

## How Ecology Responded to Public Comments on the 2009 Beyond Waste Plan Update

This document summarizes the main themes raised during the public comment period on the 2009 Beyond Waste Update. Most commenters used the online form but some remarked by phone, letter, or in meetings. Overall, commenters expressed support for the proposed changes. The commenters expressed concerns or requested changes in the areas below. Commenters also changed words, made suggestions, or requested clarification in many cases. Where appropriate, these were incorporated into the recommendations and milestones. Many comments will also be included in the explanatory text that will appear in the final plan update. This text will further express the intent of each recommendation and/or milestone. Overall, these public comments make the document better.

### **Public Comment: The plan needs a stronger emphasis on waste reduction and prevention if we are to move “beyond waste.”**

More focus on waste reduction and prevention was added to the update in a number of places. This includes the toxics education recommendation in the Industries and Moderate Risk Waste initiatives, a new milestone in the Organics initiative on food waste prevention, and emphasis on using existing building stock in the Green Building initiative.

### **Public Comment: While there is increased focus on product stewardship in this update, more could be added. Don't just rely on a product stewardship framework, but allow for a product-by-product approach where necessary.**

Additional references to product stewardship, and allowance for product-specific legislation were added. Product stewardship remains a key principle and strategy for advancing the Beyond Waste Plan.

### **Public Comment: The Plan needs clarification on roles. Which milestones and recommendations are to be addressed by Ecology's staff, local governments or others?**

Roles will be clarified in an enhanced implementation section.

### **Public Comment: The recommendations on pesticides are not acceptable as proposed; specifically the use of the term “non-synthetic pesticides.” The milestones were not readily measurable.**

The term “non-synthetic pesticides” was removed and replaced with “effective alternatives.” The milestones were revised for better measurability and increased clarity.

### **Public Comment: More exchange of information is needed between Ecology and local government on data collection and measuring progress.**

Recommendations and milestones in the Measuring Progress initiative have been adjusted to allow for more input, use, and sharing of data with local governments where applicable.

**Public Comment: The Plan needs to accommodate emerging issues, such as personal care products, pharmaceuticals, and nanotechnology.**

The Beyond Waste Plan intends to direct focus on specific key areas. However, Ecology will remain open to emerging issues and opportunities for the agency, local governments, or other entities to work on areas not specified in the plan but suited to the Beyond Waste vision.

**Public Comment: Add more quantifiable measurements in some milestones.**

Quantification was added or expanded on the packaging milestone, (SW J) and the milestone on product stewardship (IND N).

**Public Comment: There were questions on organics waste management hierarchy and organic waste to energy milestones. Prevention of organic wastes, where possible, needs to remain a top priority. Stakeholders should be involved in the organics hierarchy process.**

These milestones were clarified. Prevention will take a clearer role in the organic waste hierarchy with a new milestone for recovery of edible food. Also added was the ability for a variety of stakeholders to participate in developing the hierarchy.

**Public Comment: The importance of third-party certification systems is not sufficiently emphasized, specifically as a tool to help citizens make good purchasing decisions.**

It is agreed that third-party certification systems to define and identify sustainable products and processes are vital tools for meeting a number of recommendations and milestones in the Beyond Waste update. This has been added to the Key Principles and Strategies section of the Plan.

**For More Information:**

We will be working with the state Solid Waste Advisory Committee to complete the Beyond Waste Plan update by December 2009.

For more specific information regarding how comments were addressed, please contact:

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Beyond Waste Website at [www.ecy.wa.gov/beyondwaste/](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/beyondwaste/).

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