



News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 10th, 2021

Contacts

Erica Bertram, erica@ecocenter.org
Lynn Hoffman, lynnh@eurekarecycling.org

Mission-Based Recyclers Launch Alliance Aimed at Rebuilding Credible Transparent Recycling

The new organization Alliance of Mission-Based Recyclers (AMBR) will advance systemic recycling industry improvement, offering a unique voice in a national conversation currently dominated by greenwashing and skepticism

(Ann Arbor, MI)--Four of the original pioneers of mission-driven, community-based nonprofit recycling in the United States have joined in coalition to launch AMBR, the Alliance of Mission-Based Recyclers. AMBR enters the current dialogue about the future of recycling as a unified braintrust of seasoned, trustworthy, and transparent voices for reclaiming a struggling national recycling industry from the waste crisis. AMBR is working to guide campaigns, policies, and infrastructure investments to advance credible, transparent, recycling systems that serve as a bridge toward a circular economy and just, resilient, local communities.

“We launched AMBR to bring integrity back to the center of the recycling industry which has been co-opted by plastic manufacturers, brands, and garbage companies.” Said Lynn Hoffman, National Coordinator for AMBR and Co-President of Eureka Recycling. “Someone within the industry has to speak up for people and the planet with honesty and transparency when the public dialogue is dominated by self interested companies with terrible environmental and social justice track records.”

AMBR’s founding members are Boulder, CO’s Eco-Cycle; Berkeley, CA’s Ecology Center; Minneapolis, MN’s Eureka Recycling; and Ann Arbor, MI’s Recycle Ann Arbor. Individually, they operate some of the longest running programs in the nation founded on environmental, community development, and social justice missions. Together they have decades of deep experience in operations, education, and public policy. As recycling operators that collect and process hundreds of thousands of tons of recyclables each year, all four organizations know the workings of America’s current linear consumption model intimately.

AMBR members also share a zero-waste advocacy lens, and environmental and social justice missions, unlike plastics manufacturers and for-profit waste management corporations who dominate the recycling industry, policy and the public narrative. Members possess a unique combination of technical expertise, industry credibility, and ethical commitment to advance bold and effective systemic solutions that prioritize human health, ecosystem protection, and climate change mitigation while helping regional economies thrive.

“AMBR has the credibility, influence, knowledge, and experience to be the authentic recycling industry voice needed to reclaim recycling’s rightful role in protecting the planet and provide a powerful counterweight to the plastics and waste industries,” said Annie Leonard, Executive Director, Greenpeace USA and creator of *Story of Stuff*.

AMBR strives to strengthen authentic recycling as one essential component of a circular economy, resisting greenwashing narratives that promise a panacea for a throw-away culture and generate skepticism when they fail. “We are not in a recycling crisis; we are in a packaging crisis,” said Kate Bailey, AMBR Policy Director and Eco-Cycle Policy and Research Director. “Effective recycling is one essential piece of the solution to that crisis, but recycling has to be done right to work, and it can’t fix out-of-control resource consumption and pollution on its own.”

To deliver comprehensive solutions, AMBR takes a comprehensive approach to imagining and implementing them. From the unique vantage point of the daily pile of collected recyclables, recyclers are able to look “upstream” at how products could be redesigned to be more resource-efficient and more easily recyclable. They can also look “downstream” at how systems and infrastructure could better recover and remanufacture materials into new products. To shift practices both upstream and downstream, AMBR is working with consumer brands, packaging designers, the recycling industry, government leaders, media, and environmental movements.

AMBR’s current first priority is to stem the tide of single-use plastic packaging waste. By reducing consumption and by raising manufacturing and recycling industry standards for the most problematic and unnecessary plastics, AMBR wants to flip the common idea that recycling needs to be “fixed” to accept all plastics. Instead, plastic packaging needs to be standardized, reduced, and redesigned to protect recycling.

###

AMBR (Alliance of Mission-Based Recyclers) is a coalition founded by four of the original pioneers of mission-driven, community-based nonprofit recycling in the U.S., Eureka Recycling, Eco-Cycle, Ecology Center and Recycle Ann Arbor. By revealing facts and myths about how recycling works, modeling innovative policies and practices, and influencing the national conversation, AMBR is guiding new recycling policies and infrastructure investments to rebuild credible, transparent recycling systems that support a sustainable circular economy and just, resilient local communities.

For more information visit <https://ambr-recyclers.org/>.