



News Release

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U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND AMERICAN CHEMISTRY COUNCIL PARTNER TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

The Wrap Recycling Action Program Welcomes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as Latest Partner to Promote Plastic Film Recycling

WASHINGTON (November 15, 2016)—The [American Chemistry Council's Plastics Division \(ACC\)](#) is pleased to announce a new partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) aimed at promoting sustainable materials management (SMM) for plastics. SMM offers a systematic approach to more efficiently using and reusing materials throughout their life cycles to reduce environmental impacts and waste.

Through the partnership, EPA and ACC will work together to:

- Decrease disposal rates by tracking and lowering the overall amount of plastics disposed through activities that enable source reduction, reuse, recycling and prevention.
- Reduce environmental impacts—including greenhouse gas emissions, water and energy use—of plastics throughout their life cycles.
- Increase stakeholder capacity to implement SMM through technical assistance and raising the per capita quantity of plastic recyclables recovered.

“We are looking forward to collaborating with ACC to reduce environmental impacts from plastics,” said Barnes Johnson, Director of EPA’s Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery. “We believe that there are great gains to be made for the environment, our society and our economy by working together with the ACC on this important issue.”

“We are excited to work with EPA to advance the adoption of sustainable materials management among plastics makers, brand owners, retailers, policymakers and others,” said Steve Russell, ACC’s vice president of plastics. “By relying on a full evaluation of a material’s life cycle, sustainable materials management can help us make more informed choices that conserve resources and reduce overall environmental impacts.”

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Through the SMM partnership, EPA joins the [Wrap Recycling Action Program \(WRAP\) campaign](#), a public-private partnership with the goal of increasing the volume of plastic wraps and bags (also known as “plastic film”) recycled, through public education and sharing tools and best practices. The WRAP program has been shown to increase collection of post-use plastic wraps and bags through store drop-off programs and reduce the amount of film that is erroneously placed in curbside bins.

More than 18,000 stores across the United States collect plastic film for recycling, but many consumers are not aware of this opportunity. WRAP seeks to educate consumers about the many types of everyday packaging that can be recycled at stores.

These include: plastic bags from bread, produce, shopping, and dry cleaning; clean food storage bags (with or without zippers); wraps from paper towels, bathroom tissue, napkins and beverage cases; shipping pillows and bubble wrap; and anything labeled with a #2, #4, or the Sustainable Packaging Coalition’s [“Store Drop-Off” Label](#).

Other WRAP partners include the [Sustainable Packaging Coalition \(SPC\)](#), the [Association of Plastics Recyclers](#), the City of Vancouver, Washington ([case study](#)), and the States of [Connecticut](#) and [North Carolina](#). Several additional states are expected to announce WRAP partnerships early next year. Retailers involved in regional WRAP campaigns include Safeway\Albertsons and Harris Teeter.

Plastic film is one of the fastest growing areas of recycling with collection growing 79 percent since 2005. At least 1.17 billion pounds of postconsumer film was recovered in 2014, and the recycling rate grew to 17 percent. “There is still a long way to go—only 9.5 percent of plastics, by weight, were recycled in 2014. It is an area that is ripe for growth and we are looking forward to partnering with ACC and SPC to make real advances in plastics recycling,” Johnson said.

“On behalf of the WRAP campaign, I’m thrilled to welcome EPA as our newest member. We look forward to working with the Agency to strengthen our national footprint and raise awareness of opportunities to recycle plastic bags and wraps in communities across the nation,” Russell said.

“As a founding partner of the WRAP campaign, we’re excited to work with EPA to help Americans learn about the many types of plastic wraps and bags that can be recycled at participating stores,” said Nina Goodrich, SPC’s director. “We encourage consumers to look for the How2Recycle ‘Store Drop-off’ label on products and packages to learn more.”

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About ACC’s Plastics Division: The American Chemistry Council’s Plastics Division represents leading companies dedicated to providing innovative solutions to the challenges of today and tomorrow through plastics. Ongoing innovations from *America’s Plastics Makers*TM have led to medical advances and safety equipment that make our lives better, healthier and safer every day. And advances in plastics are helping Americans save energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and decrease waste. Because plastics are such a valuable resource, the Plastics Division is leading efforts to “reduce, reuse, recycle and recover,” including through outreach, education and access to advances in recycling technology. www.americanchemistry.com/plastics

