



## State recycling organization review – part 1

by Roger Guttentag

### SRO functions

In general, SRO websites generally provide the following information:

- Organization history, mission and structure, including technical councils
- News and events, including important meetings, conferences or special activities
- Recycling resources in the form of newsletters, factsheets, directories or links
- Information on SRO programs in the form of reports, videos or blogs
- Announcements regarding legislative or policy issues that may affect SRO members

Even if you are a member of an SRO that covers the area where you live, it can be useful to take a regular look at the information that is available on other SRO sites. Here are some samples of what you could find:

### Colorado Association for Recycling

If you look in the Government section under the Resources menu you will find six short case studies that discuss municipal solid waste system modifications that were made or considered. These efforts include changes in contracting practices and additions of recycling collection services.

### Carolina Recycling Association (CRA)

The CRA is an organization that addresses the recycling needs and challenges in North and South Carolina. As part of that mission, the CRA holds annual conferences to provide a venue for disseminating new ideas and trends affecting recycling

and waste reduction in these states. The 2014 CRA conference was held this past spring and many of the event presentations can be viewed on the CRA site. These presentations cover composting, household hazardous waste management and litter abatement, and case examples of zero waste initiatives undertaken by manufacturers. I found the zero waste discussion particularly interesting because it explored models that incorporate zero waste practices into ongoing business operations.

### Georgia Recycling Coalition (GRC)

The GRC site provides a variety of resources for anyone who wants to know more about the recycling programs or markets operating in the Peach State. For example, by selecting the link to EcoPoint on the home page, you can find recycling drop-off locations based on material to be recycled and search radius. An advanced search feature allows you to refine your query based on drop-off location or event, service provider and type of facility. The search results are then shown on a map as location tags, which are also shown in a list corresponding to the tag's letter designation.

Another useful feature is the Georgia Markets Directory, which can be searched based on company name, geographic location within or outside of Georgia, type of material recycled and availability of a pickup collection service. Search results are provided in a table with links to short company profiles and contact information.

### Indiana Recycling Coalition (IRC)

The IRC site, like that of the GRC, has an EcoPoint search engine for finding recycling

State recycling associations (SROs) have played a critical role in the development and growth of municipal recycling for well over three decades. This fact was confirmed in an August 2014 survey conducted by *Resource Recycling* in which respondents identified SROs as their best source of information on the subject of emerging technology (more details on this survey will be provided in a future article). In this month's column I would like to discuss how you can find out more about where SROs have been established, what they do and take a brief selective look at some useful resources that have been published on SRO websites.

### Getting started

A good starting point for finding out about SROs is the National Recycling Coalition (NRC) website. The NRC was founded in 1978 with a mission to create broad support for municipal recycling in the U.S. Its membership is composed of individuals from local, regional and state governments, recycling-based businesses and industries, educational and advocacy organizations and higher education institutions. One of the principal programs of the NRC is the Recycling Organizations Coalition, which aims to promote and support the activities of SROs through such channels as peer-to-peer networking, professional continuing education and policy discussions. Links to SRO affiliates of the NRC are available on the group's home page.

opportunities for a wide range of materials. Other resources that are worth noting are the Recycling on the Go guide and a jobs report prepared for the IRC by the Bowen Center for Public Affairs at Ball University (Muncie, Indiana).

The report, titled "The Untapped Job Potential of Indiana's Recycling Industry" and published in July 2013, builds on the work of previous researchers showing the relationship between boosting recycling and creating jobs. The research explains calculations showing how recycling 1 ton of material creates 10 more jobs than landfilling it, and the study estimates that only about 8 percent of disposed materials are not recyclable, compostable or recoverable. Using this as a starting point, the report goes on to argue that if the Hoosier State's diversion rate increased by 25 to 50 percent, the state would see 10,000 to 20,000 new jobs. The report also estimates that approximately 1,400 new jobs were created by Indiana's recent e-scrap legislation.

The Recycling on the Go guide, meanwhile, addresses the growing need to

## Web Address Directory

Carolina Recycling Association

[cra-recycle.org](http://cra-recycle.org)

Colorado Association for Recycling

[cafr.org](http://cafr.org)

Georgia Recycling Coalition

[georgiarecycles.org](http://georgiarecycles.org)

Indiana Recycling Coalition

[indianarecycling.org](http://indianarecycling.org)

National Recycling Coalition

[nrcrecycles.org](http://nrcrecycles.org)

A complete national listing of SROs can be found on [recyclingandreuse.com](http://recyclingandreuse.com).

increase public space recycling. This short guide goes over the basics of creating and sustaining a public space recycling system, including what materials to target, selection and siting of collection containers, how to create effective container labeling and ideas for monitoring collection results.

## Next month

Part 2 of this column will continue with

more useful resources that can be found on SRO websites.

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