

APK's Newcycling® technology receives eREC innovation award

Merseburg, 04 September 2020 – Today, APK AG – an innovative plastic recycling company from Merseburg, Germany – received the innovation award at eREC, the digital recycling conference. 'We thank the eREC organisers very much for acknowledging the game-changing contribution APK's Newcycling® technology delivers to high-quality recycling of complex, flexible plastics packaging waste streams', says Klaus Wohnig, CEO of APK AG.

APK's dissolution recycling process, the Newcycling® technology, can easily separate different polymers in multilayer plastic packaging – up to now, deemed non-recyclable – and transforms the target polymer into re-granulates with close to virgin properties. Dissolution recycling is an advanced physical recycling technology. Building on a mechanical pre-treatment step, it adds a solvent-based process step, during which the target polymer is separated and purification of contaminants, such as various additives or organic residues, also takes place. The two re-granulate products created with APK's Newcycling® technology are recycled LDPE, marketed under the Mersalen® brand, and recycled PA, marketed under the Mersamid® brand. These products are derived from complex PE/PA multilayer film waste. Both products provide high quality and overcome the performance issues often discussed with regard to plastic recyclates produced using standard mechanical recycling processes. Newcycling® achieves this steep increase in quality in combination with a considerable reduction in emissions: Emissions from Newcycling® re-granulates are, on average, 66% lower than emissions from virgin polymer versions of the same materials.

Creating a circular economy for plastic packaging will demand rigorous changes at every step of the plastics and packaging value chains in the coming years. Major developments, research, and investments will be necessary to make plastic products and plastic recycling technology fit for the coming decades. 'Design for recycling' is a key concept currently being discussed broadly. What is also urgently needed is a comprehensive overview of innovative plastic recycling technologies and their relevance for realising a circular economy in the short- and mid-term. Where sustainable re-design of products is not easy, or performance and resource use would be compromised, this is where innovative technology needs to step in. 'Burden shifting along the product life cycle to achieve recyclability is not a viable option. We need to invest in innovative recycling technology, intertwined with re-design of products. Both of these developments need to go hand-in-hand if we are to make a circular economy for plastics packaging a reality in the coming decade', remarks Klaus Wohnig, CEO of APK AG.

Source: www.apk-ag.de/en

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