

SWANA Extended Producer Responsibility EPR Guiding Principles

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy construct that holds that *Producers are responsible and accountable for the lifecycle of their product.*

Safety: Goals of EPR policy should focus on safety throughout the lifecycle of the product, particularly safety for solid waste and resource management professionals. This includes implementing design changes and/or use of funds to address potentially harmful contaminants and materials (such as PFAS and HHW) and dangerous components/packaging (such as batteries, compressed gas canisters/cylinders) in waste streams. In addition, products should be initially designed to prioritize worker safety, recyclability, reusability, and compostability.

Commonality: Current and future EPR policies should strive for commonality for identified ‘problem’ materials, including comprehensive, broadly defined categories inclusive of all agreed-on items in that product sector across states, provinces, nationally (i.e., batteries, needles, cylinders, etc.). Additionally, metrics and measurements (i.e., nomenclature, units of measure) should be consistent across states, regions, territories, provinces, nations to the extent possible.

Data: Policy should be informed by current data and needs assessments, including targets.

Funding Structure: Funds generated through EPR policies should be used in support of the system and not for other non-system projects, etc.

Current System: Any current/future EPR policies should acknowledge, protect, and integrate systems (i.e. current infrastructure, contracts, etc.) along with local best management practices for waste collection and processing systems, while recognizing the need for evolving technologies and practices.

Materials Covered: Materials regulated under an EPR system should be afforded on/off ramps based on performance standards, including post-consumer recycled content, and enforcement mechanisms should be consistently applied to producers and service providers.

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