

ECONOMIC IMPACT POTENTIAL AND CHARACTERIZATION OF MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE IN WEST MICHIGAN

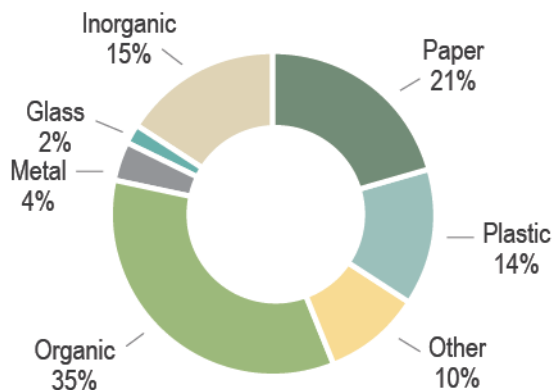
West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum and Grand Valley State University worked with Michigan recyclers and waste companies to analyze the composition of municipal solid waste currently landfilled and incinerated in West Michigan and Michigan, and the economic value of this material.

We found that most material currently being disposed of through landfills and incinerators could be recycled or composted without great difficulty where recycling services are available:

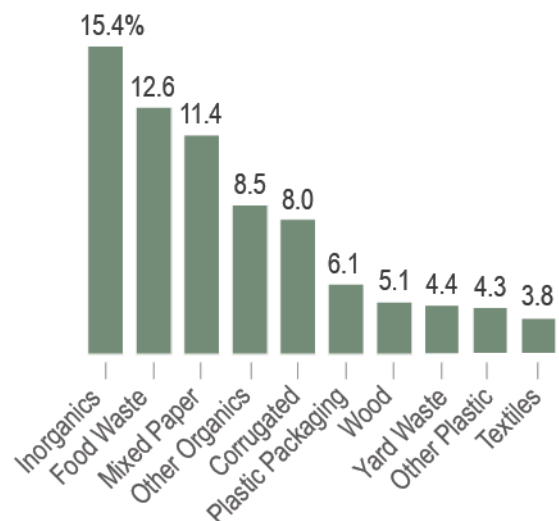
- 40% Standard Recycling: Numbered Plastic, Glass, Paper, Metal
- 35% Compostable: Food and Yard Waste, Compostable Paper, etc.
- 9% Recyclable with effort: Textiles, Bulk Items, E-waste, Soil, Hazardous
- 16% Not practical: Miscellaneous Inorganic Waste, Foam Plastic

Waste Sort Host Sites
South Kent Landfill
North Kent Transfer Station
Kent Co. Waste to Energy Facility
Elk Run Landfill
Central Sanitary Landfill
Muskegon County Landfill
Oakland Heights Development
Ottawa County Farms

W. Michigan Municipal Solid Waste Composition (mean % by weight)



Top Materials in W. Michigan MSW Composition (mean % by weight - 5% or greater)



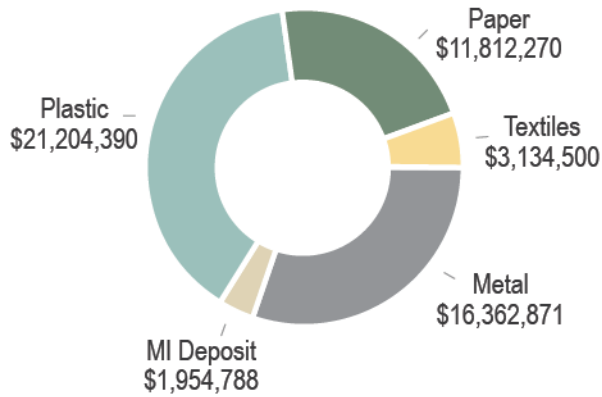
Total material value of MSW Disposed in landfills and waste-to-energy: \$52 MILLION

(W.M Counties = Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon, Allegan, Montcalm, Ionia, Barry)

Potential Economic Value: \$56 MILLION Potential Employment Value: 370 JOBS



Total Value of W. Michigan MSW Material Disposed (\$)



Total Value of W. Michigan MSW Commodities Disposed (\$)



Recommendations

Efforts to increase the recycling rate in Michigan and West Michigan should first focus on the 40% of materials that have market value, which would include all standard recyclable commodities but glass, plus textiles.

1. Aggressively promote efforts to increase recovery of corrugated cardboard, prioritizing commercial audiences.
2. Support efforts to increase availability and usage of conventional recycling programs with a goal to increase recovery of non-corrugated paper products, metal, and high-value plastic resins HDPE and PET.
3. Through recovery or source reduction, decrease quantity of electronic waste disposed in MSW by half.
4. Promote source reduction and diversion of food waste.
5. Promote source reduction of low-value plastic resins.
6. Initiate efforts to increase recycling channels for textiles and promote availability of textile recycling.
7. Educate the public on the financial difficulties of recycling and waste diversion.
8. Pursue opportunities for further study.

View the full report at wmsbf.org/msw

