

Wisconsin Council on Recycling

Food Waste Diversion Update

May 28, 2024

Ruth O'Donnell

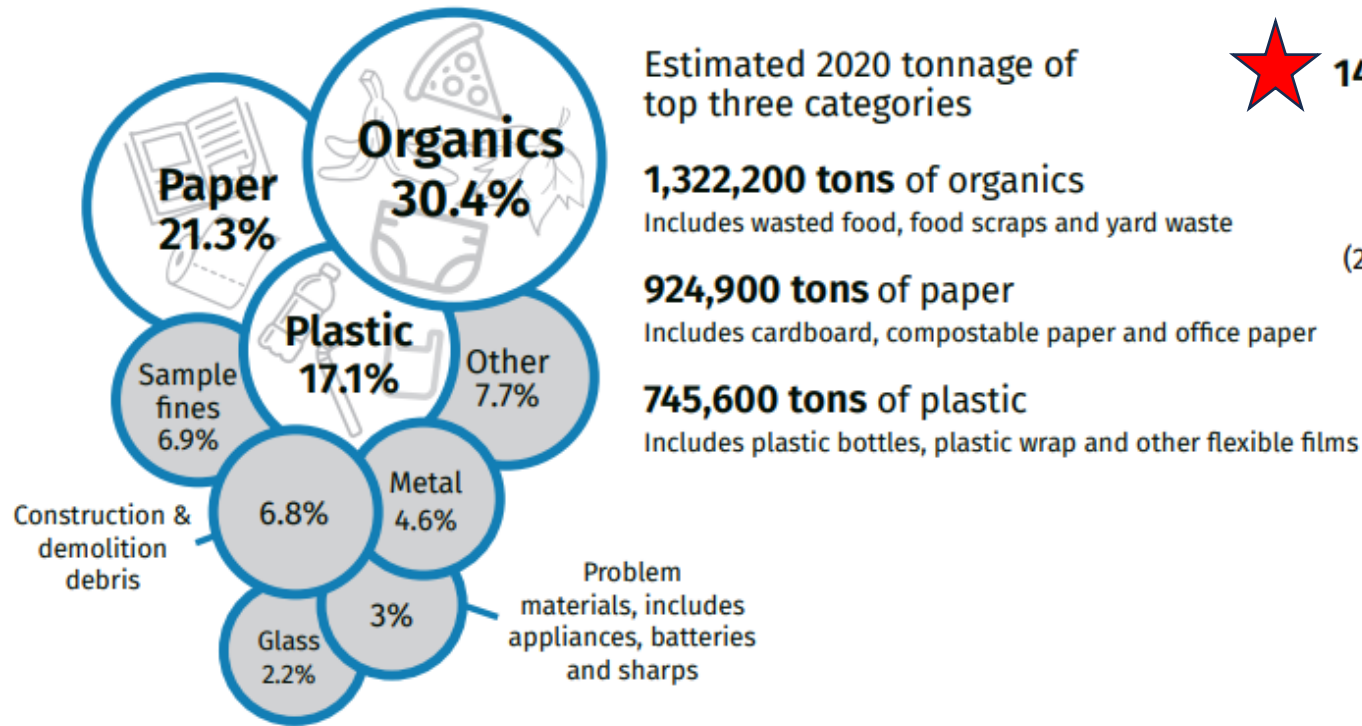
DNR Organics Waste Management Specialist



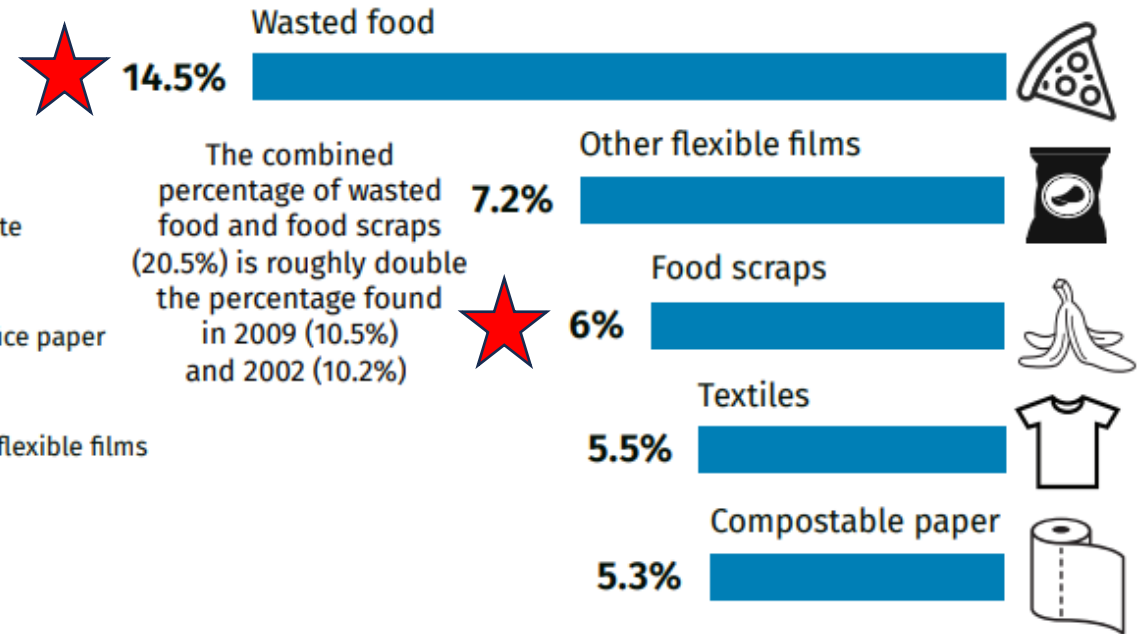
- M.S. Environmental Science & Policy
 - Waste Management emphasis
- Industrial Environmental, Health & Safety
- Corporate environmental compliance & sustainability
- Science Education – HS & Higher Ed
- DNR Hazardous Waste & Beneficial Use of Industrial Byproducts

DNR 2020-2021 Statewide Waste Characterization Study

Statewide waste categories



Top five waste components statewide



DNR's "Blueprint for DNR Climate Action"

"Reduce per-capita food waste disposed of in Wisconsin landfills by 50% by 2030, compared to 2020 levels."



DNR Actions Taken

Incorporated food waste reduction and promotion of composting into webpages, outreach and social media

In 2023, applied for and received EPA funding through a new Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant.



1. DNR is finalizing the contract with HDR to conduct research and develop a statewide Food Waste Management Evaluation Plan* that is intended to:

- Document the amounts, types and sources of food waste
- Provide data and analysis to help WDNR and local governments document the capacity of existing food recovery and recycling infrastructure
- Assess potential capacity and identify barriers between existing capacity and potential capacity to divert food waste from landfills
- Assess and rank the impact of waste diversion initiatives, including consideration of economic factors,
- Inform policy decisions on food waste reduction and recycling methods and goals
- Analyze where additional investment, technical assistance and education may be needed.

*Work to be completed within 12 months from start date.

2. DNR has plans to contract with a non-regulatory entity to provide statewide technical assistance and services on projects that prevent and divert food waste, emphasis on:

- Local governments
- Businesses
- Institutions
- Farms
- Efforts will be made to connect with and offer services to disadvantaged communities.

DNR Work Plan projects that this work is to begin ~July 2025

Will communicate with group when RFP is being developed and put out for bid

3. Hired an Organics Waste Management Specialist in April 2024 to focus on regulatory assistance, including:

- Creating partnerships with Wisconsin stakeholders and determining effective messaging and actions
- Develop and provide guidance and outreach materials
- Provide technical assistance and plan reviews to new food waste haulers and processing and composting facilities
- Partner with other state agencies and universities on advancing food waste reduction
- Grant management

Discussion

- How can we work together?
- What guidance and outreach materials would be helpful?
- Others in Wisconsin working on food waste management pathways we can partner with?
- Suggestions?
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