

ECONOMIC IMPACT POTENTIAL

AND CHARACTERIZATION OF MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE IN MICHIGAN

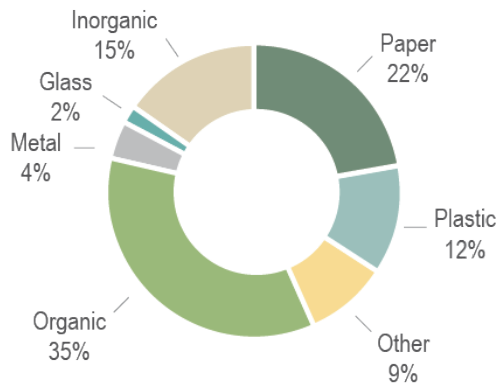
West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum and Grand Valley State University worked with Michigan recyclers and waste companies to analyze the composition of municipal solid waste currently landfilled and incinerated in Michigan, and the economic value of this material.

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.:

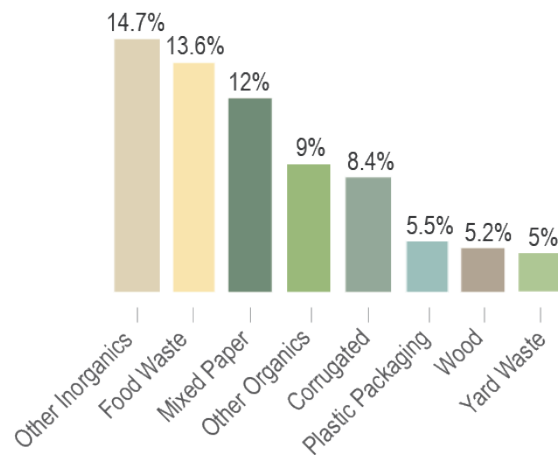
- 41% Standard Recycling: Numbered Plastic, Glass, Paper, Metal
- 35% Compostable: Food and Yard Waste, Compostable Paper, etc.
- 8% Recyclable with effort: Textiles, Bulk Items, E-waste, Soil, Hazardous
- 15% I: Miscellaneous Inorganic Waste, Foam Plastic

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

Michigan Municipal Solid Waste Composition
(Mean % by weight)

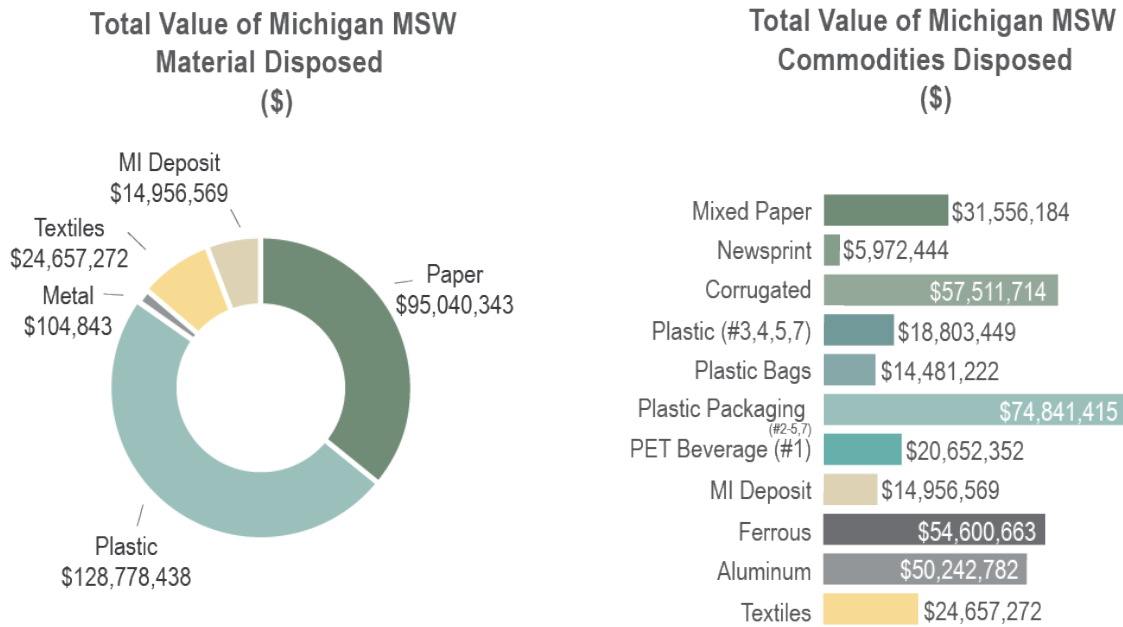


Top Materials in Michigan MSW Composition
(Mean % by weight - 5% or greater)



\$368 MILLION: Total material value of Michigan MSW Disposed in landfills and incinerators
\$399 MILLION: Potential Economic Value
2,619 JOBS: Potential Employment Value





Recommendations

Efforts to increase the recycling rate in Michigan should first focus on the 42% 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 of doubling the recycling rate for non-corrugated paper products and metal, and tripling the rate of high-value plastic resins HDPE and PET.
3. Initiate efforts to increase recycling channels for textiles and promote availability of textile recycling.
4. Promote source reduction and diversion of food waste.
5. Promote source reduction of low-value plastic resins.
6. Through recovery or source reduction, decrease the quantity of electronic waste disposed of in Michigan landfills by half.
7. Educate public on financial challenges of recycling and waste diversion.
8. Pursue opportunities for further study highlighted in this report (yard waste, deposit containers, repeat study).

View the full report at wmsbf.org/msw

