

Postconsumer PET Container Recycling Activity/2015: NAPCOR/APR Report

Arkansas Environmental, Energy, and Water Law Blog



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The National Association for PET Container Resources and the Association of Plastic Recyclers (Collectively "APR") have issued a report that provides an:

...overview of the recycling of an injection stretch blow molded polyethylene terephthalate ("PET") bottles and jars of the United States during 2015.

The report is titled Postconsumer PET Container Recycling Activity in 2015 (October 2016)("Report") and also provides a general summary of the recycling of PET thermoforms.

The Report concludes that approximately 5,971 million pounds of PET bottles were sold into the marketplace in the United States in 2015 but further states that approximately 30.1 percent of 1,797 million pounds were collected through recycling programs and sold, either to domestic or foreign markets. 5,971 million pounds constituted a two percent increase over 2014. Also noted:

PET reclaimers in the U.S. supplemented those bottles collected from the U.S. with imported materials and alternative feedstocks to process a total of 1,548 million pounds of material.

Various market factors and trends are stated to have affected the volume of PET bottles available for recycling collection in the U.S. in 2015. The negative factors included:

- Continued weakness in carbonated soft drink sales
- Combined with some reductions in single-serving bottle sizes to provide market differentiation and meet consumer demands
- Light-weighting of bottles impacting some specialty beverage categories

Positive factors included:

- Conversion into PET from other package types (both in food and beverage and non-food market segments)
- Bottled water sales increase/specialty beverage categories (energy and sports drinks, teas, and ready-to-drink coffees)

Twenty-seven United States PET reclamation plants were stated to be in operation at the beginning of 2015. By the end of 2015 the number had increased to 28 and total annual nameplate capacity was 2,495 million pounds. A reclamation plant is defined as an operation that can take dirty postconsumer plastic packaging and process it into a clean flake suitable for remanufacture.

[A copy of the Report can be downloaded here.](#)