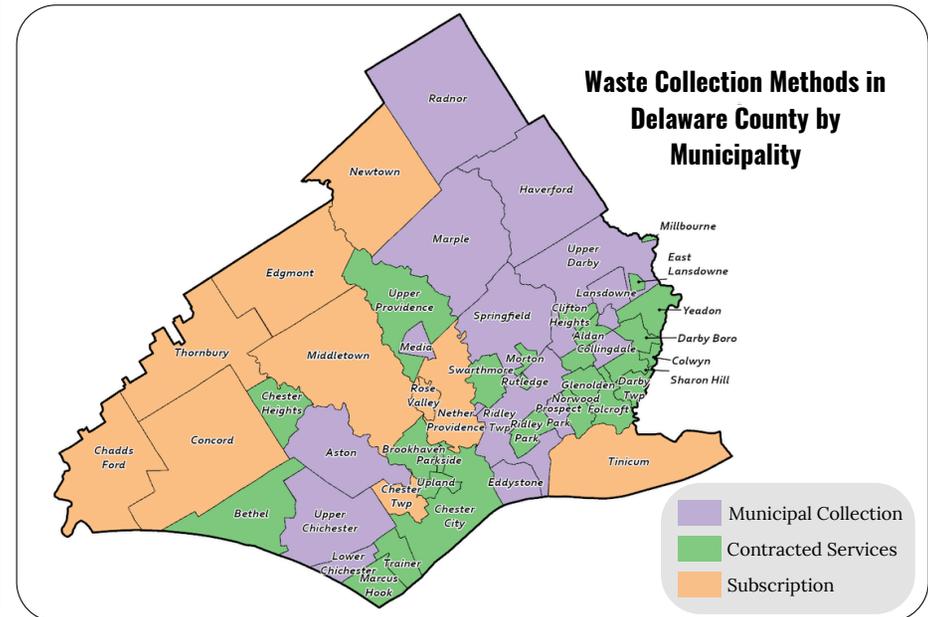


THE DELCO WASTE STREAM

Movement Through the Delaware County Waste Stream Municipal Solid Waste



- EXISTING PRACTICES
- RECYCLING & SPECIALIZED SERVICES
- CHALLENGES IN THE SYSTEM
- LIFE CYCLE ANALYSIS



Zero Waste for the Community (not the corporations)



**Restricts GHG
and Toxic
emissions.**



**Displaces the
need for
extraction and
disposal.**



**Creates jobs and
local economic
development.**

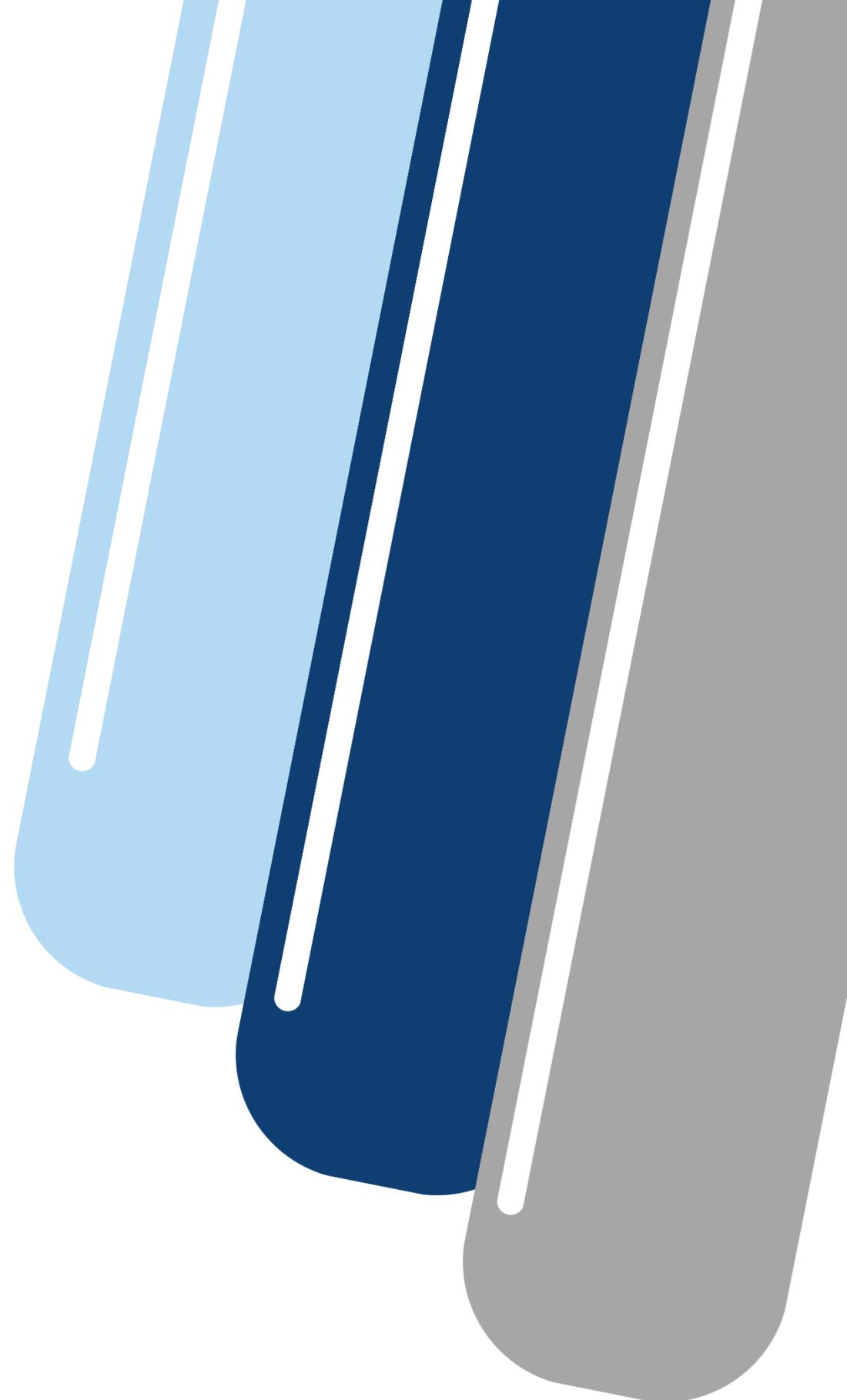


Zero Waste Strategies:

- Equitable Solution - Community Control and Engagement
- Transparency and Accountability
- Producer Responsibility
- Create Local Supply Chains
- Prioritize Reduction

DELAWARE COUNTY ZERO WASTE PLAN

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ROAD MAP TO ZERO WASTE



BECCA YURKOVICH - 3.7.26 - CRCQL

OVERVIEW

Roadmap to
Zero Waste -
Actions for the
Future

Challenges to
Implementation

Progress to Date



ROAD MAP TO ZERO WASTE

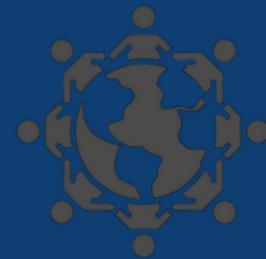


Policy

County policies or municipal ordinances to codify new rules to support Zero Waste initiatives.

Shifting Culture

Actions to shift the existing throwaway culture to Zero Waste.



Curbing Waste

Actions which change how we look at existing curbside collection programs and seek to increase efficiency and reduce unnecessary wasting.



Building Better Systems – Infrastructure

Actions which seek to introduce or expand diversion and recycling services through new facilities or increased processing capacity.

- **4 CATEGORIES**
- **17 INITIATIVES**
- **129 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- **Short-term**

Relatively easy to implement in the near-term (1-4 years), with minimal resources required.

- **Mid-term**

Requires more investment of staff time or other resources (5-9 years).

- **Long-term**

Will take more time for research, investment, and in some cases, systematic change. (10 +years)



POLICY ACTIONS



County policies and municipal ordinances to codify new rules supporting Zero Waste.

- **Initiatives**

- **Product Policies**
- **Construction & Demolition Recycling Requirements**
- **Universal Collection**



POLICY ACTIONS



Short-Term (1-4 years)

Determine legal capacity for county-wide ordinance adoption for increased waste reduction and diversion.

Develop policy for county facilities and events addressing single-use plastics, shopping bags, and other product policies.

Draft model municipal ordinances addressing single-use plastics, plastic shopping bags and other product policies and support municipalities through adoption.

Prepare county green procurement policy restricting single-use plastics and increasing recycled content purchases.

Provide ordinance reviews and recommendations for municipalities regarding reuse, recycling, illegal dumping, composting, and other policies which promote Zero Waste.

SHIFTING CULTURE



Promote change by adjusting habits on a community-scale to increase diversion and build trust in a Zero Waste System.

- **Initiatives**

- **Lead by Example**
- **Outreach, Education, & Technical Assistance**
- **Edible Food Donation**
- **Reuse and Repair**
- **Addressing Litter and Illegal Dumping**



SHIFTING CULTURE



Short-term (1-4 years)

Understand and advertise existing library offerings of "non-book" items (e.g. tool sharing).

Identify needs and opportunities for further lending libraries for items such as tools, baking equipment, and other non-book items.

Partner with county libraries to host a pilot **Fixit Clinic or Repair Café**.

Work with county and state health organizations to revise codes allowing for safe use of customer-provided reusable containers for food and drinks and provide proper education on safe practices for restaurants and grocery stores.



CURBING WASTE



Addressing curbside collection services for increased efficiency, equitable pricing, and additional diversion.

- **Initiatives**
 - **Save-As-You-Throw**
 - **Frequency of Trash Collection**
 - **Reuse Collection**



CURBING WASTE



Short-term (1-4 years)

Introduce the concept of save-as-you-throw disposal programs to municipalities and private residential collectors and encourage adoption.

Meet with private waste haulers and municipalities in Delaware County to understand needs for implementation.

Meet with apartment owners, landlords, and public housing authorities to work out best practices for implementing save-as-you-throw in multi-family housing.



Credit: Abington Township, Pennsylvania

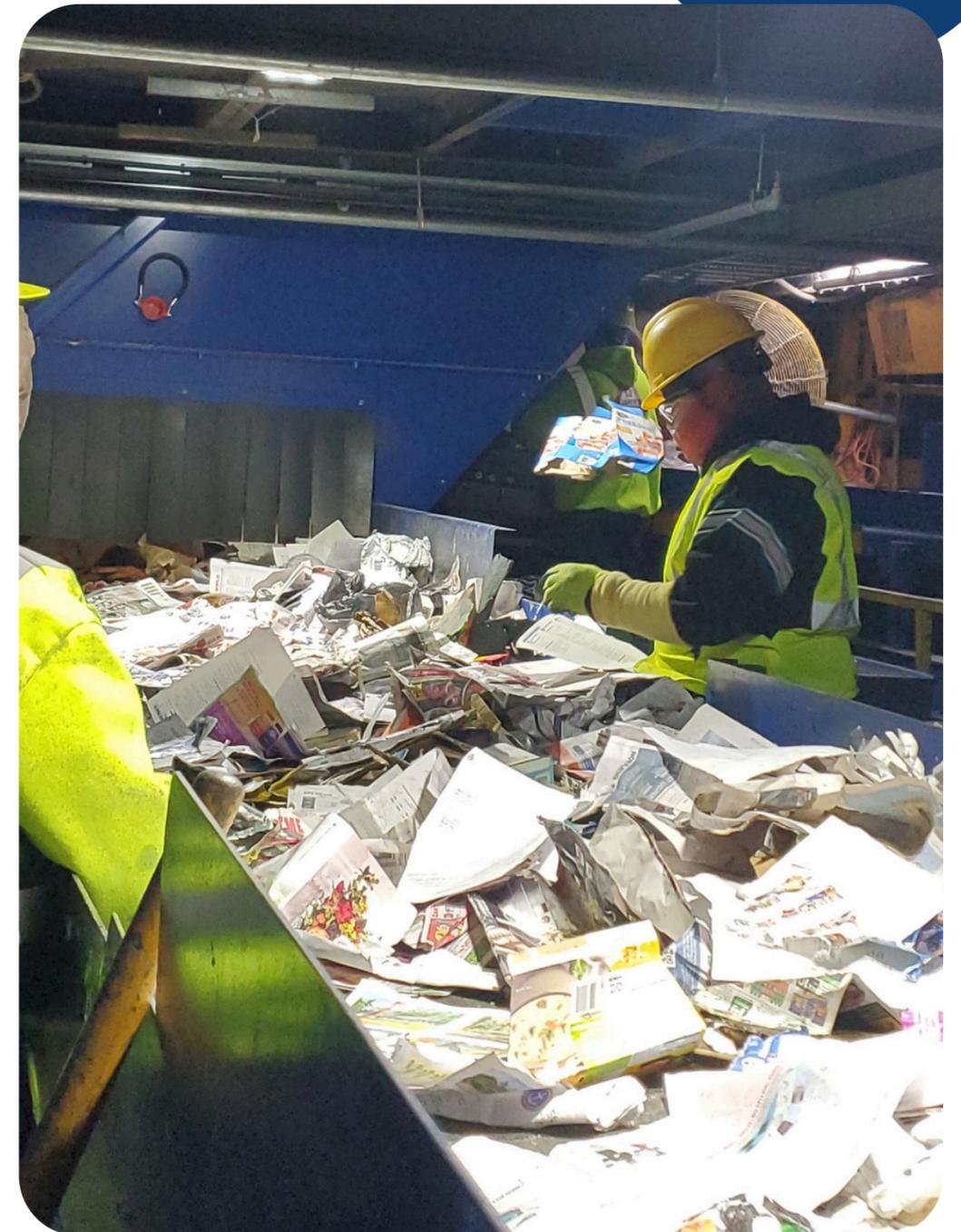


BUILDING BETTER SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE



Addressing systematic change and updated infrastructure.

- **Supporting Development of Refillable Stations and Zero Packaging Stores**
- **Building Materials Reuse Centers**
- **Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials**
- **Recyclables Processing**
- **Organics Processing**
- **Research and Reporting**



BUILDING BETTER SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE



Short-term (1-4 years)
Provide education on the importance and benefits of composting in the community and information about backyard composting.
Promote and partner with existing channels for organics processing in the county, including haulers and processors.
Survey communities to understand market viability and interest in composting.
Evaluate existing market challenges and identify need for local organics processing facility.
Consider need or opportunities for developing a county-owned or operated composting facility to bolster processing capacity.
Advocate for inclusive and modernized composting legislation in Pennsylvania.



CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTATION

- **Internally**
 - **Capacity - Party of 3**
 - **Funding**
 - **Culture Challenges**
- **Community**
 - **Variability of Services**
 - **Lack of Trust in System**
 - **Infrastructure**
 - **Funding**
 - **Buy-In**



CURRENT HAPPENINGS - POLICY

- Ensuring compliance in all County buildings
- Sustainable Communities Hub - Tackling Education and Resources for Assistance
- Engaging municipalities to better understand appetite and constraints for zero waste



Sustainable Communities Hub

Model Documents



Single-Use Plastic Bag Ordinance
(Radnor)

[View PDF](#)



Polystyrene, Single-Use Plastic Bag &
Straw Ordinance (Media)

[View PDF](#)

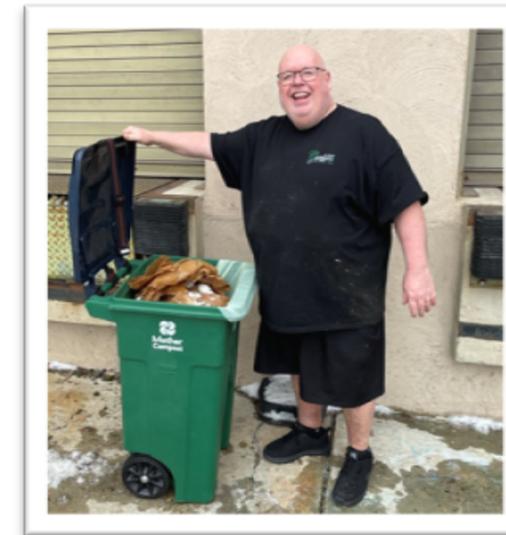


Single-Use Product Regulations
Ordinance (Upper Merion)

[View Ecode](#)

CURRENT HAPPENINGS - CULTURE

- **Cleaning up our house**
 - **Recycling Standardization**
 - **Reduced Printing - Copier RFP**
 - **Training Custodial and Staff for Recycling**
 - **Supply Swaps for Staff**
- **Education and Outreach**
- **Strengthening partnerships for implementation**



CURRENT HAPPENINGS - SYSTEMS

- **Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant (2026)**
 - **County-wide Composting Facility**
 - **Permanent HHW Drop-Off**
 - **Recycling Hub Drop-Off**
 - **Community Education and Partnership**

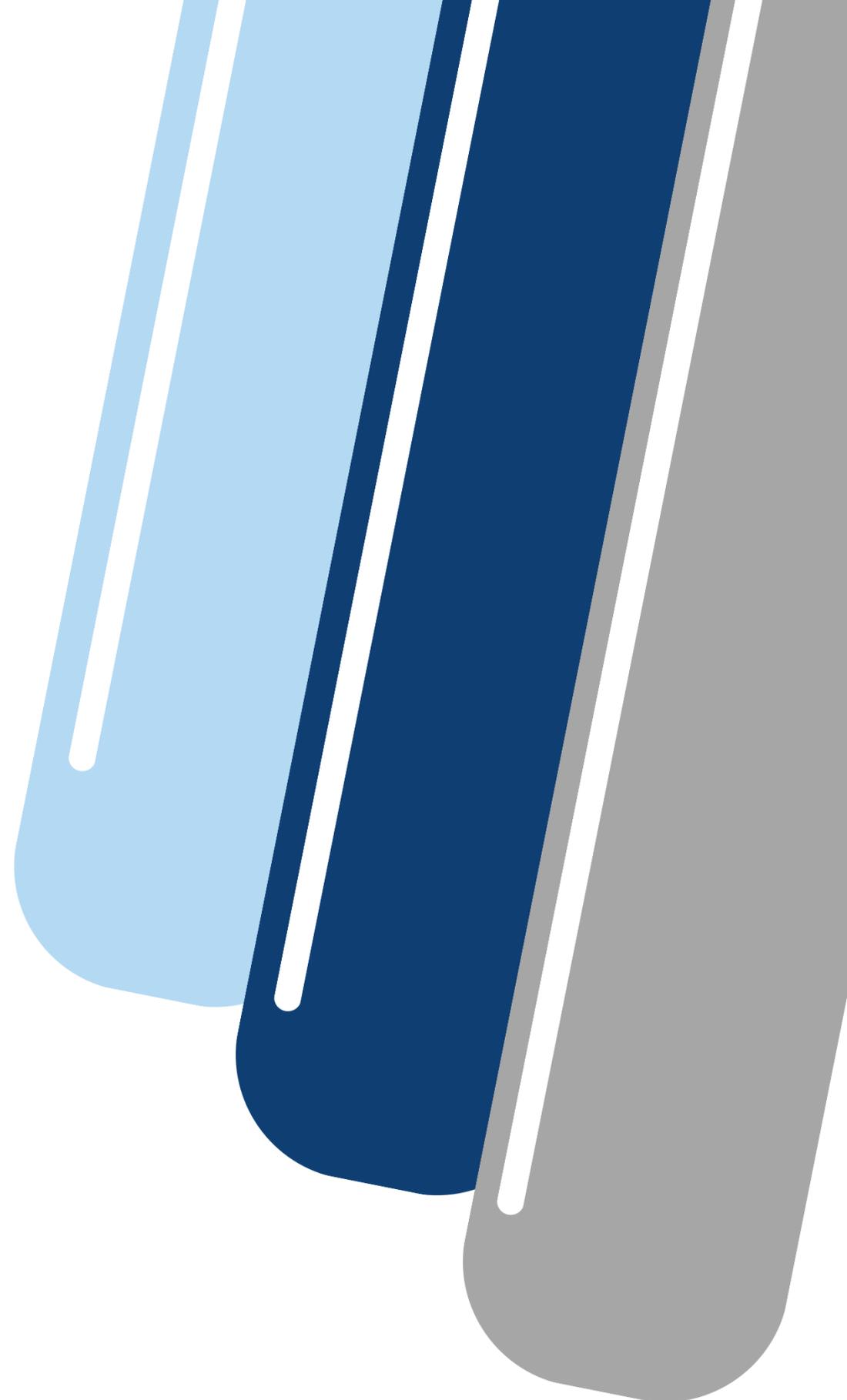


\$4,998,070.00



“We don’t need a handful of people doing Zero Waste perfectly, but we need millions of people doing it imperfectly.”

-Anne Marie Bonneau





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Sustainability
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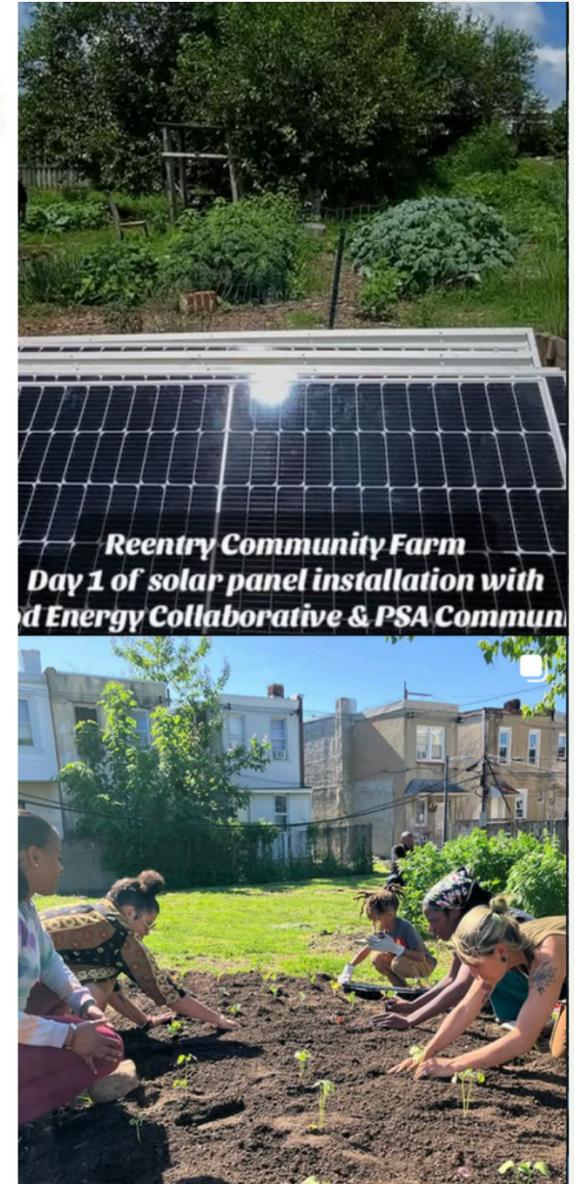




History and Mission

The Re-Entry Community Farm (RCF) is a Black led outdoor center for re-entering people to build community and find freedom through agriculture and communal land stewardship. RCF provides education, programs and community ritual around urban farming, holistic wellness, personal transformation and collective and self-sufficiency. Re-entering people includes all who wish to return to the land— especially after incarceration, while at risk of incarceration or while living under the current carceral system. We welcome those at any age or stage of the journey and offer regenerative tools to rebuild their lives.

We formally established the space in Spring 2022 and are in our second growing season. During the first growing season, we designed the layout of the space, created a farm plan and began stewarding the land. We also did outreach among Cathedral Park residents and with folks in halfway houses in the district and surrounding neighborhoods.



TAKE ACTION ON WASTE!

Your voice matters. Right now, a majority of Delco's waste is burned in Chester at Reworld/Covanta, a major contributor to toxic air pollution that impacts all of Delco.

Here's important ways you can make a difference:

- **Contact Delaware County Solid Waste Authority (DCSWA):** DCSWA must honor their commitment to divert waste from the incinerator and expand both transfer stations to accommodate the transition.
- Demand answers on the timetable for this.
- The expansion should also include offerings for recycling, composting and hard-to-recycle drop off to increase diversion.
 - **Comment DCSWA Board of Directors Meeting;** 2nd & 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 3pm
 - *Attend in-person:* 610 E. Baltimore Avenue Media, PA 19063
 - *Online:* Visit DelcoSWA.org for more info to register.
 - **Email:** info@dcswa.net
 - **Phone:** 610-892-9620



- **Delaware County Council:**

- County Council appoints the DCSWA members and needs to be held accountable for their role in Delco's health and waste management.
- Let them know it is critical that they direct DCSWA to upgrade the transfer stations to divert waste and support the recommendations outlined in the County's Zero Waste plan, which Council approved in September 2025.
 - ***In-person:*** County Council Meetings are 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month at 1pm. Visit Delcopa.gov for more info.
 - ***Email:*** DelcoCouncil@co.delaware.pa.us
 - ***Phone:*** 610-891-4270

- **Local Municipality:**

- Encourage your municipality to offer composting and recycling services if they do not already.
- Ask them to consider adopting policies to reduce waste like plastic and styrofoam bans or demolition requirements.



Learn More About CRCQL, Incineration & Zero Waste:

ChesterPaEJ.org

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484-402-7530

