

ATTACHMENT

**CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT BOARD
NEWS RELEASE ON DECLINE IN MARKET VALUE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS**

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NEWS RELEASE

Integrated Waste Management Board

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Recycled Materials Going Through Shakeup State Agency Working To Keep California's Environment Protected

SACRAMENTO-- the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) is pledging to work with California cities and counties, as well as the many recyclers, brokers, and processors who are trying to cope with the rapid decline in commodity prices for recycled paper, metals and plastic goods.

CIWMB staff are monitoring market trends and prices and examining regulatory and non-regulatory options to keep these materials from being disposed. The CIWMB will hold a special public meeting in Sacramento in early December to explore measures it can enact to ease the current situation. The Board will hear from brokers and others about possible short-term and long-term solutions.

"We're aware of the potential dilemma facing our state's recycling infrastructure," said Board Chair Margo Reid Brown. "We cannot undo the incredible progress our local cities and counties have done to reduce our waste in landfills. By working together, I'm confident we can develop short-term measures that will get us through these challenging times, while ensuring we remain true to our overall environmental goals."

Keeping waste paper and cardboard out of California landfills is one of the strategies being used to combat global warming. Paper products and other organic materials decompose in landfills and generate methane, which scientists say is 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas.

California's environment may face a potential set-back as the depressed global economy and an excess in global inventory have reduced prices being paid for recycled newspapers, old corrugated cardboard and plastics around the world. Prices being paid to recyclers have, in some instances, fallen more than 50 percent in one month. An aggressive recycling program is why California leads the nation in diverting more than half of its solid waste away from landfills. The state converts an estimated 52 million tons of solid waste each year into new, higher-value products that add billions of dollars to California's economy.

Local jurisdictions are scrambling to find additional storage space to accommodate the steady flow of old newspapers and cardboard being set aside for recycling by California residents, businesses and industry.

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"We must consider the health and safety of California as we look for short-term relief in the current situation and for long-term solutions such as locating new manufacturing and energy-producing facilities in California," Brown added.

The current drop-off in recycled paper exports could help encourage the development of additional local and regional markets for converting these recycled materials into new products or as a source of energy and fuel.

China is the primary export market for U.S. recycled paper products but has seen a global slowdown in demand for Chinese-made products using recycled materials imported from the United States.

The California Integrated Waste Management Board is the state's leading authority on recycling and waste reduction. It promotes reducing waste whenever possible, managing all materials to their highest and best use, and protecting public health and safety and the environment.

The California Integrated Waste Management Board is one of six boards, departments, and offices within the California Environmental Protection Agency ([Cal/EPA](#)).

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