



**Informational Item**

June 16, 2026

Item 6a

**Information Item:**  
**Overview of Rule Making for Senate Bill 54 (Allen, 2022): the Plastic  
Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act**

Kyla Kelly, Ph.D., Water Quality Program Manager

**Location:** Statewide

**Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives:** Goal 3: Safeguard Coastal and Marine Biodiversity; Objective 3.4: Protect and improve coastal and marine water quality; Target 3.4.5: Advance coordinated state investments to effectively reduce plastic and microplastic pollution consistent with the existing Statewide Microplastics Strategy and California Ocean Litter Strategy, including projects to monitor and prevent pollution, through the California Plastic Pollution Mitigation Fund established under SB 54 (Allen, Chapter 75, Statutes of 2022).

**Executive Summary:**

In 2022, California adopted Senate Bill (SB) 54: the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act (Allen), enacting extended producer responsibility (EPR) for single-use packaging and single-use plastic food service ware; establishing a Plastic Pollution Mitigation Fund that will provide \$500 million to the state annually for 10 years to address and mitigate the environmental impacts of plastic pollution, especially in overburdened communities; and restricting the import, sale, and distribution of expanded polystyrene (EPS) foodservice ware (commonly known as Styrofoam™) in California unless producers demonstrate specified recycling rates. This landmark legislation shifts the burden of single-use packaging and single-use plastic food service ware from consumers to producers and aims to reduce plastic pollution statewide. By reducing the amount of single-use plastic packaging and food service ware entering California's waste stream and improving material recovery, SB 54 is expected to help reduce plastic debris and microplastic pollution that impacts California's coastal and marine ecosystems. This informational report provides an overview of SB 54 background and goals, including regulations for expanded polystyrene, needs assessment findings, and permanent regulations that came into effect May 1, 2026.

## Background:

With growing public concern, local jurisdictions and the state have increasingly taken action on plastic pollution to reduce plastic waste and prevent harm caused by plastics to communities and aquatic ecosystems. This informational report provides an overview of the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act (Senate Bill 54, Allen, 2022), a comprehensive EPR program that will help reduce plastic pollution statewide, which also aligns with the target outlined in the [Statewide Microplastics Strategy](#) to “Identify Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) strategies for recycling or disposal of plastic packaging and food ware by 2022.”

## Overview of Senate Bill 54

In 2022, California adopted the most comprehensive new EPR for single-use packaging and single-use plastic food service ware in the nation: the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act (Senate Bill 54, Allen, 2022). The law requires producers of specified materials to be part of a producer responsibility organization (PRO) with a producer responsibility plan approved by the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), or otherwise individually comply with the law. All producers of these products are responsible for ensuring covered products are recyclable or compostable by 2032, meet recycling rates and source reduction targets for plastic products, and are required to reimburse eligible costs, such as waste/recycling service and collection expansion, through the PRO. This legislation additionally establishes the Plastic Pollution Mitigation Fund (Public Resources Code section 42064), which requires producers to pay \$500 million to the state annually for 10 years, a total of \$5 billion, to address and mitigate the environmental impacts of plastic pollution, especially in overburdened and underserved communities. Starting in Fiscal Year 2027-28, the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and other agencies specified in statute are anticipated to receive a portion of these funds, as appropriated by the Legislature.

## Regulations of Expanded Polystyrene Food Service Ware

Senate Bill (SB) 54 also prohibits producers of EPS food service ware from selling and distributing these products unless producers can demonstrate that all EPS (not just EPS food service ware) achieved recycling rates of no less than 25% on January 1, 2025, 30% by January 1, 2028, 50% by January 1, 2030, and 65% by 2032. EPS food service ware producers are prohibited from selling, distributing, or importing EPS food service ware in or into the state because they did not demonstrate that the statutorily mandated recycling rates were met for all EPS covered material as of January 1, 2025. Furthermore, California’s Attorney General issued an [enforcement advisory](#) regarding this ban in December 2025.

## SB 54 Statewide Needs Assessment

SB 54 requires CalRecycle to collaboratively develop a statewide needs assessment to evaluate the actions and investments needed to meet the goals of SB 54. This [needs assessment](#) will guide the PRO's budget and plan detailing how producers will meet the packaging and plastic pollution reduction goals of SB 54.

CalRecycle has identified what California needs to implement SB 54 successfully through the following detailed needs assessment studies: Source Reduction Baseline Study; Collection, Processing and End Markets Study; Source Reduction and Material Design Study; Consumer Education and Access Study; Current and Needed Statutory Funding Provisions Study.

Key findings from the needs assessment studies include:

- The potential for covered material design changes to:
  - Support successful, cost-effective implementation of the law
  - Play a significant role in source-reduction
  - Remove barriers to collection, processing and recycling
  - Reduce existing costs for local governments and material handlers
- That comprehensive reporting will significantly improve understanding of material flows and handling in the state.

## SB 54 Regulations

On May 1, 2026, CalRecycle announced that the Office of Administrative Law approved the [permanent regulations](#) for SB 54 and filed with the Secretary of State. The regulations became effective upon filing.

CalRecycle also launched the [Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility System \(PEPRS\)](#), an electronic portal designed to support producer registration, reporting, document submittals, and compliance monitoring. To assist entities with transitioning into program implementation, CalRecycle published a new [webpage for producers](#) with plans to publish additional, new guidance materials over time.

As the regulations became effective on May 1, 2026, several regulatory deadlines now apply. Producers had 30 days to register with Circular Action Alliance, which is serving as the approved PRO under SB 54, and submit supply data if participating in the PRO; register with CalRecycle and apply to be an independent producer; or register with CalRecycle and apply for the Small Producer Exemption.