



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of the Governor

Executive Order

NUMBER SEVENTEEN (2022)

RECOGNIZING THE VALUE OF RECYCLING AND WASTE REDUCTION

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor, I hereby issue this Executive Order to recognize the value of recycling, to help create new clean technology jobs, and to help stop food waste.

Importance of the Initiative

Americans today recycle less than they did a generation ago, yet there are more opportunities for post-consumer recycled products than ever before. Recycling and reuse activities account for over 750,000 jobs nationwide. Food waste comprises the single largest category of waste by volume disposed of in landfills. We need to conserve our natural resources, reduce the amount of recyclable materials and waste that goes into landfills, and promote new clean energy jobs here in Virginia. Recognizing and promoting the importance of recycling has the potential to positively impact the Commonwealth's environment, providing cleaner air and water, as well as create new clean technology jobs.

Directive

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority vested in me as the Chief Executive Officer of the Commonwealth, and pursuant to Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and the laws of the Commonwealth, I hereby order my administration to take the following actions to address our ideals of environmental stewardship:

1. Recognition of the Value of Recyclable Material

A. State Agency Initiative to Encourage Recycling

It is the policy of the Commonwealth, and all executive branch state agencies, including state institutions of higher education, and their concessioners (Agency or Agencies) to increase awareness of the importance of recycling and better capture recyclable material, as well as encourage the use of post-consumer recycled (PCR) products and biodegradable materials.

In accordance with the State Agency Recycling Initiative, employees of the Commonwealth should be notified of the recyclable material collection areas, including, but not limited to, newspapers, office papers, corrugated boxes, folding cartons, glass containers, plastic bottles, plastic containers, plastic film, and metal cans through clearly visible signage posted in recyclable material collection areas. The signage should include information regarding the value of waste diversion.

It shall be the official responsibility of Agencies to work with the Department of General Services, or building property owners and local waste management companies and recycling facilities, as appropriate, to ensure access to recycling programs that accept all Agency collected materials. .

B. Virginia State Parks Plan

The Department of Conservation and Recreation, shall report to the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources with an assessment plan for a Virginia State Parks Campaign in accordance with the State Agency Recycling Initiative to determine the necessary resources to increase the capacity to capture recyclable materials, including increasing the recycling receptacles in Virginia's State Parks and necessary requests for resources to implement the Virginia State Parks Plan. The campaign should be developed in partnership with the Virginia Green Travel Alliance to promote the parks' recycling initiatives to the public.

2. Making Virginia Home to New Clean Technologies

A. The Waste Diversion and Recycling Task Force shall discuss ways to encourage new recycling related businesses, including collection, processing and manufacturing facilities, to locate in the Commonwealth and include any recommendations in their next report.

B. Within 12 months the Department of Environmental Quality, in conjunction with the Department of Commerce and other stakeholders as appropriate, will produce a report outlining opportunities for attracting PCR product business entities to the Commonwealth. The report shall identify:

1. The waste-stream requirements for PCR companies to locate within the Commonwealth.
2. Identify incentives offered to PCR companies in other States and identify feasible options in the Commonwealth.

3. Identify potential geographic areas within the Commonwealth to focus on new clean technology business development, with particular emphasis in rural areas.

3. Stopping Food Waste

Food waste is the single largest substance by volume sent to solid waste sites across Virginia and the United States. While Virginia families are struggling to put food on the table and our farmers are struggling to feed their livestock and fertilize their crops we must divert this waste stream to benefit people and farmers in need.

The Department of Environmental Quality in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall work in partnership with large-scale suppliers of food such as food manufacturers, grocery retailers, sports arenas, schools, hotels and banquet facilities to identify appropriate strategies to reduce food waste in their respective sectors by encouraging donations to needy individuals, food for animals or for composting purposes.

4. Annual Report to Increase Transparency

The Department of General Services shall catalog the metric tonnage of the state's recycling program and establish goals by December 31, 2022 for each succeeding year for state agency recycling through 2025.

The Department shall report to the Governor and the Chairs of the House Agriculture, Chesapeake, and Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Agriculture, Conservation, and Natural Resources of the progress of the State Agency Recycling Initiative by no later than December 1, 2022, and each succeeding year.

5. Exclusions

Nothing in this Order shall restrict any Agency from using any items as necessary to respond to any executive action declaring a state of emergency or order of public health emergency that would otherwise be restricted in use by this Order.

This Executive Order rescinds and replaces Executive Order No. 77 (2021) issued by Governor Ralph S. Northam.

Effective Date

This Executive Order shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect unless amended or rescinded by further executive order.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia this 7th day of April 2022.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Glenn Youngkin".

Glenn Youngkin, Governor

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kay Coles James".

Kay Coles James
Secretary of the Commonwealth