

# Waukesha County Stormwater and Recycling Municipal Updates

June-July 2026

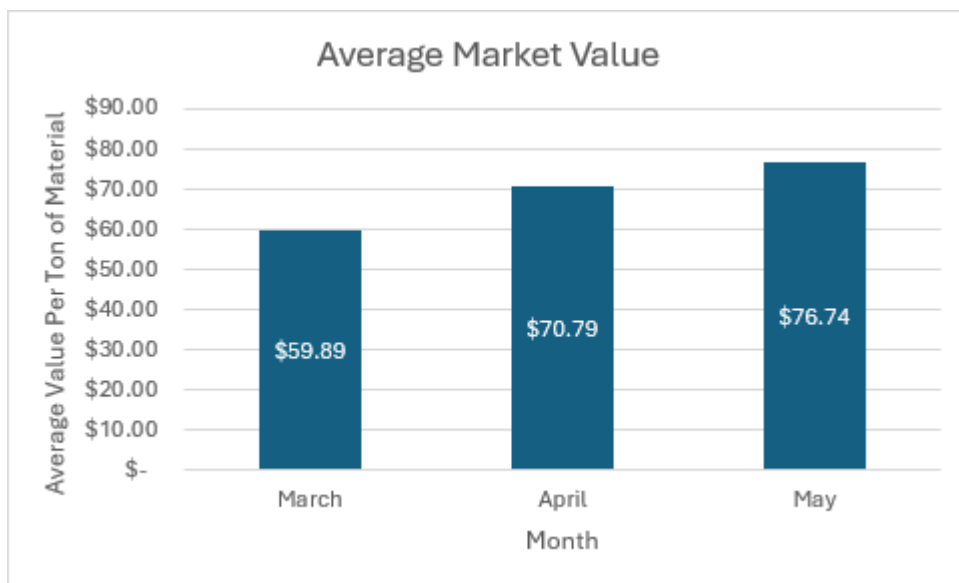
**Recycle Right Campaign:** Waukesha County is continuing its “Recycle Right” campaign from April through October 2026 to help residents recycle correctly and reduce contamination. The campaign features media outreach; social media posts, ads & videos; email newsletters; a postcard; and community events/direct engagement. Monthly messaging highlights specific materials like paper, cans, glass, plastics, and cartons, with tips to keep items loose, empty and dry. A news release about the campaign was distributed in May and is attached to this email for reference. We encourage you to share these resources to help residents recycle confidently.

As part of this campaign, staff were talking about *Recycling Right* last month on TMJ4’s The Morning Blend. Check it out here: <https://www.tmj4.com/shows/the-morning-blend/steps-for-smarter-recycling>

**Recycling Composition Study:** Preparations are underway for Waukesha County’s annual recycling composition study, which will take place this fall (date to be determined). This study analyzes recyclables collected from the Waukesha County Responsible Unit to estimate the material mix, overall quality, and amount of non-recyclable contamination in incoming loads. County staff will work directly with contracted community haulers to coordinate accurate and efficient sampling as materials are delivered to the MRF. The study results will help determine the average market value of collected recyclables for the coming year.

Please continue encouraging residents to recycle right, by sharing recycle right campaign resources (attached and mentioned above) through your channels, to help improve material quality and support strong results.

**Recycling Performance:** Below, please find the monthly average market value per ton for recyclables.



For March through May 2026, Midwest recycling market index reporting shows a generally improving recycling market: aluminum remained one of the strongest of the listed commodities, steel increased steadily, and cardboard (OCC) posted continued gains through May, while mixed paper recyclables

also moved upward, though they remained at comparatively low levels. Plastic containers like milk jugs and laundry detergent bottles (HDPE) performed much better than plastic water bottles (PET) during the period, with natural-colored HDPE strengthening each month, in contrast to PET, which dropped in April and recovered only slightly in May. PET is the clearest weak spot in spring 2026. After remaining at very low levels in March, it declined further in April and showed only a limited rebound in May, reflecting continued weakness in end markets. Overall, the March–May 2026 Midwest market shows that metals and HDPE provided the most resilience, fiber improved modestly, and PET remained the primary area of concern and the commodity to watch most closely heading into the summer.

**Event Recycling:** With summer in full swing, many municipalities and organizations around Waukesha County are planning their community events. The Waukesha County Recycling and Solid Waste team offers a free recycling bin-lending program for events in Waukesha County. Supplies are limited during peak event-season so coordinate now with [cduffy@waukeshacounty.gov](mailto:cduffy@waukeshacounty.gov) to get your supplies secured for your upcoming events!

**Staff Update:** Recycling and Solid Waste Supervisor, Abbie Liedtke, will be out of the office on maternity leave beginning in July until approximately November. During this time, please contact [recycling@waukeshacounty.gov](mailto:recycling@waukeshacounty.gov) for assistance, and County staff will be available to help.

**WI Stormwater Week September 19 to 27:** We will have special stormwater education tables in the passport event at Apple Harvest Fest at Retzer Nature Center on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Please consider having your municipality become a partner for this awareness event. [Sign up here \[click\]!](#)

➡ Stay tuned for FREE educational webinars & a statewide Call to Action for WI residents!

🗨 More details soon at <https://www.wistormwater.com/>

**Salt Wise Winter Equipment Open House** in Mukwonago on October 8th from 9 to 11:30. Expect peer-to-peer conversations among public and private sector equipment operators, policy discussions with elected officials, and lots of learning for all. We will discuss current practices and facilitate conversations around next steps through a show-and-tell of winter maintenance equipment.

### **Upcoming Events:**

[Clean Water Festival](#) June 27<sup>th</sup> at Pewaukee Lake Beach

[Waukesha County Fair](#) June 15 from 12 to 4 pm in the 4-H Kids Zone in North Hall of the Forum Building

[Hartland Kids Fest](#) July 29, 9:00 to 1:00 pm

[Oconomowoc Kids Fest](#) August 4, 9:00 to 1:00 pm

[Mukwonago National Night Out](#) August 4, 6:00 to 8:30 pm

[Delafield National Night Out](#) August 4, 6:00 to 8:00 pm

[Sussex National Night Out](#) August 5, 6:00 to 8:00 pm

[Waukesha National Night Out](#) August 5, 5:00 to 8:00 pm

[Hartland National Night Out](#) August 6, 6:00 to 8:00 pm

[Big Bend National Night Out](#) August 13, 5:00 to 8:00 pm

[Oconomowoc National Night Out](#) August 21, 5:00 to 8:00 pm