

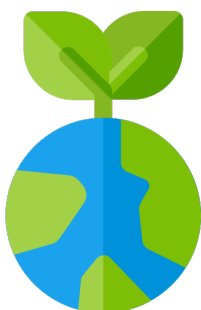
GREEN & Simple

Changing the way we make things

Twenty-three years ago, William McDonough and Michael Braungart published “cradle to cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things.” Their introduction to the book takes the reader through the toxic maze of our built environment, a “take, make, waste” scenario that is rather bleak. They then invite the reader to consider an alternative: “What if humans designed products and systems that celebrate an abundance of human creativity and productivity? That are so intelligent and safe, our species leaves an ecological footprint to delight in, not lament?” (pp. 15-16, “cradle to cradle,” McDonough and Braungart)

In this edition of Green and Simple, you will read about the possibilities of making this question a reality as civic leaders, municipal leaders and industry experts all lend their voices, in unison.

Stephen Stuart
Section editor



Waste is an imbalance of our system *Let it transform us instead*

By CAROLINE BAILLIE and ERIC FEINBLATT

Wasteful; wasted; wasteland; desolate; depleted; diminished; superfluous; worthless, exhausted; empty. In other words, *Waste: something we no longer want or feel connected to, something we may have valued in the past but no longer value, something to be thrown away, to be made invisible.*

But is there another way?

Value is not the essential property of things. It's what we give to them, what society gives them. Things wear out, we get bored of them, but they don't necessarily lose their value, only their value to us. So, instead of simply discarding things when we're done with them, could we creatively re-use them or even share their value with others?

In the July Sustainability issue, Eric Feinblatt and Rebecca Creshkoff pointed in this direction. Think, for example, of something common to all of us: food waste. It doesn't take much effort to turn that waste into compost that naturally conditions our soil, helps it retain moisture, reduces water usage and runoff, and fertilizes our gardens and plants. Or, adversely, we could send it to a landfill to emit toxic methane gas. Which makes more sense, has more value? Is it more balanced and transformative?

Of course, the best way to manage waste is not to create what will become waste in the first place. Easier said than done, for sure, especially if we live in a linear throwaway economy, which moves from raw materials to products to consumption to falling off that line into a final dead and deadly heap. But at what cost? Can we assume the Earth has an infinite capacity to absorb all our waste?

Suppose instead, we think of our materials and products differently, as a circle, and everything that goes into that circle stays there, circulating. We only need to look out the window to see the best model of circularity ever created: our forests have no concept of waste. Together, the animals and plants of the forest create and use up each other's waste in a perfect cycle. Why can't we learn from them?

Imagine being able to circulate our own things, locally, to people who can use them. No more falling off into the garbage for still use-able items. When your child outgrows his playmobiles, you can take them to the local swap shop and bring home the vintage soccer shirt she's been asking for; off to the borrowing shop where they'll loan you the reciprocating saw you need this week for that once-in-a-blue-moon project you've been putting off doing; and that lamp, which annoyingly no longer turns on, can take a trip to the local repair café for a quick fix by the retired electrician who's there to help every other Tuesday.

These may sound like pie-in-the-sky ideas,

REFUSE what you don't need.

REDUCE what you buy.

REUSE by giving items a second life.

REPAIR what's broken

instead of replacing it.

REGIFT what you won't use;

pass it on.

RECOVER resources—for example, compost your food scraps.

RECYCLE right—

know your local rules.

but they have their real-world models. Finger Lakes Reuse collects and sells, at low cost, everything that fills up our trash containers: building materials, furniture, tools, toys, books, clothing, electronics, you name it. They even have a job training and career pathway development program to help people gain the skills they need to find local employment. Or Berlin's Leila Project, the “sharing economy” shop, in which neighbors can borrow anything from board games to wine glasses, fog machines to hiking rucksacks, juicers to unicycles because we don't need to use most of our things all of the time—they just use up space—so why not share them with others and keep them centrally located? And Incredible Edible Milbridge, Women for Healthy Rural Living's community garden and educational project that feeds on composted food waste and, in turn, feeds a local population in need by providing pick-your-own fruit and vegetables for free.

But we don't have to travel to the Finger Lakes or Berlin or Milbridge to get a whiff of that circularity because we have two repair cafés in our own backyard: in the Livingston Manor-Roscoe Library and the Repair Café Tusten in Narrowsburg.

Ulster County's Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency is a few steps ahead of us but is a great place to begin to learn. They are publishing a **Reuse and Resource Directory**, which

connects Ulster residents with local organizations that help keep valuable materials—like food, furniture, clothing, and household goods—in circulation. “Whether you're looking to donate things you no longer need or access local reuse services, the directory makes it easy to give, receive, and reduce your environmental impact. Every act of reuse helps conserve resources, prevent waste, and strengthen our community!”

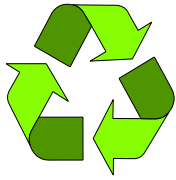
An idea is all it takes. We spoke to the Callicoon Depot team about the number of outgrown toys we have stored away, and how much we would love another child to enjoy them. They jumped at the idea and are launching a community Holiday Season **toy giveaway** on December 7.

If we consider ourselves to be part of a system, we can imagine giving and taking and sharing as a community. As a community, we can decide what we have that we no longer need but someone else may. We can consider what we need that someone else can offer. When this simple exchange becomes a system, we have true circularity.

Caroline Baillie is a professor of integrated engineering and the director of MESH at the University of San Diego.

Eric Feinblatt is a co-founder of Sustainable Sullivan.

**WE THANK OUR FRONTLINE WORKERS FOR THEIR HARD WORK,
DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITIES
KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!**



Thompson Sanitation
Waste Management and Recycling Service Since 1986

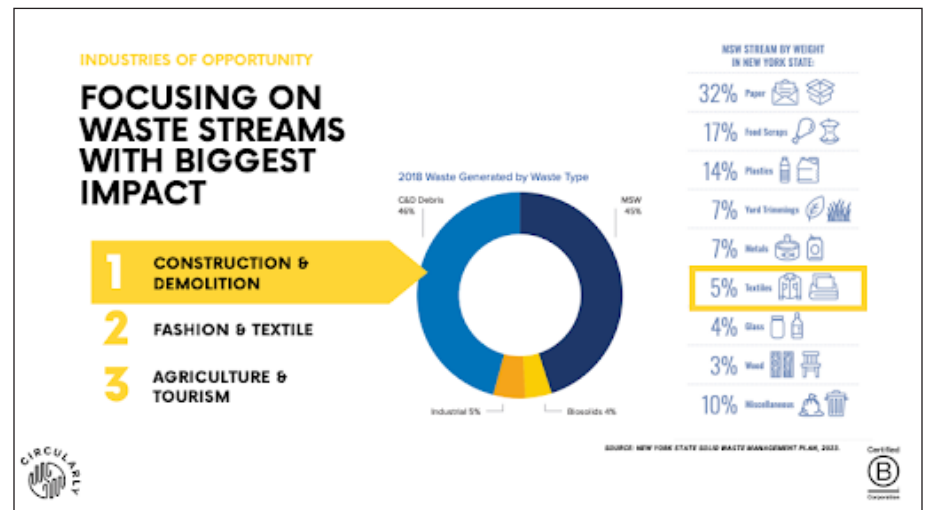
KEEP IT LOCAL!
845-796-1032

- **Sullivan County's #1 Garbage & Recycle for Over 30 Years, Same Owner/Operator**
- **Competitive Pricing & Superior Service**
- **Servicing Local Communities throughout ALL of Sullivan County**
- **Keeping Jobs and Money in Sullivan County**
- **Residential Program... Roll-Offs... Commercial... Special Clean-Ups**



www.thompsonsantiation.net

Don't Get Left On the Curb!
Call Thompson Sanitation TODAY!



Building a circular Hudson Valley From waste to resilience

By CASEY PLASKER

In the United States, we rarely stop to consider the full story behind the “stuff” in our lives. Each product is extracted, processed, manufactured, shipped, purchased, used—and then, too often, discarded.

Here in the Hudson Valley, we’ve long understood the social, economic and environmental costs of this linear “take-make-waste” system. The next frontier is far more transformative: building a circular economy.

As defined by the Circle Economy Foundation, “The circular economy is an economic system where waste is designed out, everything is used at its highest possible value for as long as possible, and natural systems are regenerated.” It mirrors nature, where there is no such thing as “waste”—only nutrients circulating through systems of renewal.

In a circular economy, materials remain in use at their highest value through repair, reuse, remanufacturing, sharing and recycling, while waste is designed out entirely. But circularity is more than a technical solution—it’s a systems shift. It challenges us to rethink how we design products, operate businesses, structure policy and distribute value.

Why reuse is key to regional resilience

“Waste” is becoming an escalating challenge across New York State. In Ulster County alone, it costs more than \$11 million each year to ship waste to the Seneca Meadows landfill. With in-state disposal options dwindling and landfill capacity maxed out, communities will be forced to send trash farther away—and pay the price through rising waste-tag fees.

New York’s largest landfill, spanning 350 acres, was slated to close in 2025. Instead, it’s petitioning to expand by seven stories and 47 acres to remain open until 2040—a move that creates new health hazards, depresses nearby property values, and funnels profits to a Texas-based corporation while New Yorkers bear the environmental and financial costs.

Yet within this challenge lies a profound opportunity: we can build power locally through material reuse.

According to New York State’s Solid Waste Management Plan, construction and

demolition (C&D) debris makes up 46 percent of the state’s entire waste stream. If we reframe that challenge as an opportunity, the potential for local economic and environmental benefit is enormous.

From “Constructing a Circular Economy in New York State: Deconstruction and Building Material Reuse” (Heisel, Felix; Minner, Jennifer; Augustine-Marceil, Wyeth; Cohen, Diane; Worth, Gretchen, eds. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Circular Construction Lab, Cornell Just Places Lab, and CROWD, 2024):

\$3 billion—Potential economic impact if 75 percent of New York State residential demolitions shift to deconstruction.

12,600—New green jobs created.

90 percent—The amount of building materials that can be reused or recycled.

When usable building materials, textiles and products are discarded, their value—and the jobs they represent—disappear from our communities. A circular economy keeps that value here, supporting local makers, manufacturers, logistics providers, construction crews and reuse retailers who give materials a next life.

Building the circular ecosystem

To truly shift toward circularity, we must build a regional ecosystem that connects every part of the material flow:

Reuse and recovery organizations intercept materials from construction, renovation and consumer waste streams.

Businesses that remanufacture and repair convert “waste” into profitable new products.

Designers and architects plan for disassembly, durability and longevity.

Storage and logistics systems make materials easy to move, access and trace.

Digital tools match supply with demand and track environmental benefits.

Policies and financing models reward reuse, innovation and community ownership.

Circularity isn’t just about waste prevention—it’s about economic regeneration, equity and care for people and place. A circular Hudson Valley ensures the benefits of this transition are shared widely: good green jobs, healthier communities and a resilient regional economy fueled by abundance rather than extraction.

Today, the ecosystem remains **- Page 13**

Make a positive impact on your electric bill and the environment!

Hiring the area's premier solar installer means you get the most aesthetic installation at the best price.

Roof or ground mounted panels with optional back-up battery add-on and generator integration capabilities.



- Reduce or eliminate your electric bill.
- Secure your energy independence.
- EMF solar flare protection.
- Easiest way to improve your home's efficiency and reduce negative impact on the environment.

570-729-7791

BUSELLI SOLUTIONS

GENERATORS SOLAR DUCTLESS

Take action by getting your **FREE Quote!**

BUILDING - Page 11

fragmented. Organizations are doing incredible work, but without shared infrastructure, materials struggle to move efficiently, data remains siloed, and entrepreneurs often operate in isolation. Local governments lack the insight to design smart policies, and businesses can't scale without clear demand signals and financial support.

A collective movement toward circularity in the Hudson Valley

The Hudson Valley has always been a place of innovation and industry—from agriculture to textiles to brick manufacturing and the creative economy. Circularity is our next chapter. It calls on us to see materials, buildings and even people not as expendable, but as essential contributors to a thriving future.

To drive this systems-level change, we are in the early stages of formalizing a regional movement around circularity, beginning in Ulster County. On October 23, 2025, the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency, Sustainable Hudson Valley, and Circularly co-hosted a Circular Economy Strategy launch event to build momentum. More than 60 community members—including makers, remanufacturers, reuse-store operators, waste haulers, legislators, architects, contractors, developers, recyclers and repair specialists—came together to share ideas and voice their support.

There's so much potential right in front of us. Now is the moment to harness it, together. It's an exciting time to be part of



Contributed image

a systemic shift that can make the Hudson Valley—and New York State—a model for circularity, resilience and shared prosperity.

Casey Plasker is a circular economy strategist and the founder of Circularly, a women-led impact consulting firm and Certified B Corp. With over a decade of experience at the intersection of cleantech and circularity, she has helped Fortune 100 companies, startups and municipalities unlock purpose-driven sustainability strategies.

Momentum is building

Across New York, circular movements are already taking shape and individual organizations are leading the way:

CR0WD and RECLAIM NYC are pioneering deconstruction and building-material reuse. See cr0wd.org and reclaim-nyc.org.

Hudson Valley Repair Cafes are restoring both items and relationships. Visit www.repaircafehv.org.

Makers and designers like Loose Parts and FN Furniture turn “waste” into functional pieces. Learn more at www.loose.parts and www.fnfurniture.com.

Remanufacturers such as Davies Office give

office furniture new life. Visit www.daviesoffice.com.

Fashion designers, including Apres L'Amour, So Vicki and Made x Hudson use deadstock and textile waste to create beautiful clothing locally. See apreslamour.com, sovicki.fashion and madexhudson.com.

Architects and builders like CO Adaptive and Assemblage Landscape Architecture integrate reuse into design. Visit coadaptive.co and assemblagelandscape.com.

Climate-justice groups ensure historically burdened communities benefit from this transition.

—Contributed by Circularly.

Jeff Sanitation
Refuse & Recyclable Pick-Up

Roll Off Containers 10, 15, 20, and 30 yard and Dumpsters Available
PO Box 387 • Jeffersonville, NY
845-482-9826

Rinker Inc.
Generator / Ductless / Electrical

GORINKERINC.COM 570-698-9696

**Automatic Generators
Battery Storage Systems
Ductless Heating & Cooling
Electrical Services**

"Where comfort and peace of mind are more affordable than you think."

Professional Service
for Over 30 Years

0% Financing
*With credit approval through Synchrony Financial

BMA
Buck Moorhead Architect

Callicoon | Upper Delaware | New York City

Buck Moorhead Architect is a full-service architectural firm, offering residential, commercial, institutional and municipal design services. BMA specializes in high performance, carbon-neutral, and net-zero building design, informed by the Passive House standard.



HOME OF THE YEAR GREEN BUILDER 2024 | The Laundrette | The Callicoon Library | BEST OF HUDSON VALLEY 2023

info@buckmoorheadarchitect.com

www.buckmoorheadarchitect.com

Ulster County launches RePØWER project

Building a circular economy, one reused item at a time

By TIM WEIDEMANN

REGION — Counties throughout New York State are facing a solid-waste crisis, but the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA) is ready to fight back with a groundbreaking initiative: the **Reuse Pathway for Zero Waste and Economic Resilience (RePØWER)** project.

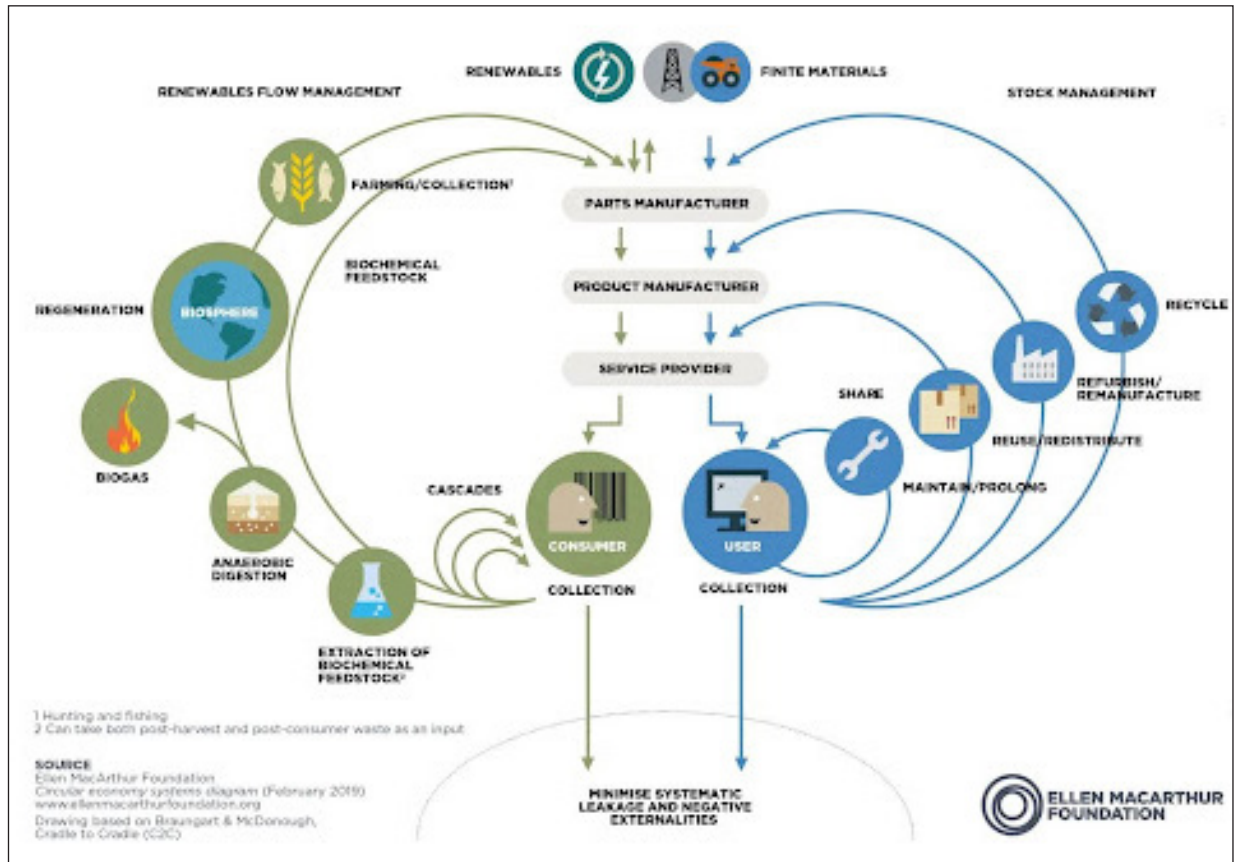
This isn't just about better recycling; it's about redesigning the whole waste system. The way we currently make, move and dispose of stuff accounts for a massive **12 percent of our region's climate footprint**. In Ulster County alone, nearly 265,000 tons of waste were generated in 2023, and despite our best efforts, **only 27 percent** of that garbage gets recycled or composted.

That means 140,000 tons of waste must be landfilled each year. Since there are only a few landfills in the state that can handle those quantities, and none of them are local, UCRRA dispatches over 4,000 tractor-trailers annually, hauling waste 240 miles to the Seneca Meadows landfill. This transport costs the county **\$14 million per year** and contributes a staggering **87,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent (MTC02e) in climate-warming emissions**.

That's where RePØWER steps in. It's UCRRA's first major venture into creating a more circular local economy, building a crucial "reuse pathway" for materials that still have residual value and don't belong in the landfill.

The hub and the spokes: Building a reuse network

The core of RePØWER is a network of physical sites. At the center is the **Reuse Innovation Center (RIC)**, or the Hub, located in the Kingston area. The RIC will [- Page 15](#)



Contributed image

CLEAN • COURTEOUS • HONEST

Narrowsburg ELECTRIC



ENERGY EFFICIENT
SPLIT SYSTEMS INSTALLED

LICENSED MASTER ELECTRICIAN
JUSTIN MALONEY

(845)252-6640 voice
(570)729-5756 voice or text

When Service Matters

GIVE US A CALL
and see the difference for
ALL of your propane needs

MODERN Empire Dealer
GAS SALES INC.

Our 20lb. tank refill price is the best around!

Call 570-352-3400 to start saving \$\$\$ Today
www.moderngas.com
Mention where you saw this ad



Building science-directed consulting and guidance for your home

Low Energy
Net Zero Design
Healthy Building Materials

stephenstuart.2000@gmail.com

845-701-9126

Stephen Stuart, CPHT, CPHC



CERTIFIED PASSIVE HOUSE CONSULTANT

Catskill Mountainkeeper
Protecting our natural heritage and empowering communities



catskillmountainkeeper.org

What's with New York's EPR bill?

By NEIL SELDMAN and YAYOI KOIZUMI

NEW YORK STATE — The New York Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act (S7408/A8007), an extended producer responsibility (EPR) bill, is one of the most talked-about environmental bills in Albany this year. On paper, it aims to make corporations responsible for the packaging waste they create. In practice, it's a fascinating contradiction.

The bill begins from the right premise: Companies that profit from disposable packaging should be required to reduce it. For decades, corporations have externalized the cost of waste—financially, ecologically and socially—while local governments and taxpayers foot the bill. Extending producer responsibility is long overdue.

But here's the contradiction. After correctly identifying industry as the source of the problem, the bill hands that same industry control over the solution. A single producer-run organization—funded and directed by corporations like Coca-Cola, Pepsi and Procter & Gamble—would design, finance and operate the program. The polluter pays, but the polluter also decides how the money is spent. That turns “polluter pays” into “polluter controls.”

This is not a theoretical concern. When chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) were banned from aerosol cans in the late 1970s, the industry predicted chaos. It claimed the economy would collapse and that alternatives were impossible. Yet the day after the ban took effect, the same companies had their products back on shelves in non-aerosol packaging. Packaging engineers can adapt to any standard set by law—they just need to be told what the standard is.

That's the point of government: to set clear rules in the public interest, not let corporations write the rules for themselves. The New York bill, however, does exactly that. It turns the regulatory framework over to private management, where public oversight is minimal.

Supporters call the bill a step forward because it sets packaging-reduction targets and restricts certain toxics like PFAS. Those are welcome provisions. But without a truly public structure to enforce them, they will remain paper goals. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), which would supervise the program, already struggles with accountability. Expecting that same agency to police a producer-run system is unrealistic.

There are better ways to do this. Across the country, communities have shown how citizen action can reshape waste policy. Local governments and grassroots organizations have led the fight against incinerators, promoted reuse systems and driven genuine zero-waste progress. These movements work because they are public, participatory and transparent. New York's EPR bill should follow that model, not a corporate one.

Several changes could align the bill with its stated purpose:

Replace the producer-run organization with a public agency.

Packaging reduction and recycling should be managed by a publicly accountable body, not by corporations that profit from waste. This would ensure decisions and investments are transparent and directed toward true reduction and reuse.

Protect local control and community reuse programs.

The bill must guarantee that local governments and non-

profits can continue running and expanding reuse, refill and bring-your-own (BYO) systems without being preempted or defunded by a state-level corporate plan.

Guarantee transparency and public access to data.

All producer submissions, fee schedules and tonnage reports should be public and searchable. Without this information, watchdogs and citizens cannot hold companies accountable.

Many other fixes are needed—stronger timelines, clear definitions of toxics and tighter loopholes—but unless these three fundamentals are addressed, the bill remains morally compromised. Public control, local empowerment and transparency are the minimum standards for credibility.

New York can still get this right. Instead of outsourcing responsibility to a private producer organization, the state could create a public agency to manage funds and direct them toward proven solutions—community reuse infrastructure across foodware, construction materials and textiles. The expertise already exists; what's missing is democratic oversight.

Waste policy is complex, but its principle is simple: Those who profit from pollution should be accountable to the public, not the other way around. The legislature still has time to fix this contradiction and pass a law that truly serves the people of the state.

Neil Selzman directs the Recycling Cornucopia Program for Zero Waste USA. Yayoi Koizumi is the founder of Zero Waste Ithaca.

PROJECT - Page 14

be a central collection site and warehouse, handling donated items, diverting materials from UCRRA's waste stream, and managing deconstruction and salvaged materials.

Crucially, it will be a retail store, wholesale clearinghouse and an **incubator for new reuse businesses**.

Extending the reach across the county are the **19 community-based satellite facilities**—the “Spokes”—which utilize existing municipally owned sites for collection. This decentralized network ensures that reusable goods are kept out of the landfill system from the start.

Beyond the physical sites, RePØWER focuses on fostering the region's growing reuse economy. UCRRA plans to host events and support the development of new reuse businesses. For those interested in fixing things, the RIC will offer access to a **tool library for repair cafés and educational classes**. The project also aims to promote sustainable building practices by training contractors on deconstruction methods to increase profitability and decrease waste, facilitating the wholesale sale of **salvaged building materials to contractors**.

Implementing the regional roadmap

RePØWER isn't just a local fix; it's a direct response to the goals outlined in the Hudson Valley Regional Climate Action Roadmap (Roadmap). The roadmap calls on local waste agencies to redesign their

systems to make circularity the new normal through systemic reuse, up-cycling, and recycling.

By creating the RePØWER Hub-and-Spoke system, UCRRA is actively building the **decentralized collection infrastructure** called for in the Roadmap. Furthermore, the regional strategy specifically promotes **repair and reuse businesses** and encourages groups like the **Repair Café of the Hudson Valley and Catskills**. RePØWER directly implements this by convening new reuse businesses and supporting repair cafés. It also contributes to the Roadmap's goal of using sustainable building materials, such as those with **high recycled content**, by promoting the reuse and sale of salvaged materials.

The path to launch

To bring the project to life, UCRRA has already taken the first steps. Last month, the agency hired a new reuse coordinator to spearhead the RePØWER project. Next, UCRRA will select the location for the RIC hub facility. And alongside these first steps to get the program going, UCRRA is also securing funding and financing to support a multi-year startup phase of the program.

How can I get involved?

The Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency is developing a Circular Economy Strategy as part of its work to accomplish ambitious zero-waste goals. Working with Sustainable Hudson Valley and Circularly.co, the agency is holding a series of workshops in November where thought-leaders will help us identify high-impact actions that will advance the region's transition toward a more circular economy, resulting in the reduction or diversion of waste. To learn more, visit www.sustainhv.org/circular-hudson-valley.

What is a 'circular economy'?

A circular economy is a resilient system designed to eliminate waste and pollution and ensure that materials never become waste. It requires a dramatic shift from the linear “take-make-waste” system.

Based on three principles driven by design—eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials (at their highest value), and regenerate nature—the system keeps goods in circulation through processes like reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling and composting. The goal is to maximize the useful life of goods, reduce extraction and address climate change by decoupling economic activity from finite resource consumption.

Rather than running the physical facilities on its own, UCRRA is preparing to issue a request for proposals to identify experienced reuse organizations that will operate the RIC. To support the chosen operator, UCRRA expects to provide startup funding in the form of subsidized rent, donated materials and direct financial support.

When RePØWER hits its stride, the environmental impact will be significant. The project aims to divert **32,000 tons of waste over 10 years**, aligning with UCRRA's long-term goal to divert 90 percent of waste from landfills by 2050. This diversion is expected to avoid **over 17,000 tons of CO2 emissions per year**, proving that making the old new again is one of the best ways to fight climate change.

Tim Weidemann is the coordinator of performance and development for the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency.

DCS DAMASCUS CITIZENS
CLEAN WATER, AIR AND LAND ARE BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

In addition to science-based advocacy and legal initiatives, we educate about renewable energy, new technologies, affordable energy, and refocusing consumption.

845-252-6677
dcs@DamascusCitizens.org

Storefront Open Sat & Sun Noon - 3pm
25 Main St. Narrowsburg, New York

CATSKILL EnergyHomes

Best Green Builder, River Reporter's Readers' Choice Awards

Building energy-efficient custom homes in the Catskill region, using the latest green technologies and modern architecture.

845-252-6838 • www.catskillenergyhomes.com

Scaling the circular economy

Strategies for both individuals and local governments to adopt circular economy models

By JENNIFER PORTER

Is scaling the circular economy possible in the U.S. today? And, if so, how do individuals and local municipalities find inspiration around such a daunting goal?

To simply define the system: A circular economy is one in which there is no (or very limited) waste, and all systems regenerate.

To answer the question of whether scaling such a system is possible, I start with the simple belief that it is. This is how nature works across the board, and consumer brands are catching on as well as they market to consumers, highlighting their sustainability commitments. One entity's willingness to plant the seed of possibility is all that is required to inspire the inventive solutions that arise to meet our most intractable challenges.

Even in the ever-shifting global landscape, progress toward a more circular world is happening. The E.U. adopted its first Circular Economy Action plan in 2024, marking the widespread embrace of an idea once relegated to the periphery and standing in contrast to the traditional, linear model of take-make-dispose.

Action drives change

Now, turning to my second question: how do sometimes beleaguered local residents or municipal leaders find inspiration for these changes? The answer is through observation. By looking around, we can see that while there are many initiatives that require somewhat limiting necessities—such as infrastructure, policy support or penalties—there are also others that can start simply, in a single store or neighborhood, and spread from there.

While landfilling may still be more economical where you live or work (potentially challenging adoption of circular economy models), everyone can find a way to disrupt this linear model in critical ways. On an individual basis, people can make personal commitments or band together with like-minded neighbors to find inspiration and evolve current processes. For those who work in government, the spark of

the idea can also start with you, pushing for new programs on a community level. Just as belief in the possibility of such a system originates with a single person, so does the action that drives change.

Pioneering programs

The following are five examples of circular economy concepts in action that can offer inspiration for pioneering thinkers in communities anywhere.

1. Bottle-to-bottle return

There are currently 10 U.S. states with recycling refund legislation for single-use containers. But even in those that do not have it, manufacturers can still lead the way with more sustainable bottle-to-bottle reuse. As one small-scale example, Ronnybrook Farm Dairy packages its milk in sturdy quart glass with a \$2 deposit. It is a simple idea, but it works, as nothing can beat a financial incentive for motivating behavior. Lead acid battery deposits net 99 percent return rates nationally. The financial incentive to re-use is well demonstrated.

2. Refilleries

There are more than 1,000 refill stores in the U.S. and counting, including The Callicoon Pantry, where consumers can bring their own containers to refill things like laundry soap, olive oil or chocolate chips. Even during the pandemic, refilleries were able to stay operative by shifting to filling containers for their customers. LitterLess has a state-by-state shopping location guide that is a nice listing of zero-waste stores.

3. Fiber sharing

With the apparel industry contributing approximately 10 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, making strides toward a circular economy in this context is critical. Consider ThredUp, where consumers are paid to return their clothes to the secondhand market, and Rent the Runway, where consumers cost-share through limited-duration single-use rentals. At the community level, evaluate options: e.g., place a Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles

(SMART) textile collection bin in your town.

With 85 percent of textiles still being landfilled every day, there is a lot to do. We are standing on tradition here: SMART, aka the Association of Wiping Materials, Used Clothing and Fiber Industries, has been operating since 1932.

4. Apps

With organic waste ranking as the largest contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions, a myriad of apps have arisen to encourage zero food waste. This typically means moving potential food waste from restaurants/grocery stores to people in need rather than simply tossing these items within the usual 24-hour period. Many apps are free or low-cost, easy to start and able to be implemented in small and large areas alike. ChowMatch for instance is free and available for use in 700 communities in the following areas: northern California (San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa, Humboldt, Sonoma, Monterey, Sacramento and Stanislaus counties); southern California (Los Angeles, Orange, Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino and Kern counties); Maryland (Montgomery County and parts of nearby Baltimore, Prince George's, Fairfax, and Washington counties); New York (Hudson Valley); North Carolina (City of Charlotte, Buncombe County and Madison County); Kansas (Riley County); and Central Illinois.

A proven path

So, first believe that it is possible, then look around to find what inspires you, and make it happen today. We must move rapidly to mirror what we know works from nature. The circular economy is the well proven path for the future.

Jennifer Porter, a principal consultant at Raftelis, is a planning leader with more than 23 years of experience in government and private sector sustainability, circularity, and solid waste/sustainable materials management initiatives. She can be reached at 845/481-1321 or email jporter@raftelis.com.



music • news • weather • local information • digital marketing • branding • advertising



Online. On-air. Mobile. Social. Live. Local.

boldgoldnewyork.com

BOLD GOLD MEDIA GROUP
#wv.possibilities

UNITED PLUMBING & HEATING

Wood & Coal Stoves, Hot Air Furnaces,
Boilers, S.S. Chimneys, Liners,
Stove Pipe & Fittings

Showroom on Route 6, White Mills, PA

570-253-0469 • Fax 570-253-0520

www.unitedjim.com

DELAWARE VALLEY OIL

Family owned and operated

FUEL OIL • KEROSENE • DIESEL
24-HR. EMERGENCY SERVICE

COD • HEAP • CREDIT CARDS • SENIOR DISCOUNT
PO Box 838, Callicoon, NY 12723

570-224-4141 • dvoil.com
845-887-6090 • 877-887-6090

Office in Equinunk, PA • Free Tank Inspections for our Customers



WARNING! ATVs can be hazardous to operate. For your safety always wear a helmet, eye protection, and protective clothing and never carry passengers unless the adult ATV has been designed by the manufacturer specifically for that purpose. Polaris adult models are for riders aged 16 and older. Be sure to take a safety training course. For safety and training information, call SVIA at 800-887-2887. You may also call your Polaris Dealer or Polaris at 800-342-3764. ©Polaris Sales Inc.



Snowmobiles • ATV • Rangers



408 Welcome Lake Road Beach Lake, PA 18405

www.billcase.com 570-729-7402

POLARIS