



**Walter Wright, Jr.**  
wwright@mwlaw.com  
(501) 688.8839

# The Association of Plastic Recyclers/American Chemistry Council: 2015 United States National Postconsumer of Plastic Bottle Recycling Report

## Arkansas Environmental, Energy, and Water Law Blog

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The Association of Plastic Recyclers and American Chemistry Council (Collectively "APR") issued *2015 United States National Postconsumer of Plastic Bottle Recycling Report* ("Report").

The study is a cooperative effort between the two organizations.

The goal of the *Report* is the quantification of the amount of high density polyethylene ("HDPE") and polypropylene ("PP") bottles collected for recycling (as well as the rate of recycling of those bottles).

The *Report* includes postconsumer recycling values and comments for polyethylene terephthalate ("PET") developed by the National Association of PET Container Resources and the Association of Plastic Recyclers.

The *Report* concludes that the total pounds of plastic bottles collected for recycling was 2,977 million pounds. The lower amount was due to what is characterized as an "economically difficult year."

The plastic bottle recycling collection rate was 31.1 percent. This was a decrease of 0.6 percentage points compared to 2014. As a result, the overall recycling rate for plastic bottles for the year was 31.1 percent compared to 31.7 percent the previous year.

The *Report* notes that since 2010 plastic bottle recycling has grown by nearly 400 million pounds. Further, plastic bottle recycling has increased an average of nearly 80 million pounds per year. This increase constitutes a 2.9 percent increase annually.

The organizations state that several factors have contributed to what is deemed to be a "recent plateau." The factors are:

- A drop in material collected available for recycling
- Reduced exports and increased contamination of recyclables
- Use of plastic bottles in packaging applications continues to expand (but is offset by light weighting and increased use of concentrates with smaller, lighter bottles)

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