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Receive Updates



Waste Reduction Pilot: May 2020

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Waste Reduction Pilot: May 2020

1. Join the Better Buildings, Better Plants Virtual Leadership Symposium, June 8-11, and the Waste Reduction Session



The [2020 Better Buildings, Better Plants Summit](#) is less than a week away, June 8-11! It will feature a series of timely webinars and peer exchanges beginning with an Opening Plenary on Monday, June 8. The event is free to attend; view the full schedule [here](#).

We particularly encourage you to participate in the **"Early Best Practices from the Waste Reduction Pilot" session on Thursday, June 11, from 11:00 am-12:30 pm Eastern** (note the time change from an earlier email). We'll discuss best practices for waste management, early results from the pilot, and relevant resources from DOE and beyond and hear about the experiences of two pilot partners, [Shorenstein Properties, LLC](#) and [Volvo Group North America](#), from company representatives Bill Whitfield (General Manager and Sustainability Program Manager) and Mark Pannell (Environmental Manager), respectively.

[Register](#) for free for the virtual Summit now!

2. ICYMI: Second Quarterly Call Focused on Food Waste Now Available Online

Shorenstein Properties Shares Solution-at-a-Glance on Improving Waste Diversion

[Shorenstein Properties](#) has published a solution-at-a-glance that details its comprehensive waste diversion program. As part of the Waste Reduction Pilot, the partner is working towards a goal of increasing waste diversion 20% by 2025 over a 2016 baseline.

Shorenstein's waste program consists of three main components: policy, training and outreach, and auditing. [Check out](#) the solution-at-a-glance to learn more.

Take Advantage of Circularity 20 on August 25-27

[GreenBiz](#) is hosting a waste conference, Circularity 20,

We hosted our second quarterly call on May 12; the food waste-focused webinar included presentations from Samantha Kenny, Program Officer on the Food Waste Team at World Wildlife Fund US, and Lori Driver, Corporate Sustainability Manager at [Flowers Foods](#).



In case you missed it, the recording, slides, and transcripts have been posted [online](#).

3. Progress is Being Made in the Pursuit of a Circular Economy for Plastics

An important trend of manufacturers in the past ten years has been the pursuit of a circular economy, the objective of which is to eliminate waste, repurpose components and products, and reuse materials for as long as possible before final recovery and recycling of materials at end of life. One area that has recently shown a great deal of potential is the plastics industry. **Manufacturers and third parties are developing new methods for recycling, reusing, and deconstructing plastics for other uses.**

Total global production of primary plastics in 2015 reached 381 million tons. In that same year it is [estimated](#) that 55 percent of global plastic waste was discarded, 25 percent was incinerated, and 20 percent recycled.

Within industry, the chemicals sector has taken some interesting steps in recovering and breaking down plastics for use as feedstocks or fuels. In one such initiative that partners can keep an eye on, BP is developing a depolymerization chemical recycling technology to break down polyethylene terephthalate (PET), a widely used form of plastic that is difficult to recycle. Called "Infinia," this recycling technology decomposes PET waste into monomers or feedstocks that are similar to the monomers derived from traditional hydrocarbon sources like oil and natural gas. These recycled monomer feedstocks are then available to make new PET products. The [potential](#) is that the Infinia processes will enable PET to be recycled numerous times.

In 2019, BP [broke ground](#) on a \$25-million pilot plant at its research and development center in Naperville, Illinois. If successful, the pilot will develop the technology to a state where it can operate on a commercial scale and be deployed at many of the company's plants around the world.

Another interesting plastics-recycling development: PureCycle (located in Ironton, Ohio) will recycle discarded carpets made of polypropylene in a process licensed from a Better Plants partner, [Procter & Gamble](#). The company will be able to [recycle](#) over 119 million pounds of polypropylene and to produce 100 million pounds of Ultra-Pure Recycled Polypropylene per year, starting in 2021, thereby creating a market for polypropylene waste.

These efforts may well get a boost from the efforts under way in the DOE's [Plastics Innovation Challenge](#) (PIC). Launched last year, the PIC intends to dramatically reduce plastic waste and position the US as a leader in advanced plastic recycling technologies. Through R&D and partnerships like the [BOTTLE consortium](#), this initiative aims to

with program tracks including "Food & Water Systems," "Logistics & Infrastructure," and "Next-Gen Packaging" and promising "informative plenaries, breakouts, tutorials, tours, networking opportunities and a solutions-oriented showcase."

Best of all: it's all online and free. Explore the conference agenda and register [here](#).

Tip of the Month: Reducing Microplastics



[According](#) to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), microplastics are plastic debris, commonly found in waterways, that are 5 millimeters or less in length. Microplastics come from a variety of sources, including from larger plastic debris that degrades into smaller and smaller pieces and tiny plastic beads that are added as exfoliants to health and beauty products. These tiny particles, as well as synthetic fibers from clothing, easily pass through water filtration systems and end up in the ocean and other waterways. Washing in cold water can reduce wear on clothes and energy use.

enable upcycling of waste plastics and development of new plastics that are recyclable-by-design.

As a partner in the [Waste Reduction Pilot](#), we are sharing updates, tips, and new resources with you at the end of every month. We welcome your thoughts and feedback. If you come across something you'd like to share with the pilot cohort, please let us know via BetterBuildings@EE.Doe.Gov and we'll do our best to feature it.

We are grateful for your support and participation in this pilot. We hope this email finds you healthy and staying safe!

Sincerely,

The Better Buildings/Plants Team

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