

## rPET Recycling: Closed Loop Partners Study Addressing System Interventions to Improve Cost Structure



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The Association of Plastic Recyclers noted a study undertaken by Closed Loop Partners that addresses recycling system interventions that could reduce the cost of processing post-consumer PET compared to producing virgin resin.

The study is titled:

*Cleaning the rPET Stream: How We Scale Post-Consumer Recycled PET in the US (“Study”)*

The motivation for the *Study* is the concern that less than 30% of the PET used in bottles and jars is recovered in the United States. Further, the *Study* states that only 6% is re-used as rPET in new bottles. The *Study* notes that this is despite the fact that PET is the most common resin type used in plastic packaging and is accepted in most United States municipal recycling programs.

As a result, the *Study* focuses on the following question:

How can we address the stark under-performance of Pet recycling through investment in solutions that provide long-term benefits to the system overall?

The *Study* identifies what it characterizes as a “suite of interventions” that would improve the cost structure of rPET and benefit MRFs, reprocessors, and end-users. The interventions identified are claimed to potentially increase nationally by 6% the recycling rate of PET. As to bottle-to-bottle processes, the *Study* claims to have identified interventions that:

... effectively improve yield from residential curbside collection by more than 20% and lower costs of rPET processing by 10%.

The components of the *Study* include:

- Recent trends in rPET capacity in North America
- rPET vs. Virgin Production Processes
- What drives costs?
- Interventions that work
- What’s next?

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