

The Reuse Systems Ladder

Many of us think about reuse as bringing your own reusable shopping bag or water bottle. But to tackle plastic pollution and overconsumption, we really need to rethink how to get what we want and need without all the waste. Reuse systems and services are the key to unlocking innovation so that packaging becomes a service and we get our food and products through convenient reuse systems.



Reuse/refill for online shopping/delivery

- Requires rethinking how we deliver goods and services.
- Delivery services can be part of the new reuse economy by picking up empty reusable product and shipping containers when they drop off new deliveries.
- Lots of innovation potential.

Refillable consumer goods services

- Can be through physical retail locations or mobile retail through cart / truck based services.
- Requires dedicated space for refill stations and collection and washing infrastructure.
- Large opportunities to replace sachets.

Refillable beverage-container systems

- Leasing is a proven model whereby one entity owns the refillable bottles and leases them to the beverage companies.
- Companies can also run their own reuse/refill systems.
- Requires localized collection, washing and redistribution.

Reusable to-go container services

- Can be run by a city; licensed to one reuse service provider; or have multiple service providers operating in the same jurisdiction.
- Take-out/to-go is generally easiest, then groceries/prepared food, then delivery.

Reusable to-go cup services

- Can be run by a city; licensed to one reuse service provider (like a franchised-utility service); or have multiple service providers operating in the same jurisdiction.
- Requires convenient drop-off or collection options for consumers; centralized local wash-hub and logistics

Disposable-free “on-site” dining

- Can be accomplished voluntarily or through city or state policy.
- Disposables (exempting paper napkins and possibly paper straws) are eliminated for on-site dining.