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2020 U.S. MRF Survey: Survey of U.S. Residential Material Recovery Facilities - Acceptance of Post-Consumer Plastic Products

Hundreds of hours of effort were donated to identify and document accurate information in the public domain.

MRFs and Cities are welcomed to submit information to LastBeachCleanup@gmail.com The MRF list spreadsheet will be revised after confirmation of updates.

Acceptance of Polypropylene Cups & Tub Containers				
	ALL MRFs		Top 65 US MRFs	
		%		%
Total Count	367		65	
No PP#5 cups/containers collected	171	47%	29	45%
PP#5 Containers collected separately but may not all be recycled	14	4%	2	3%
PP#5 Containers may be collected as part of mixed #3-7 bale and may not all be recycled	178	49%	34	52%
PP#5 collected with high probability of sale to recycler/reprocessor	4	1%	0	0%

Top Plastic Pollution Items: Acceptance (No Assurance of Recycling)						
	ALL MRFs			Top 65 US MRFs		
	No	No %	Yes	No	No %	Yes
Polystyrene Foam Food Service	357	97%	10	65	100%	0
Plastic Bags	354	96%	13	63	97%	2
Plastic Cups	326	89%	41	56	86%	9
Plastic Plates	363	99%	4	64	98%	1
Plastic Clamshells	316	86%	51	57	88%	8
Plastic Trays	342	93%	25	59	91%	6
Plastic Lids/Caps (Loose)	356	97%	11	59	91%	6
Plastic Cutlery, Straws & Stirrers	365	99%	2	65	100%	0
Plastic Food Wrappers/Pouches	366	100%	1	64	98%	1
Plastic Coffee Pods	367	100%	0	65	100%	0

Access to Collection for Recycling Estimation

	Total U.S. Population 2015/2016 ¹	(A) Total U.S. Population Winter 2019 (estimated)	Estimation Basis: Change from 2015 ²	(B) PP#5 Tub Acceptance (Recycling Not Assured)	Basis	Total US PP#5 Tub Acceptance (A x B)
Automatic Curbside Collection for Recycling	53%	50%	-5%	53%	Per Survey Above	27%
Opt-In/Subscription for Curbside Collection for Recycling	20%	18%	-10%	10%	No value for plastics #3-7, low value for segregated PP#5	1.8%
Drop Off Access to Collection Systems for Recycling	21%	19%	-10%	10%	No value for plastics #3-7, low value for segregated PP#5	1.9%
No Access to Collection for Recycling	6%	13%		0%		69%
Access to Collection for Recycling (Collected materials may not actually be recycled)	94%	87%				31%

Data Sources & References

1. 2015/2016 Centralized Study on Availability of Plastic Recycling	Due to China's ban on plastic waste imports and decrease in new plastic feedstock prices, this study is out of date.
2. Waste Dive: How Recycling Has Changed in All 50 States	Basis for estimation of change in access to recycling
US Residential MRF List - published by Recycling Partnership with credit to Resource Recycling	Corrected for facilities closed or are not Residential MRFs
MASS MRF List	Reviewed for MRF Locations
New Jersey Intermediate Processing Facilities List	Industrial programs not included
Republic Services MRF List	Reviewed for MRF Locations
Ohio MRF List	Reviewed for MRF Locations
Largest 75 North American MRF List	65 of Top 75 are in the U.S.

Survey Information & Use

<p>Objective Assessment: This survey was performed in October to December 2019 and reverified in January 2020 by two registered professional chemical engineers and a recycling industry expert. The technical persons involved have no conflicts of interest related to U.S. plastic recycling that would influence the assessment or results. The information was found in the public domain and is publicly shared to promote transparency and establish a traceable account of facts related to legitimate recyclable labels for plastic products.</p> <p>Use of the Survey: The U.S. MRF Survey results may be quoted with attribution to Greenpeace. The information in the Survey spreadsheet may be quoted with attribution to the original source of the information (provided by links in the spreadsheet). The spreadsheet itself is the property of The Last Beach Cleanup and may not be reproduced without express written consent.</p> <p>Survey Updates: Submissions by MRFs and local governments are welcomed to update or correct the information presented. Links to publicly available information are required to revise the traceable account. Since external links may change at any time, we request notification of a broken link. Please send updates with links to lastbeachcleanup@gmail.com.</p>
