

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



Promoting sustainable recycling in the Southeast by connecting local supply and regional demand of recovered material.

Southeast Recycling Development Council

The Southeast Recycling Development Council (SERDC) has played an integral role in making recycling work not only in the region but nationwide.

The organization has grown from an idea of representing 11 Southeastern states and the region's recycling industry to working with national stakeholders including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and The Recycling Partnership (TRP). SERDC does this through presentations, webinars, special-focus events, legislative days, technical assistance and research .

The mission of SERDC is to:

- ⇒ unite industry professionals, organizations, government agencies and individuals engaged in the business of recycling;
- ⇒ foster communications among those groups;
- ⇒ promote sustainable recycling programs; and
- ⇒ coordinate education and public awareness activities related to recycling.

SERDC's primary vision is to:

- ⇒ increase recovery of quality of recyclable material;
- ⇒ foster economic development through the recycling industry; and
- ⇒ create a greater awareness of the recycling industry's impact in the Southeast.



Funding

SERDC is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. The organization is funded through membership and sponsor support; state agency partnerships and grants; EPA grants and professional service fees.

Acknowledgements

The staff and board would like to thank membership and those who support the mission and work of SERDC.



SERDC

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info@serdc.org
www.serdc.org

Advocates of Recycling for the Southeast

SERDC's Region

Alabama	Georgia	Mississippi	Tennessee
Arkansas	Kentucky	North Carolina	Virginia
Florida	Louisiana	South Carolina	

Southeast Recycling Development Council (SERDC)

Executive Director: Will Sagar

Director of Outreach and Member Services: Jen Dabbs

Executive Committee:

SERDC Chairman: Kurt Schmitz
Pratt Recycling

SERDC 1st Vice Chair: Rusty Angel
Machinex

SERDC 2nd Vice Chair: Cheryl Coleman*
Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries

SERDC Treasurer: Derric Brown
Evergreen Packaging

SERDC Secretary: Dawn Gaines
Representing Self

Board at Large:

Richard Chesley
South Carolina Department of
Health & Environmental
Control

Jim Nordmeyer
O-I Glass

Bobby Fanning
Arkansas Recycling Coalition

Hal Risher
WestRock

Gary Logsdon*
KY Department for
Environmental Protection

Susan Robinson
Waste Management

Michael McPherson*
GA Municipal Association

Leslie Vetter*
Federal International

Dexter Matthews
Liberty Tire

Wendy Worley
NC Department of
Environmental Quality

Will Newsome
Sonoco

*elected in 2020

Ex Officio Committee:

Barbara Alfano
EPA Region 4

Nicole Ray
Coca-Cola

Gavin Adams
Alabama Department of
Environmental Management

Jerry Thornton
Waste Management

Stephanie Baker
KW Plastics Recycling

Thank you to our exiting 2020 Board Members:

Nicole Ray: Coca-Cola

Sam Still: Federal International

Dave Keeling: Representing Self

Andy Johnson: KW Plastics

Pandemic reminds us Recycling is an Essential Service

Will Sagar, Executive Director of SERDC.

From August 13, 2020 release

Front Line Funding Crunch

Local governments are an integral link in the material supply chain, capturing the feedstock for more than 360 factories in the Southeast. This is a crucial service that results in an economic impact reaching into the hundreds of billions of dollars for the region.

No chain is any stronger than its weakest link. The Covid 19 pandemic is causing an unprecedented impact of lost income for our cities and counties. Sales tax, lodging tax, utility revenue and other fees have all fallen short compared to previous levels. These income streams have been perceived as steady and reasonably recession proof, or at least recession resistant. Until now. Projected Budget Impacts Range from -5% to -20%. Budget cuts of 10% seem common.

Those of you likely to be reading this will feel that recycling is important and should still be funded. I agree. But we need to appreciate the challenge our mayors, aldermen, commissioners and others are addressing. From Animal Control to Zoning, there are many services from our local government upon which our communities depend. Education, EMS, water and sewer are big ticket and necessary operations (1).

Now, more than ever, it's important to remember, and to communicate, that recycling is an essential service. The pandemic has caused several supply interruptions, leading to shortages of products on the shelves. These inconveniences are only a forewarning of the looming gaps in our consump-

tion, should we fail to capture the resources needed to produce our day to day products.

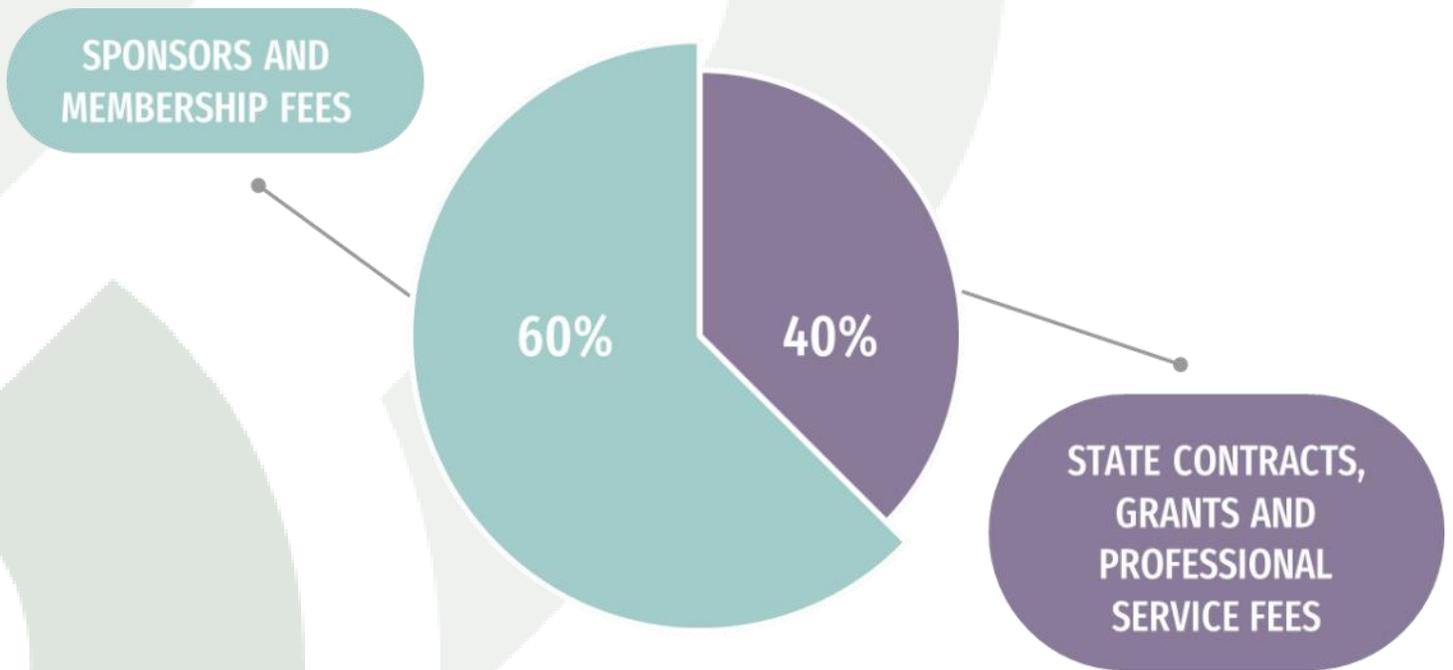
Most programs still operate. There have been some collection program suspensions, though so far most have been limited to smaller communities. Several have restarted services, following the initial shock of pandemic response.

Market prices have forced increases on processing fees charged by the material recovery facilities. There will likely be little room in municipal budgets for contract cost hikes. Modest increases in service or utility fees may be needed. Most households like their recycling program and likely won't object to a monthly increase of a couple of dollars to maintain program operation.

Key actions needed to support the industry will include coordinating and promoting the importance and value of recycling to the domestic economy. SERDC and other organizations are focusing on these efforts as we adjust to the "New Normal." Let's work together so that the New Normal advances the circular economy for improved material management.

[1] See SERDC presentations on local government financial projects at <https://www.serdc.org/Keeping-Recycling-Programs-Essential>.

SERDC Funding



Membership Priorities

Membership remains strong with 153 partners representing 68 organizations

Here are three tasks the SERDC Board focused on for 2020.



Grow Membership

to communicate importance of recycling's impact to the region's economy



Strengthen Membership Representation and Diversity

to provide a more comprehensive picture of recycling issues and challenges



Evaluate Membership

benefits and other services in response to changes to the recycling landscape

Sponsor Members

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsor



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



Thank you Sponsor Members!

O-I Glass increases to Silver Sponsorship in 2020.

CPG joins SERDC as Bronze Sponsor.



Membership

Business Members



Organizational Members



See your logo here next year

www.serdc.org/join



SERDC Committees



Finance



Program



Marketing



Grant



Membership



Board Development



Expanded the Board Handbook



Developed a new board member orientation program

SERDC Professional Services

<p>Mapping Services</p> 	<p>Survey Management</p> 	<p>Economic Impact Studies</p> 
<p>Event Production</p> 	<p>Webinar Management</p> 	<p>Messaging Platform</p> 
<p>Program Evaluations</p> 	<p>Workshop Curriculum</p> 	
<p>Legislative Days Support</p> 	<p>Meeting Facilitation</p> 	

SERDC is proud to be able to offer various support services to our members, partners, and communities throughout the Southeast through contracts, grant agreements, memorandums of understanding or other similar agreements. Our services span a wide array of offerings. In addition, SERDC can combine any of the offerings in this suite of services into a consolidated service package that helps to meet the needs of our government and NGO members as well as corporate members.

For questions on any of these services or to discuss the opportunities to partner, feel free to contact our staff or email us at info@serdc.org. Please see <https://www.serdc.org/Professional-Services> for more information online.

Outreach

In early 2020 SERDC continued presentations to conferences in the recycling industry covering the current economic situation for recycling markets and the forces impacting the same. The reports including identifying several capital investments under construction that will soon increase material demand in the region and nationally.

Following the Covid restrictions on travel, SERDC transitioned to online meetings and presentations to continue the same work. Additional programming was added to provide tools and guidance for local governments facing Covid induced budget reductions. This curriculum covered methods for program cost reduction, while maintaining popular recycling services.



2 Webinars produced

- ⇒ •The Recycling Industry & the Supply Chain During a Pandemic – April 2020 (highest attendance ever for a SERDC webinar with 358 registrations)
- ⇒ •What Communities Need to do to Keep Recycling as an Essential Service – July 2020– 111 registrants



- ⇒ Recycling 101 Classes (virtual) for West Tennessee AWMA during their technical conference October 23, 2020.
- ⇒ State of Washington Recycling Development Center Advisory Board Meeting– Invited panelists
- ⇒ Tennessee Environmental Council- Video Interviews on recycling



The annual meeting was held virtually over three days. Day one provided a history of SERDC and future objectives, followed by a presentation on Communities/Supply Impacts from Covid, budgeting for recycling, essential for infrastructure/economy. Day two presented a report of the MRF Glass Survey Project and Online Messaging Guidance, then multiple presentations from leaders in the plastics recycling industry. The final day was the annual membership

meeting and year end report, followed by presentations on the Proposed National Recycling Strategy and other initiatives in recycling procurement. Gary Logsdon-KY DEP, Michael McPherson-GA Municipal Association, and Leslie Vetter-Federal International were elected to the Board of Directors.

SERDC citations in national industry Publications

- ⇒ **Georgia voters approve ballot measure that could direct millions to new recycling efforts** • Posted: Nov. 13, 2020 WasteDive
- ⇒ **Shreveport, Louisiana contract impasse and MRF closure pauses multiple recycling programs** • Posted: Sept. 29, 2020 WasteDive
- ⇒ **Waste Management report shows untapped recycling potential, clarifies policy positions** • Posted: Sept. 10, 2020 WasteDive
- ⇒ **Seeing slight shifts in municipal recycling programs** • Posted: August 27, 2020 Recycling-Today
- ⇒ **Balcones acquisition of Florida recycler latest step toward new type of vertical integration** • Posted: Aug. 12, 2020 WasteDive
- ⇒ **Colorado law calls for exploration of recycling market development center, EPR policies** By • Posted: July 29, 2020 WasteDive
- ⇒ **The Impact of COVID-19 on the Waste and Recycling Industry** • Posted May 1, 2020 WasteAdvantageMag
- ⇒ **Tennessee launches statewide recycling messaging program** • Posted: April 30, 2020 Recycling-Today
- ⇒ **Recycle Right Tennessee Statewide Recycling Messaging Program Launches** • Posted April 29, 2020 WasteAdvantageMag
- ⇒ **Pandemic alters – and threatens – supply chain for end users** • Posted on April 21, 2020 Resource-Recycling
- ⇒ **Coronavirus poses multiple safety risks for waste and recycling workers** • Posted: March 18, 2020 WasteDive
- ⇒ **Municipalities suspend recycling due to coronavirus impact on prison labor, broader safety concerns** • Posted: March 18, 2020 WasteDive
- ⇒ **Coronavirus pandemic disrupts recycling sector** • Posted on March 17, 2020 Resource-Recycling
- ⇒ **Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act debuts in Congress, instigating packaging EPR debate** • Posted: Feb. 11, 2020 WasteDive



Technical Support



The Opportunity Project, from the US Census Bureau, helps companies, non-profits, and universities turn federal open data into new technologies that solve real-world problems for people across the country. SERDC was part of the User Advocates group, offering feedback and insights throughout the 12 week sprint.

The challenge: Develop innovative digital solutions that connect domestic recycling facilities with manufacturers to enhance recycling markets and increase the use of recycled materials.

Target audience: U.S. recycling facilities and manufacturers looking to produce, sell, and buy quality recycled materials; rural or tribal communities; organizations and state and local governments striving to improve their recycling facilities and infrastructure.



America Recycles

SERDC participated in two work groups formed from the America Recycles efforts from the EPA: Market Development and Measurement

Will Sagar was part of the session: [Closing the Loop: The Importance of Buying Recycled](#) on November 17 at the America Recycles Day Summit

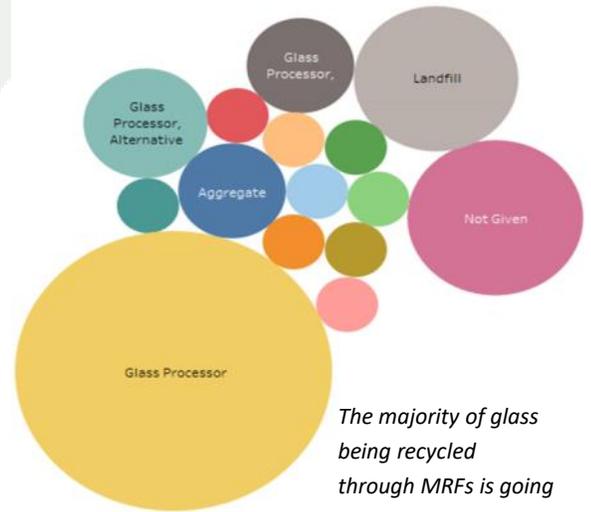


Glass Recycling Coalition

Will Sagar chaired the Coalition's Technical Assistance Committee which assists the GRC with infrastructure investments to improve the capture of material for recycling.

Southern Material Recycling Facility Survey

- Gathered lists from state agencies, TRP, SERDC lists
- Identified over 150 waste processing permitted operations
- Verified MRFs, removed non MRFs
- 90 MRFs surveyed
- Funding from GPI and NAIMA



The majority of glass being recycled through MRFs is going to glass processors, but a significant amount are going to landfill, aggregate and other "not given" locations.

Survey Findings

68% Response Rate

85% process single stream materials

Diverse Capacity
800-450,000 TPY

Not all MRFs are automated

Universal Issue

Contamination is weighing the industry down. Plastic bags remain the primary contaminant.

Supply Chain

Excess processing capacity exists in the region. More attention to hub and spoke infrastructure should be evaluated to fill voids.

Future Projections

Education along with better sorting technologies (automation and robots) are eminent for success

Find the full study here:

<https://www.serdc.org/2020-Glass-Recycling-Study>

Tennessee Technical Assistance

The 5 year contract with Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to provide professional services was completed in 2020.



Professional Development

- Manufacturing Waste Reduction webinar
- Recycling Safety Training curriculum
- Preventing Contamination workshop
- Coordinated curriculum for the recycling tract at the Environmental Show of the South
- 3 Stop workshop series: Best Management Practices and Market Information
- Measurement Matters Summit : nationally recognized event to develop steps toward universally accepted metrics for the material management industry



Support

- Consultations with local governments to improve recycling collection efficiency and market access
- Promoted private grant funding opportunities for recycling infrastructure



Research

- Inventory of manufacturing markets across the state
- Conducted a full economic impact study of the recycling industry across the state,
- Design and outreach for development of hub and spoke material processing
- Development of a consistent recycling message and graphics for statewide distribution



Outreach

- TNTrainingAcademy.org: training opportunities offered by multiple organizations related to material management
- MeasurementMatters.net: Summit logistics, resource references and Summit recap
- RecycleRightTn.org: localized recycling messaging for municipalities



Measurement Matters



Recycling Infrastructure Grant

In 2020, two recycling Infrastructure grants were awarded.

⇒ Weaverville, NC

- 2,100 Households: \$13,156 grant for carts and out-reach



⇒ Southern Shores, NC

- 2,200 Households: \$1,700 for outreach

Grant funds were provided to SERDC for distribution through the Coca-Cola Foundation.



RECYCLE RIGHT
Carts are replacing bags

<p>PLASTIC Bottles, tubs, jugs and jars</p>  <p>No pumps Empty and rinse</p>	<p>METAL Cans</p>  <p>Empty and rinse</p>																				
<p>GLASS Bottles and jars</p>  <p>Empty and rinse</p>	<p>PAPER Paper, cartons and cardboard</p>  <p>Flatten cardboard</p>																				
<p style="text-align: center;">KEEP THESE ITEMS OUT!</p> <table style="width: 100%; font-size: small;"> <tr> <td>⊗ Aerosol cans</td> <td>⊗ Disposable cups (plastic and paper)</td> <td>⊗ Medical waste</td> <td>⊗ Tanglers (cords, hoses, wires, etc.)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>⊗ All batteries (car, lithium, etc.)</td> <td>⊗ Electronics</td> <td>⊗ Plastic bags/wrap</td> <td>⊗ Tires</td> </tr> <tr> <td>⊗ Ceramic items</td> <td>⊗ Food-tainted items</td> <td>⊗ Scrap metal/wood</td> <td>⊗ Toys</td> </tr> <tr> <td>⊗ Clothing or textiles</td> <td>⊗ Hazardous waste</td> <td>⊗ Shredded paper</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>⊗ Diapers</td> <td>⊗ Household glass</td> <td>⊗ Styrofoam/peanuts</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		⊗ Aerosol cans	⊗ Disposable cups (plastic and paper)	⊗ Medical waste	⊗ Tanglers (cords, hoses, wires, etc.)	⊗ All batteries (car, lithium, etc.)	⊗ Electronics	⊗ Plastic bags/wrap	⊗ Tires	⊗ Ceramic items	⊗ Food-tainted items	⊗ Scrap metal/wood	⊗ Toys	⊗ Clothing or textiles	⊗ Hazardous waste	⊗ Shredded paper		⊗ Diapers	⊗ Household glass	⊗ Styrofoam/peanuts	
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PLEASE DON'T BAG YOUR RECYCLABLES!

