



**DATE:** July 1, 2014

**TO:** Recycling Board/ Planning and Organization Committee  
Waste Management Authority Board

**FROM:** Gary Wolff, Executive Director

**BY:** Justin Lehrer, Program Manager

**SUBJECT:** EPA Seeds of Change Award

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## **BACKGROUND**

One of the Agency's Product Decision Targets, Reusable Transport Packaging, is supported by a \$500,000 grant from the US EPA Climate Showcase Communities Program (CSC). In addition to reducing GHG emissions, one of the primary goals of the CSC program is to create and disseminate replicable tools and help support other public agencies that wish to leverage the resources we have developed to drive expansion of reusable transport packaging in their own communities. We have long recognized that products are rarely produced, shipped, and consumed within the boundaries of a single county and that our work would have the greatest impact when addressing regional and larger supply chains.

## **DISCUSSION**

To date, the CSC grant has allowed StopWaste to provide assistance to 18 businesses as they made the switch from single- or limited-use transport packaging to more durable alternatives. With the majority of those organizations located in Alameda County (including Finelite in Union City, the host of the July Recycling Board meeting), the project is well-aligned with the Agency's Product Decisions Target focused on the advancement of reusable transport packaging in Alameda County. The grant has also allowed the team to extend its sphere of influence beyond County boundaries.

In late April, over 50 participants from local governments across the nation and many federal programs participated in a series of panel discussions highlighting the work of CSC grantees. This was an excellent opportunity to highlight some of our successes – 22 workshops held (18 in Alameda County), technical assistance for over 200 businesses since 2010, a library of 16 case studies, over 3500 tons of waste prevented and over 13,000 tons avoided GHG emissions. At the workshop, StopWaste was honored with the "Seeds of Change Award," for grantees who are inspiring replication of their project by actively working with other communities. Over the past two years, StopWaste has partnered with communities surrounding Madison, WI, Salt Lake City, UT, and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (Dallas/Ft. Worth area) to produce Reusable Transport Packaging training events. Our leadership on these

collaborations leveraged our efforts in Alameda County, extending the reach of our work on reusable packaging by moving other communities further along in their efforts to implement reusable packaging.

We are now in the final year of grant funding from US EPA, and have made grant funds available for organizations planning to incorporate reusable transport packaging into their manufacturing, transport, and/or distribution systems. Examples of reusable transport packaging include durable pallets, totes or bins, reusable pallet wrap, or other reusable transport packaging solutions. The deadline for applications is August 15, 2014, and two free 30-minute webinars will be offered to learn more about the types and benefits of reusables, grant eligibility and the application process. Grant application packets are available for download on the Use Reusables Grants Page: <http://www.usereusables.com/resources/grants/>.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that Board members share grant information with their networks and encourage businesses to consider applying for this funding opportunity.

