

CASE STUDY / ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

RENEWING THE FOCUS ON RECYCLING IN TEXAS

The potentially positive environmental impacts of a well-designed recycling program are clear, but when the State of Texas wanted to understand current and potential economic effects of municipal solid waste recycling programs, an in-depth approach was needed.



UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACTS OF RECYCLING

Designing a study that provides insight on quantities of material recycled, economic impacts and market development opportunities.

PROJECT STATS

CLIENT

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

LOCATION

Texas

STUDY FINDINGS:

9.1

MILLION TONS OF MATERIAL RECYCLED IN 2015

\$3.4

BILLION IN ECONOMIC IMPACTS

MORE THAN

17K

RECYCLING-RELATED JOBS IN 2015

CHALLENGE

In 2015, the 84th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 2763, calling for the creation of a Study on the Economic Impacts of Recycling. Building on the efforts of past recycling studies, the new study would focus specifically on the economic benefits of the recycling industry in Texas and provide information to policymakers to inform future economic and environmental development.

Through a partnership with the Lone Star Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America, the State of Texas Alliance for Recycling (STAR) released the Texas Recycling Data Initiative (TRDI) in February 2015. This new study provided a point of reference for gauging recycling activity in Texas, including methodologies for gathering economic and job information.

SOLUTION

Our team was retained by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to work alongside STAR on the development of a study that would build upon information gathered in

the TRDI and other regional studies. The study would need to collect data from recycling processors and the end markets responsible for handling Texans' recyclable material.

In accordance with House Bill 2763, the study would also need to provide more information on key topics for the Study on the Economic Impacts of Recycling, including:

- Current recycling efforts
- Methods to develop new markets and businesses
- Funding methods
- Job creation
- Infrastructure needs

RESULTS

The partnership's resulting survey, conducted between Aug. 15 and Oct. 31, 2016, was hosted online, allowing respondents to complete a questionnaire for each of their facilities. Each participant was asked to provide a facility description and the amount of material processed or used, as well as economic and market information.



STAR

State of Texas Alliance for Recycling



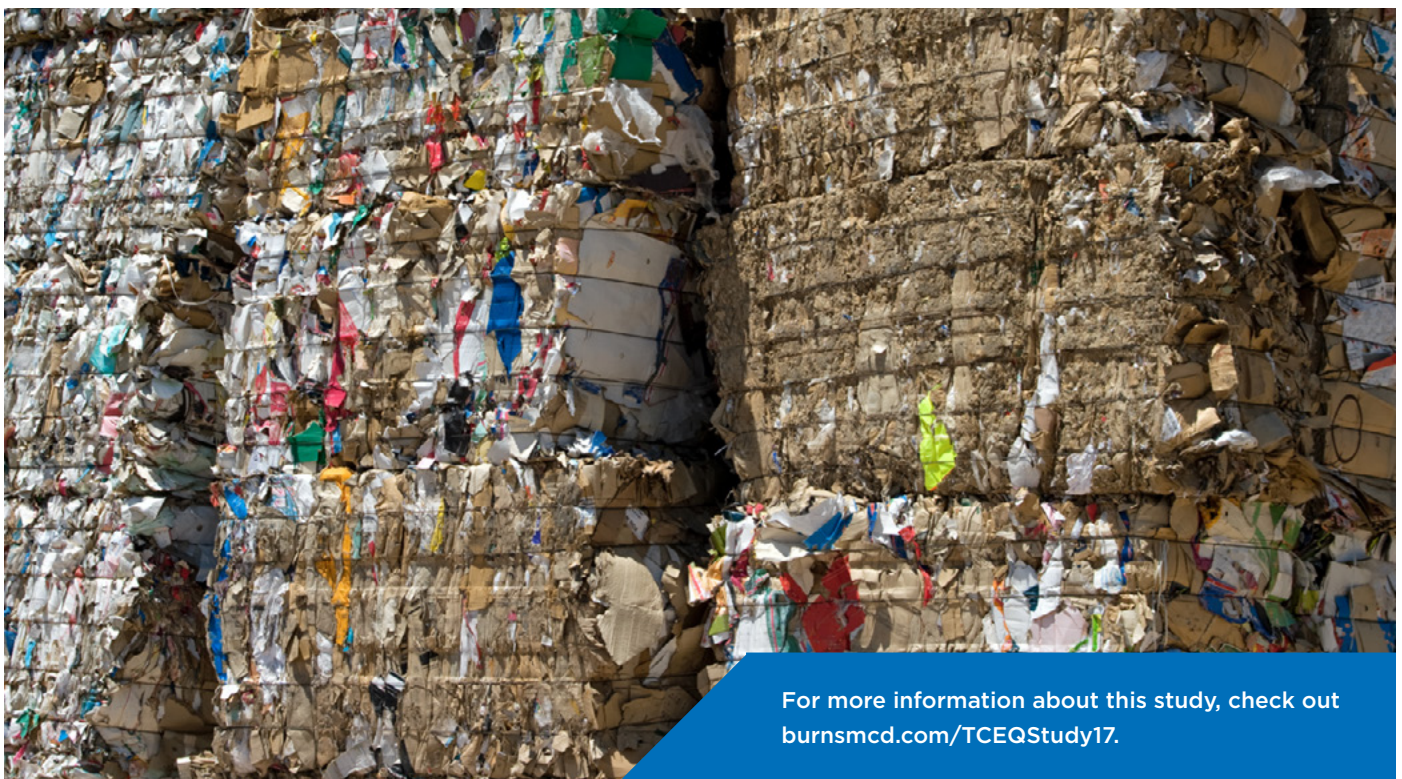
Among the many metrics collected throughout the survey, the results of the study provided definitive evidence for a wide range of rural recycling opportunities throughout Texas. Additionally, recycling infrastructure needs, funding mechanisms for recycling programs and opportunities for programs in cities and regions studied were identified. These findings will inform years of infrastructure improvement projects for state and local governments.



The final report does a tremendous job of validating that recycling is a booming, highly-motivated industry keeping millions of tons of material out of our landfills while also producing tens of thousands of well-paid jobs and billions of dollars in economic output.

No doubt the report will also prove invaluable to current recyclers as a resource for identifying development opportunities and funding models, and learning from best practices across Texas. What's more, the report compellingly predicts opportunity for even more economic growth by focusing public and private investment toward recycling.

STATE SEN. JOSÉ R. RODRÍGUEZ,
HB 2763 SPONSOR



For more information about this study, check out burnsmcd.com/TCEQStudy17.



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