

ZERO WASTE MONTHLY



BUSINESS NEWSLETTER



Brought to you by Zero Waste Strategies

0waste.org



Stacy Savage

Founder & CEO

@TexasTrashTalker

September's zero waste monthly is full of momentum and important lessons for businesses.

This issue covers emerging federal recycling policy, food-waste depackaging, solar-panel recovery, and IKEA's new peer-to-peer furniture resale marketplace.

We are also excited to introduce *The Waste Stream*, our new podcast that will explore practical ways businesses and governments can reduce waste, save money, and lead in the circular economy.

Dive in for timely news, fresh ideas, professional resources, and practical inspiration to help you waste less and achieve more. Let's get into it!



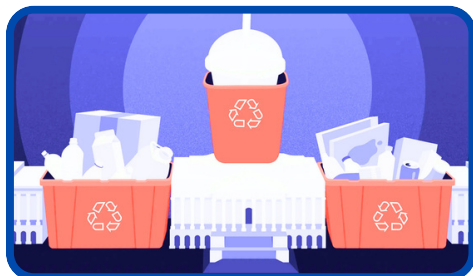
Jon Savage
Executive
Vice President

THE SCOOP!

Zero Waste Business News & Updates



1



TRACKING THE FUTURE OF US RECYCLING POLICY IN CONGRESS

A House Energy & Commerce subcommittee advanced the PACK Act and Recycled Materials Attribution Act, addressing packaging messaging and federal recycling standards. Congress is also renewing efforts to strengthen recycling through infrastructure, organics management, & education.



NO BIDDERS RESPOND TO MAINE'S EPR RFP

Maine received no bids to administer its packaging EPR program, leaving the nation's first statewide packaging stewardship law without a path to implementation. The state is assessing options after Circular Action Alliance declined to bid, citing misalignment with its operational practices.



SOLAR PANEL RECYCLING: WHY IT MATTERS AND HOW IT ACTUALLY WORKS

Solar panel waste is becoming a growing challenge as aging panels reach end-of-life. Recycling can recover valuable materials, but U.S. recycling rates remain low. Reuse, manufacturer takeback programs, and improved recycling systems can help keep panels out of landfills.



DESIGNING RECYCLING INTO PLASTIC PACKAGING

Designing packaging for recyclability can improve recovery by simplifying materials, labels, adhesives, and components. Early collaboration with recyclers helps ensure packaging works with existing systems, reduces waste, and helps companies meet evolving EPR requirements.



DEPACKAGING IS SCALING FAST AND REGULATION ISN'T KEEPING UP

Food waste depackaging is expanding rapidly, but regulation remains inconsistent. States vary in permitting and contamination standards. Stronger oversight, contamination monitoring, third-party testing, and source separation can help protect compost and digestate quality.

>>> SEPTEMBER'S FEATURED STORY <<<



IKEA Makes Furniture Resale More Mainstream

IKEA is expanding its circular-economy strategy in the United Kingdom with a new peer-to-peer marketplace designed specifically for pre-owned IKEA furniture. The platform will allow IKEA Family members to buy and sell eligible items directly with nearby shoppers, creating a more focused and convenient resale option for everything from shelving, desks, and dining furniture to children's-room essentials and home décor.

The concept has already been tested in Norway and Spain, and the U.K. rollout builds on IKEA's existing Buy Back program. Through Buy Back, customers return qualifying furniture to IKEA in exchange for an IKEA refund card; suitable items are then resold through the company's Re-shop and Re-use offering. The new marketplace takes a different approach. Rather than requiring every item to pass through a store or meet formal buy-back criteria, it creates a direct local channel for customers to keep functional products in use.

That distinction matters. Many household items still have plenty of life left even when they are not eligible for a retailer-operated resale program, do not need professional refurbishment, or are simply easier to pass on locally. A dedicated IKEA marketplace could make it easier for sellers to recover some value from furniture they no longer need while helping buyers furnish homes at a lower cost.

Furniture is one of the most visible and challenging parts of the throwaway economy. Large items can be expensive to replace, difficult to transport, and inconvenient to dispose of responsibly. When resale options are unclear or inconvenient, usable furniture can end up at the curb, in bulky-waste collection, or in landfill. By making resale part of the same brand ecosystem where people shop for new furniture, IKEA is helping normalize reuse as an everyday option rather than a niche alternative.

The initiative also reflects a larger shift in retail. Companies are increasingly recognizing that their responsibility—and opportunity—does not end at the point of sale. By supporting repair, take-back, refurbishment, resale, and peer-to-peer exchange, retailers can extend product life, build customer loyalty, and reduce the material and financial impacts of constant replacement.

IKEA's marketplace may be limited to its own products, but the model offers an important example for retailers, property managers, institutions, and communities seeking practical ways to keep durable goods circulating longer.



Tex Savage
Chief Cuddle Officer

Hello, humans! September is here, and you know what that means—pumpkin spice, cooler nights, and fewer excuses for throwing things away!

As the leaves start to fall, let's make sure your waste doesn't fall into the landfill. This month, I've got some paws-itively simple tips to help your business fall into better zero waste habits!

Fall Into Zero Waste!

Summer is finally starting to loosen its grip, the days are getting shorter, and fall is sneaking up on us (not so much here in Central TX). You know what that means? It's the purr-fect time for a little business waste checkup!

Before you get buried under pumpkins, holidays, and year-end chaos, take a few minutes to look at what your business is throwing away.

Paws-itively Simple Tips:

 Spot the waste: Pick one waste stream and see what's piling up. Paper? Packaging? Food scraps? Maybe there's a surprising culprit hiding in there!

 Ask "Why?": Before tossing something, ask whether it could be reduced, reused, repaired, donated, or recycled.

 Think before you buy: Can you purchase products with less packaging or choose reusable options?

 Check your bins: A quick bin check can reveal contamination, missed recycling opportunities, and materials that could be diverted.

 Start small: Choose ONE improvement and try it for 30 days. Track what changes—and celebrate the wins!

Remember, you don't have to transform your entire operation overnight. Small changes, repeated consistently, can lead to big reductions in waste, costs, and environmental impact.

So this fall, don't just fall for pumpkin spice... fall in love with wasting less! 



SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT



4



SUBSCRIBE



DID YOU HEAR THE NEWS?! Zero Waste Strategies has a brand new podcast! Subscribe today to [The Waste Stream](#) where we explore zero waste and circular economy concepts and strategies to help businesses and governments save money!

Tune into our very [1st episode](#) with Goodwill's Mehreen Chowdhury as the topic of textile recycling is exposed as one of the most pervasive waste streams in the world and what we can do about it.



In August, our founder & CEO joined host, Lin Coughlin, on the [Nflections podcast](#). They discussed Stacy's path from environmental activist and legislative lobbyist to business owner and how she has worked with some of the world's biggest brands!



[Consulting for Women in Waste: Build Wealth, Gain Freedom, and Grow Your Brand](#)

is our 6-month, self-paced online training course designed specifically for women sustainability professionals & green graduates who are ready to transform their passion for the environment into a thriving consulting business. **[APPLY NOW!](#)**

Our 8-week online **[“Cash for Trash” Zero Waste Business Academy](#)** equips business owners and managers with the tools to reduce waste, save money, and boost brand reputation.

Through comprehensive training modules on waste reduction, food waste management, and employee education, business owners and managers will learn the key foundational concepts to running an optimized operation.

With bonuses, such as educational resources, private group access, expert consultations, and a Zero Waste Business training certification. This program is designed to empower business leaders to drive sustainability and tap into the growing market of eco-conscious consumers.





UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS



<u>Nebraska Recycling Council Conference</u>	September 16	Lincoln, NE
<u>ReMA Leadership Conference</u>	September 15-16	Chicago, IL
<u>Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals</u>	September 29-October 1	New Orleans, LC
<u>RCon</u>	September 29-October 2	St. Louis, MO
<u>National Zero Waste Conference</u>	October 21-22	Virtual
<u>Texas Environmental Leadership Awards</u>	October 22	Austin, TX
<u>Georgia Recycling Coalition</u>	November 11	Griffin, GA
<u>NYSAR 37th Annual Conference</u>	November 18-20	Cooperstown, NY
<u>US Composting Council Conference</u>	February 1-4	Jacksonville, FL
<u>Southeast Recycling Conference (SERC)</u>	February 16-19	Destin, FL
<u>Wisconsin Integrated Resource Mgmt.</u>	February 24-26	Lake Geneva, WI
<u>World Recycling Convention</u>	May 5-6	Milan, Italy



[Zero Waste and Your Family: A Guide to Green Living for Cost-Saving Results](#) is your family's new handbook to lead a zero waste lifestyle! Learn waste reduction strategies for each room of your home, events and holidays, and family vacations, plus your kid will love the games & coloring pages included to make "talking trash" fun!

ABOUT OUR COMPANY

Zero Waste Strategies (ZWS) was founded in 2013 by Stacy Savage, AKA “The Texas Trash Talker”. ZWS is a sustainability consulting firm specializing in Zero Waste business protocols to support the newly emerging Circular Economy. ZWS works with leaders in the business, government, institutional, and nonprofit sectors who are serious about using waste reduction to drive increased revenue, deeper customer loyalty, employee empowerment, and a green marketing edge.

ZWS is an S-Corp based in Austin, TX. The company’s client list includes Dell, AT&T, Apple, Kohler, Nestle Purina, Wayfair, Misfits Market, Boston University, and the City of Austin, among many others. The company is a member in good standing with the US Green Building Council (USGBC), State of Texas Alliance for Recycling (STAR), the Austin Green Business Leaders Program, and the Green Business Bureau.

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