Republic Services Polymer Center Opens, Promoting Bottle-to-Bottle Plastics Circularity

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First-of-its-kind facility in North America will help meet growing demand for recycled plastics for use in sustainable packaging

PHOENIX, Dec. 5, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Republic Services, Inc. (NYSE: RSG) today marked the opening of its Polymer Center in Las Vegas, the first-of-its-kind facility in North America, enabling greater circularity for plastics and helping meet growing demand for recycled material. The Polymer Center expects to produce more than 100 million pounds of recycled plastics each year for use in sustainable packaging and other applications.

"The Republic Services Polymer Center will supply high-quality, domestically sourced recycled plastic to advance a critical need for more sustainable packaging," said Jon Vander Ark, president and chief executive officer. "As a leader in the environmental services industry, it's our responsibility to challenge every truckload of material we collect. The Polymer Center is another example of our commitment to developing solutions that promote greater circularity and help customers achieve their sustainability goals."

The Polymer Center will process plastic bottles, jugs and containers collected from homes and businesses to produce recycled PET (rPET) flake and color-sorted HDPE and polypropylene ready for use in new sustainable packaging. Until now, the fate of a recycled plastic bottle in the U.S. wasn't a new plastic bottle; instead, it was generally downcycled into fiber for use in carpet or clothing – material that has few options for further recycling. The Polymer Center expects to significantly extend the lifecycle of plastic packaging and help turn plastic bottles into new bottles six to seven times, enabling true circularity.

As brands commit to using more recycled content in their packaging and more states mandate the use of recycled plastic, supply is struggling to meet the growing demand. By 2030, demand for rPET in the U.S. is expected to total 5 billion pounds, while the supply – based on current processes – will only reach about 2.5 billion pounds.[1] The Polymer Center can help companies fill this urgent gap now.

The Coca-Cola Company, one of the first customers of the Las Vegas Polymer Center, has committed to use at least 50% recycled material in its packaging by 2030. The Polymer Center is scheduled to supply rPET to Coca-Cola, beginning in January 2024.

Plans for a nationwide network of Polymer Centers are underway, with the second facility expected to open in Indianapolis in late 2024.

About Republic Services
Republic Services, Inc. is a leader in the environmental services industry. Through its subsidiaries, the Company provides customers with the most complete set of products and services, including recycling, solid waste, special waste, hazardous waste and field services. Republic's industry-leading commitments to advance circularity and support decarbonization are helping deliver on its vision to partner with customers to create a more sustainable world. For more information, please visit RepublicServices.com.

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[1] https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/packaging-and-paper/our-insights/filling-the-gap-boosting-supply-of-recycled-materials-for-packaging?cid=other-eml-dre-mip-mck&hlkid=3c2399fd2c704291abc04761e70adec9&hctky=13828386&hdpid=c20c1335-6bf0-41cd-a195-e2f0e9b12d8e











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