



Technology to Improve Collection

Recology, Sonoma Marin, California: Case Study

In Santa Rosa, California, a newly modernized MRF handles up to 880,000 pounds per day of mixed recyclables from Sonoma and Marin counties. Recology Sonoma Marin, which completed the \$35 million modernization and opened the facility in early 2024, worked with The Recycling Partnership to include dedicated polypropylene recycling in the project.

The Santa Rosa MRF serves over 170,000 customers in 13 communities. Optical sorters, over 100 conveyor belts, and ample bunkers for storage have made it one of the highest capacity MRFs on the West Coast. In California, recycling facilities are an essential link in meeting the requirements of The Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act, which requires a 65% recycling rate for single-use packaging and foodware by 2032.

Recology had already stopped exporting bales of mixed #3 through #7 plastics and switched some of its operations to recovering polypropylene (#5) a few years ago, according to Julia Mangin, the company's head of sustainability. "Where we operate, it does feel that the markets for polypropylene are well established," she said. "So, it was a priority for us to be able to leverage any technology that would make it even easier to collect."

The Polypropylene Recycling Coalition's grantmaking dovetailed with Recology's plans to modernize its Santa Rosa facility. The flexibility and relative simplicity of the grant process was key, noted Garen Kazanjian, Recology's public policy and regulatory affairs manager. "One of the great aspects is that the Coalition met us where we were, and we didn't have to reinvent the wheel in our processes," he said.

Recology also values The Partnership's connections to the larger circularity supply chain. "We appreciate that The Recycling Partnership is supported by manufacturers that ultimately will be seeking to recover these materials for their own products," Mangin said. "That's exactly the type of circular system that we want to be creating and that we want to be a part of."



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