

Zero Waste Washington 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW





Senator Liz Lovelett and Representative Liz Berry at January 16, 2025, press event for the Recycling Reform Act

In 2025, Zero Waste Washington worked with our partners and hundreds of Washington residents to support more than 28 zero waste-related bills. Twelve passed into law. It was a fabulous year!

Our highest priority bill, the Recycling Reform Act, which will reduce waste and modernize our recycling system, passed into law (after 5 long years!).

Legislative Successes in 2025

Reforming our recycling system!



Senator Liz Lovelett and **Representative Liz Berry** were a dynamic duo who worked tirelessly (over 400 meetings in the past 2 years) to finally pass the **Recycling Reform Act** ([SB 5284](#)). This new law will establish a product stewardship program for packaging and printed paper, include recycling and reuse targets, and require plastic source reduction. All residents of Washington who currently get garbage pickup will get recycling pickup (currently 11 counties do not have this service at all). There will be one set of rules for what goes in the blue bin across the state, and we will have assurance that the items on that list will actually be recycled!



Right to Repair your electronic devices and appliances

With big thanks to **Representative Mia Gregerson** and **Senator Derek Stanford**, [HB 1483](#), Right to Repair passed into law (after 8 years!). This law requires digital electronic product manufacturers, such as Apple and Microsoft, to make repair information, parts and tools available to independent repair businesses and owners. Now small businesses will more easily be able to repair these items for you. Extending the life of computers, tablets and cellphones, and appliances reduces the burden on manufacturing new products – therefore also decreasing greenhouse gas. This law will lower costs for consumers, get used digital electronics into the hands of people who need them, and help overcome digital inequities in Washington. This way, people can more easily keep using their items instead of tossing them!



Right to Repair mobile wheelchairs



Championed by **Representative Mia Gregerson** and **Senator Drew Hansen**, this law ([SB 5680](#)) requires manufacturers of powered wheelchairs and similar devices to make repair information, parts

and tools available to independent repair businesses and owners. There is a lack of options for repairs across the state and the wait time for repairs can be up to several months!



Third big law addressing composting and food donation

Championed by **Representative Beth Doglio**, this law ([HB 1497](#)) improves composting and other management of organic (yard and food waste) in order to divert the material from the landfill and avoid methane gas generation. Previous laws on this overall topic passed in 2022 and 2024. This year's law will help reduce wasted food, create cleaner compost, and provide more equitable service to multifamily residents. The bill aims to reduce contamination by standardizing color-coded collection bins and lids and labels on the bins. It creates a pathway for bringing organics collection to more multi-family buildings, including more room for the bins on each floor or at the loading dock or area.



Aiding the transition to less polluting refrigerant gases



Brought home by **Representative Davina Duerr** and **Senator Liz Lovelett**, this law, [HB 1462](#), helps Washington adapt to the national/global phasedown of hydrofluorocarbon refrigerant gases that are super potent greenhouse gases. It limits climate pollution by stimulating reclamation and reuse of refrigerant gases. These gases are used in refrigeration, air conditioning, and heat pumps. The law also guides the long-term transition to more affordable and climate-friendly alternative refrigerants.

Testing toxic PFAS (forever chemicals) in biosolids

Led by Sen Jeff Wilson, this law ([SB 5033](#)) establishes a monitoring program for PFAS (i.e., the forever chemicals) in biosolids from wastewater treatment facilities. Biosolids are spread in forests and on farms ... and we are concerned about the impacts of these bioaccumulating toxic chemicals.



Other zero waste-related bills that passed into law!

- Adding Ecology approval for landfill permits ([HB 1154](#))
- Solar panel recycling program revision ([SB 5175](#))
- Drug take-back program fix ([HB 1422](#))
- Adding accountability to Adopt a Highway ([SB 5556](#))
- Lead in paint ([SB 5494](#))
- Editing lead in cookware law ([SB 5628](#))
- Litter penalty increase ([HB 1293](#))

Testing messages to reduce laundry impacts

In partnership with the Duwamish River Community Coalition and Latino Northwest Communications, we supported high school youth interns in a project to understand behaviors associated with laundry. The use of detergents, water temperature, and frequency of washing can contribute to excessive energy consumption, environmental impacts, and shortened life of clothing. In the project, funded by a King County Waterworks grant, youth interviewed community members about their laundry habits and tested persuasive messaging to motivate behavior change. Based on the most successful messaging, they created three educational videos.



Youth interviewing community members

Tackling farm plastics: pilot projects

Zero Waste Washington worked closely with farmers to tackle waste on farms across Snohomish, King, Kitsap, and Pierce counties. Through interviews with over 50 farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers, we learned about the pressing waste challenges they face—particularly with plastic. Then in 2025, we launched three pilot projects designed to address farm waste, reduce landfill use, and save farmers money. These projects were funded by a Public Participation Grant from the WA State Department of Ecology. The projects were:

- Free Trial of Reusable CSA and Delivery Boxes, to replace non-recyclable “waxed” cardboard boxes
- 50% Cost-Share Program for Durable Nursery Trays which will last 30 years, to replace flimsy thin plastic trays that last at most 2 years
- Nursery Tray and Pot Recycling Events for otherwise hard to recycle items



Above, staff person Nayeli with Mike, manager at the Snohomish Co-op, distributing items to farmers. Bottom: three farmers with their items

Waste exchange forums

In partnership with Seattle Good Business Network and local partners and supported by a grant from the WA State Department of Ecology, we hosted three materials exchange forums in Vancouver, Bellingham, and Methow Valley. At these happy hour events at local breweries, businesses and organizations described surplus and difficult to recycle items and byproducts that others might be able to use.

This project feeds into a new *Washington Reuses* online platform through which businesses can list surplus or “waste” items for sale or for free. This is a Craig’s list concept, focused on commercial and industrial materials. The platform will launch in 2026.



Replacing milk cartons with bulk milk at King County schools

We worked with three school districts in King County (Federal Way, Tukwila and Renton), with the support of a King County Re+ grant, to replace milk cartons with bulk milk dispensers. The individual milk cartons are largely unrecyclable. Kids reported that the bulk milk was cold and tasted better!



Students doing a milk waste audit, prior to installation of bulk milk dispensers, individual milk cartons being replaced by this project, and Chef Tom French training school cafeteria staff about their new milk dispensers in late August, just before school started.



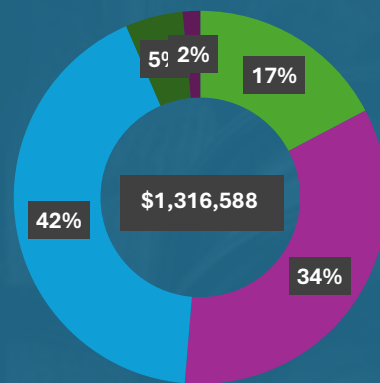
Furniture Repair Bank launched as new nonprofit!

We are thrilled to announce that our Furniture Repair Bank project launched as a new stand-alone nonprofit on July 1, 2025. The repair bank was designed and grown by Xenia Dolovova (at right in photo) and her team over three years.

In this innovative program, furniture that is broken or damaged and is on the path to the landfill, is rescued for reuse. Volunteers repair and restore the furniture, creating beautiful, functional pieces. Then, in partnership with organizations that serve recent immigrants and newly housed Washingtonians, furniture is delivered to families in need, free of charge.

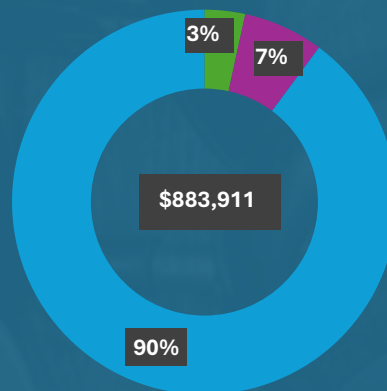
The repair bank got so big, it moved into a new warehouse, double the size. And Zero Waste Washington moved with it! We are co-housed for our storage and office needs.

Financials



Revenue 2024*

- Individual and memberships (17%)
- Government grants (34%)
- Foundation Grants (42%)
- Corporate and business (5%)
- Interest and other (2%)



Expenses 2024

- Administration (3%)
- Fundraising (7%)
- Program (90%)

**Our most recent 990*

Metal fry pans collected at Swap Out events in 2025, in which residents receive safer alternatives for toxic household items. The items tagged with blue tape had lead contamination detected.



Plastic kitchen utensils and cutting boards collected at Swap Out events in 2025, in which residents receive safer alternatives for toxic household items

Your part

Zero Waste Washington needs your contribution to continue reducing waste and making a circular economy a reality in Washington, now and into the future.

Please donate [here](#)

We will
continue to
ACT in 2026!

Thank you!

Zero waste is more
than just putting the
right thing in the bin...
although that is
important too.

It is about changing
the system!

