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APR Highlights "Five for Focus" PET Bottle Design Areas

Recycling Trade Organization Provides Guidance on Impacts and Innovations

Washington, D.C. – The Association of Plastic Recyclers (APR) today confirmed its "Five for Focus" push to highlight and address key components of PET container design that can affect recycling. Each of the design areas identified have the potential to negatively impact the quality and value of recycled PET, or cause bottles to be pulled or misdirected from the PET recycling stream.

"The **APR Design® Guide for Plastics Recyclability** provides clear direction and resources to push for continued innovation and improvement in recycling compatible package design," said Steve Alexander, APR's President and CEO. "There is great momentum in the marketplace from brands that want to ensure their PET bottles are recyclable and don't contribute to the degradation of the recycling stream. We have seen significant improvements in some of these five focus areas from our member companies and others, but we challenge brands to do more."

THE APR FIVE FOR FOCUS:

1) Metal components attached to PET packaging	**Increase operation costs and yield loss; are a primary source of defects in products made with recycled PET; will not be recycled if removed from stream by metal detectors.**
2) PETG sleeve labels	**Can reduce quality of RPET; increase yield loss; bottle coverage can impede PET sortation (all sleeve labels).**
3) Pressure sensitive labels	**Full-coverage adhesive can be difficult to remove from recycled PET; inks and adhesives can be source of discoloration for PET.**
4) Barrier layers	**Additives and non-PET layers providing oxygen scavengers or CO2 barrier are a source of discoloration and defects in products made from recycled PET.**
5) PETG extrusion blow-molded containers	**PETG is a copolymer that is not compatible with commonly used container grade PET.**

The Five for Focus were recently communicated to APR member companies in conjunction with the trade organization's March meetings. All were identified through the APR's long-standing "problem container" reporting process as representative of commonly cited and impactful design issues.

"As a processor of postconsumer PET material, problematic bottles present very real challenges for operations like ours in terms of contamination and yield loss," said Byron Geiger, COO of Indorama Ventures Sustainable Solutions, LLC and Chairman of APR's PET Technical Committee. "It's a key part of the APR's role to educate the marketplace about specific impacts of containers and related components, and to ensure that recycling compatibility is an important aspect of the package design process."

There are options or innovations to address the Five for Focus design elements. The APR encourages package manufacturers, designers and brands to explore the PET section of the APR Design® Guide (https://plasticsrecycling.org/pet-design-guide), or to reach out to the APR to learn more: FiveForFocus@plasticsrecycling.org.

Five for Focus follows extensive work by APR membership and staff to update the APR Design® Guide, specifically including revisions to the inventory of PET test protocols, and the addition of several new PET screening tests, all of which were completed in mid- to late 2018. Find the complete APR Design® Guide at https://plasticsrecycling.org/apr-design-guide/apr-design-guide-home

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