



Mark Murray, Executive Director of Californians Against Waste, uses very misleading facts and figures in his attempt to downplay the positive news in the recent [National Postconsumer Plastic Bag and Film Recycling Report](#). If Mr Murray was genuinely interested in reducing waste he would help recycling efforts by promoting the opportunity to recover so very many recyclable household items such as toilet paper wrap and bread bags—thanks to the infrastructure provided by retailers across the country to collect bags. An infrastructure that, unlike curbside, does not cost communities anything and is a benefit to the retail community as well. The majority of grocers voluntarily collect bags and wraps from their customers and combine it with their back-of-the store pallet wrap. This high-quality product is being purchased by domestic reclaimers, diverting valuable resources from disposal and creating jobs.

The figures Mr. Murray uses in his press release about the [National Postconsumer Plastic Bag and Film Recycling Report](#) misdirect the readers. It is true there was an increase in film and bag generation from 2009 to 2010 according to the EPA figures, but the increase of ALL bags, sacks and wraps was only 160 million pounds and the increase in recycling was 220 million pounds. And, over a three year period (2008 - 2010) recycling gains are even more impressive. According to the EPA data, recycling of bags, sacks and wraps grew by 530 million pounds, while sales of the same decreased by 60 million pounds (Wraps grew over the three year period, but Bags and Sacks sales actually dropped 340 million pounds). The EPA data, clearly shows that film recycling is making significant gains! The retail infrastructure for collecting bags, which allows for the collection of consumer sacks and wrap as well, is making these recycling gains possible.

Mr. Murray questions Moore Recycling Associates' methodology to determine the amount of bags recovered by referencing a CSUS study: a study which calls the validity of it's own data into question several times. As stated in the [National Postconsumer Plastic Bag and Film Recycling Report](#), Moore Recycling selected the most conservative percentage of bags mixed with wraps that were reported by the companies that buy and process millions of pounds of retail-generated material from all across the country. A mixed film bale with only 6% bag material would be either a premium grade bale with a high percent of wrap, or a really bad bale with an extreme level of contamination. And note that the 6% he referenced was only for "complying" bags, a very narrow California-specific definition.

But more important than clarifying Mr Murray's inveigled figures, is to acknowledge the fact that we saw growth in the domestic processing of recovered film and bag material. Domestic reclaimers reported increases in all grades of film. More material was processed in the US or Canada than was sold to overseas markets, which is a significant reversal in the trend seen over the past several years. The sustainability of our infrastructure to manage our resources domestically depends on a steady supply of quality material. The retail infrastructure for collecting bags—which allows for the collection of consumer sacks and wrap as well—is making these recycling gains possible.

Respectfully submitted,
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