



PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP AND EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

Reducing Economic, Environmental, Health, and Safety Impacts from Consumer Products

In 2011, in collaboration with our community, PSI updated its Principles of Product Stewardship, which were originally established in 2001 by the founding board members of the Product Stewardship Institute. The updated Principles were developed to harmonize terminology in the U.S. and to help streamline the development of policies, legislation, and other initiatives.

The growing product stewardship movement in the United States seeks to ensure that those who design, manufacture, sell, and use consumer products take responsibility for reducing negative impacts to the economy, environment, public health, and worker safety. These impacts can occur throughout the lifecycle of a product and its packaging, and are associated with energy and materials consumption; waste generation; toxic substances; greenhouse gases; and other air and water emissions. In a product stewardship approach, manufacturers that design products and specify packaging have the greatest ability, and therefore greatest responsibility, to reduce these impacts by attempting to incorporate the full lifecycle costs into the cost of doing business.

The terms *product stewardship* and *extended producer responsibility (EPR)* are often used differently by stakeholders involved in the product stewardship movement. The purpose of this document is to harmonize terminology in the U.S. and to guide development of policies, legislation, and other initiatives by governments, companies, and other organizations. By speaking the same language, we can have a constructive public discussion.

We use the following definitions for product stewardship and EPR. Since we define EPR as a legislative approach, we believe it requires further clarification and therefore developed the subsequent *Principles of Extended Producer Responsibility*.

Product Stewardship is the act of minimizing health, safety, environmental and social impacts, and maximizing economic benefits of a product and its packaging throughout all lifecycle stages. The producer of the product has the greatest ability to minimize adverse impacts, but other stakeholders, such as suppliers, retailers, and consumers, also play a role. Stewardship can be either voluntary or required by law.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a mandatory type of product stewardship that includes, at a minimum, the requirement that the producer's responsibility for their product extends to post-consumer management of that product and its packaging. There are two related features of EPR policy: (1) shifting financial and management responsibility, with government oversight, upstream to the producer and away from the public sector; and (2) providing incentives to producers to incorporate environmental considerations into the design of their products and packaging.

PRINCIPLES OF EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

The following EPR Principles include key elements that should be included in all EPR legislation. Although these Principles will be applied differently by different jurisdictions, they are aspirational and considered best practice to achieve maximum results.

- **Producer Responsibility**
 - Producers are required to design, manage, and finance programs for end-of-life management of their products and packaging as a condition of sale. These programs may or may not use existing collection and processing infrastructure. Programs should cover all products in a given category, including those from companies no longer in business and from companies that cannot be identified.
- **Level Playing Field**
 - All producers within a particular product category have the same requirements, whether they choose to meet them individually or jointly with other producers
- **Results-based**
 - Producers have flexibility to design the product management system to meet the performance goals established by government, with minimum government involvement.
 - Producer-managed systems must follow the resource conservation hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recycle, and beneficially use, as appropriate.
 - Products must be managed in a manner that is protective of human health and the environment.
 - Producers design and implement public education programs to ensure achievement of performance goals and standards established by government.
 - All consumers have convenient access to collection opportunities without charge.
- **Transparency and Accountability**
 - Government is responsible for ensuring that producer programs are transparent and accountable to the public.
 - Producer programs, including their development and the fate of products managed, provide opportunity for input by all stakeholders.
- **Roles for Government, Retailers and Consumers**
 - Government is responsible for ensuring a level playing field for all parties in the product value chain to maintain a competitive marketplace with open access to all, for setting and enforcing performance goals and standards, for supporting industry programs through procurement, and for helping educate the public.
 - Retailers only sell brands within a covered product category that are made by producers participating in an industry program, and are responsible for providing information to consumers on how to access the programs.
 - Consumers have a responsibility to reduce waste, reuse products, use take-back and other collection programs, and make appropriate purchasing decisions based on available information about product impacts and benefits.

Endorsing Organizations

Businesses

AkkuSer (Battery Recycler, Europe)
Amazon Environmental (Paint Recycler)
Close The Loop, Inc. (Recycled Product Producer)
Covanta (Waste to Energy Company)
Los Angeles Fiber (Carpet Recycler)
Marin Sanitary Service (Waste Hauler)
Peninsula Packaging Co. (Packaging Producer)
Reliance Carpet Cushion, Inc. (Carpet Cushion Producer)
Terracycle (Up-cycler)

Governments

Alameda StopWaste, CA
Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, CA
Chittenden County, VT
City of Santa Monica, CA
City of Seattle - Seattle Public Utilities
Clallam County Solid Waste Advisory Committee, WA
Delta Diablo Sanitation District, CA
Illinois Counties Solid Waste Management Association
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
METRO, OR
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
South Shore Recycling Cooperative, MA
Tamalpais Community Services District, CA

Academia

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)

Consulting Groups

Gracestone, Inc.
Grossman Marketing Group
Kathy Walsh, LEED
Peg Hall Consultancy
Special Waste Associates

Stewardship Organizations

Call2Recycle
Encorp Pacific (Canadian)

Government Councils

California Product Stewardship Council
Colorado Product Stewardship Council
Connecticut Product Stewardship Council
Environmental Council of the States
Massachusetts Product Stewardship Council
Midwest Product Stewardship Council
Nebraska Product Stewardship Coalition
New York Product Stewardship Council
Rhode Island Product Stewardship Council
Texas Product Stewardship Council
Vermont Product Stewardship Council

Non-Profit Organizations

As You Sow
Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin
California Resource Recovery Association
Clean Water Action, California
EcoCycle (Boulder CO)
Environmental League of Massachusetts
Intervale Associates
MassRecycle
Michigan Recycling Coalition
Midwest Environmental Law & Policy Center
Natural Resources Council of Maine
Natural Resources Defense Council
North American Hazardous Materials Mgmt. Assn.
Product Policy Institute
Product Stewardship Institute
Sierra Club, National
Sierra Club, Connecticut Chapter
Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA), California Chapters
Teleosis Institute
Texas Campaign for the Environment