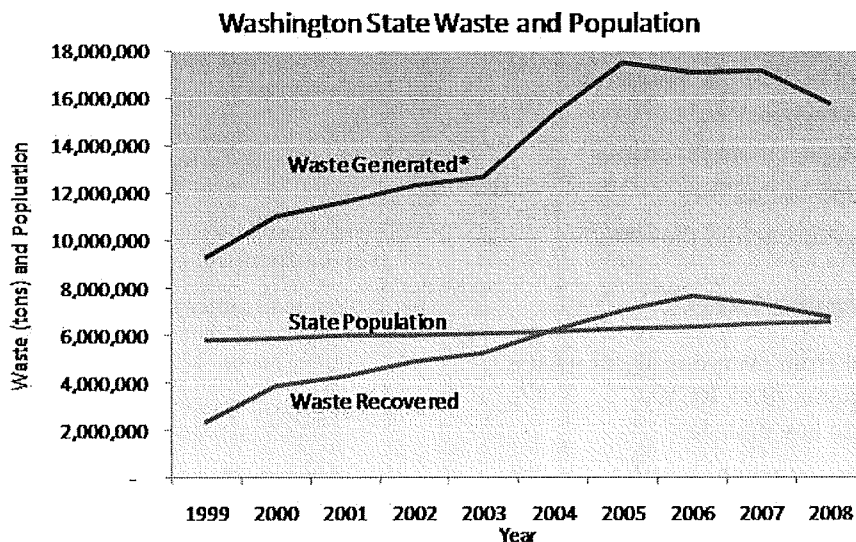


### Think Outside the Landfill

We generated nearly 16 million tons of waste in 2008. That's more than two and a half tons per person. Some of it was recycled or otherwise diverted from disposal, but not enough. Nine million tons was thrown away, even though much of it was not really "waste." For example, since 2003 we've buried more than \$1 billion worth of recyclable materials in landfills. We have yet to reach the 1995 recycling goal of 50 percent. Waste generation continues to grow faster than our population.



\*Includes waste from citizens, industry, business, and manufacturers

### How did we get here?

Washington's solid waste law was first passed in 1969 (Chapter 70.95 of the Revised Code of Washington [RCW]: Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling). At that time, the majority of waste was disposed in open burning dumps. The focus of the 1969 law was closure of these dumps and construction of new "sanitary landfills" to control air pollution.

Our waste stream, which was once mostly organic, now contains products and packaging made of a variety of materials, including some toxic substances.

Since 1969, the Legislature amended Chapter 70.95 RCW 28 times in response to the changing waste stream. Other legislative efforts resulted in standalone pieces of legislation to encourage and increase recycling efforts, and address specific products, including labeling of plastics, used oil recycling, mercury, and more recently, electronics recycling, children's safe products and lead wheel weights laws.

### REDUCING WASTE IN WASHINGTON

Ecology is kicking off the solid waste law update process by asking for input to identify problems with our solid waste laws.

#### Invitation to Participate

##### Problem Assessment Workshops

We need your knowledge, ideas and expertise to help modify our law to reduce waste and improve the solid waste management system. Please come to one of the workshops below to provide input on problems with Washington's solid waste laws. You can also provide input on-line at the [70.95 website](#).

**April 13:** Ephrata 1 pm – 4 pm, Grant County Public Works, 124 Enterprise St. SE

**April 14:** Yakima 1 pm – 4 pm, Ecology, 15 West Yakima Ave Suite 200

**April 15:** Spokane 1 pm – 4 pm, Riverside Park Water Reclamation Facility, 4401 N. A.L. White Parkway

**May 4:** Lacey 1 pm – 4 pm, Ecology HQ Auditorium, 300 Desmond Drive

**May 6:** Mt. Vernon 1 pm – 4 pm, Skagit County Commissioner's Hearing Room, 1800 Continental Place

**May 12:** Seattle 1 pm – 4 pm and 6 pm – 9 pm, King Street Center, 303 South Jackson Street, 8<sup>th</sup> floor conference center

Meetings will be scheduled later in 2010 to discuss potential solutions.

## We can do better!

We can reduce wastes and conserve materials. Our goals are to:

- Eliminate waste wherever possible.
- Reduce product toxicity.
- Recycle the materials we use.
- Safely dispose of any residue.

Updating our laws can better address solid waste management challenges and help us move “beyond waste:”

- Encourage efficient use of materials.
- Improve environmental performance of products.
- Use the competitive market economy to promote innovative technologies and creative materials use.
- Ensure safe operation of materials management facilities.
- Responsibly regulate solid waste disposal facilities.
- Provide stable funding for local programs across the state.

## What’s wrong with our solid waste laws?

In the upcoming workshops, we want to hear from everyone about what’s wrong with solid waste law, specifically Chapter 70.95 RCW.

Some issues we’ve identified with solid waste law include:

- Current law can inhibit recycling and reuse of beneficial materials because they are legally defined as solid waste.
- We need more recycling facilities in underserved areas of the state.
- The existing solid waste financing system is based on and encourages waste disposal. If recycling increases, waste generation goes down and revenue goes down. This creates a disincentive to promote recycling or reuse of materials.
- The law contains conflicts between hauling recyclable or reusable materials and hauling wastes for disposal.
- Conflicts of interest occur in some solid waste permit oversight. The state sets regulatory environmental performance standards for solid waste facilities for local government to enforce. Conflicts can arise when a solid waste permit is issued to the public works department by the public health department and both departments report to the same authority.
- Local industrial capacity to use recycled materials in Washington is lacking. Many recovered materials are sent overseas for recycling.
- There is disparity among some jurisdictions’ programs, funding and regulatory oversight depending on available resources.
- There is little or no regulatory authority over material recovery facilities, and permit requirements vary from one jurisdiction to another.

### Moving Beyond Waste

The Beyond Waste Plan is Washington state’s combined solid and hazardous waste plan. It’s 30-year vision is to reduce most wastes and toxic substances, and use remaining wastes as resources. However, our solid waste laws do not fully facilitate moving “beyond waste.”

[www.ecy.wa.gov/beyondwaste](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/beyondwaste)

### Stay Involved

- Come to a workshop (dates/times on the front page).
- Use the on-line comment form at the [70.95](http://70.95) website.
- Sign up to receive email updates on this process on the [70.95 listserv](http://70.95.listserv).
- Keep track of our progress at the [70.95](http://70.95) website:

[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/7095](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/7095)

### Contact information

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### Special accommodations

To ask about the availability of this document in a version for the visually impaired, call the Waste 2 Resources Program at 360-407-6900.

Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.