Dear RCAT members and supporters,

Pasted below for your review and use is the Subject document.

Zoom Meet #9

Berkeley

Rotary Climate Action Team

**Meeting Record, Thurs. Aug. 6, 2020**

Next RCAT Zoom meeting Aug.20

Berkeley Rotary’s Climate Action

Team (RCAT) participants discussed how to reduce the production and use of

petroleum based plastics that greatly contribute to global warming. The potential project grows out of Berkeley Rotary's existing advocacy to reduce single use plastic. The group

also discussed the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group that is an

umbrella resource for climate minded Rotary members to unite their projects and resources.

The recent rise in ESRAG’s visibility, the new Rotary focus on the environment/climate change and the recent lunch presentation about ESRAG's role in the Bay Area formed a new understanding of the role of Rotary Action Groups and the upcoming ESRAG sponsored Freon collection project.

Key topics discussed:

**1.** **The Role of Rotary Action Groups Such as ESRAG in Supporting Berkeley's Climate Actions**

The purpose of a Rotary Action

Group such as ESRAG was discussed.

· Rotary Action Groups are independent, Rotary-affiliated groups made up of people from around the world who are experts in a particular field, such as economic development, peace, addiction prevention, the environment, or water.

· Action groups provide expertise and support to help clubs plan and implement projects to increase impact - one of Rotary's strategic priorities. This support includes helping clubs find partners, funding, and other resources.

· Action groups can also help clubs and districts prepare grant applications, conduct community assessments, and develop plans to monitor and evaluate club projects.

**Next Steps #1**: Read the

2019 [**Rotary Action Groups annual report**](https://my-cms.rotary.org/en/document/rotarian-action-groups-rag-annual-report?embed=true).

**2.**

**Pilot Advocacy to Corporate Online Shippers Against Plastic Packaging**

As consumers, objecting to plastic in cartons and pouches for online purchases is an opportunity to pressure corporations to improve their sustainability practices. The immediate burden on consumers to discard on line product packaging raises the opportunity to proactively and reactively challenge sources such as Amazon.

· Plastic used for protective interior packaging for mail order shipping represents a small portion of the plastic used in the retail market. Corporate programs like **Amazon Certified Frustration-Free Packaging** may reduce plastic use.

· Substantial recycling of packaging products such as corrugated boxes exist throughout the U.S. About 10% of the plastic produced annually is recycled including packaging.

· Product containers, wrapping and padding for large items such as appliances, and clear plastic coverings of retail products represent a larger share of plastic production and use.

**Next steps #2:** John Pardee will provide RCAT with:

a) examples of contacts RCAT members can email to communicate requests to reduce plastic content; and,

b) template sample text for emails to convey an RCAT goal to reduce the production and use of petro-plastic.

*Note that the Aug. 6 RCAT note taker attempted after the meeting without success to follow the Amazon instructions to use “Frustration Free Packaging See note below.* [***[1]***](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#m_-3478946423661651562_m_-2464841842506131010_m_7932292846074657633__ftn1)

**3.** **Educational Outreach About Current CA State**

**Legislation to Increase Recycling**

The[*California Recycling and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act of 2020*](https://caaquaculture.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Plastics-Initiative.pdf) is a major new California recycling law in development that would mandate plastic in California to contain recycled content.

The Reduction Act requires:

· fees for selling single-use plastic packaging of 1 cent per package sold.

· packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable and mandates recycled content.

· Reduction is wasted packaging and prohibits the use of virgin plastic.

· The 1 cent fee system to support local recycling programs.

Two parallel actions are bringing the new law forward for voter or legislative approval:

· The first action is a state wide signature gathering now underway to qualify an initiative for this Nov. 2020 ballot. Supporters are gathering signatures to meet the early September deadline. The instructions [to sign the petition on line are here](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/555e4bf5e4b08ef1ebb4e8f7/t/5e90b8eb2f746b410d78b040/1586542827554/PlasticsFreeCA+Initiative_Instructions.pdf).

· The second action is in the form of two concurrent state senate and assembly bills to achieve much the same as the petition. **SB 54 and AB 1080** *The California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act* (Allen and Gonzalez) is currently being held in the legislature and therefore, the reason for the petition drive if the legislature fails to act. The link to [a summary of the bill is here](https://www.cawrecycles.org/sb-54-ab-1080-bill-page#:~:text=In%20response%2C%20SB%2054%20and,compostable%20on%20and%20after%202030.) with information for educational outreach.

**Next steps #3:** RCAT discussion on educational outreach steps about the *California Recycling and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act of 2020* before November 2020*.*

**4.** **Freon Collection Project**

The Freon Collection project will conduct a Zoom training session following the RCAT meeting. The training will cover how Freon will be collected by Rotary volunteers.

**Next steps #4:** Ed Church will provide date and place information for RCAT volunteers to work at the drop off site in Oakland.

**5.** **RCAT Group Education About Petroleum Based**

**Plastic Production**

Educating ourselves and building the share knowledge of the RCAT members about oil sourced plastic production and use will help our actions and outreach to achieve results. Examples of such information may include:

· About 300 million tons of plastic are produced annually. Recycling alone will not reduce the excessive amount of petro-plastic production.

· The oil, gas, and coal industry produce the fossil-fuel to make 95% of the plastic. Just to drill and transport natural gas for US plastic production, pollutes about 12.5 million carbon dioxide equivalent tons into the atmosphere each year.

· Conversion to single use plastic to plant based plastic is one partial solution.

**Next Steps #5**: RCAT participants and team knowledge base sharing about US petro plastic production and use would be helpful at the bi weekly meetings. Sharing a point of information in a “plastic minute” at the start of the meeting is another way of learning more together.

Two sample sources for RCAT inputs at future meetings follow:

· "From Scratch" is a progressive commercial consulting group that outlines steps for influencing corporations in the link below. The tips "how to make a difference with corporate communication" are valid media relations steps RCAT could use. The link to From Scratch suggestions: <https://from-scratch.net/insights/how-to-get-companies-to-use-less-plastic/>

· The link to the 2018 UN report summarizes in two pages the need for corporations to do more to reduce plastic production. <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/what-are-businesses-doing-turn-plastic-tap>

**6.** **RCAT Updates and August 2020 Next Steps #6**

· Ed Church will update the Board on the Freon Project Aug. 9. Materials will be provided before the meeting.

· President Chris will use RCAT member, Katherine Weis’ update on RCAT discussions to reduce plastic production and use to update the Club Board Aug. 19.

· Lewis Ames will contact Denaya Shorter Community Engagement Program Director at the Berkeley Ecology Center to be a speaker at a Wed. lunch program and/or to participate in an RCAT meeting. Ms. Shorter leads and supports Climate Action through the Center’s Berkeley Climate Action Coalition, and Zero Waste Education that supports the curbside recycling program.