

Avery Dennison Introduces Recyclable Shrink Film



A new addition to our Rapid-Roll® Portfolio addresses a common barrier to plastic bottle recycling, delivers the ultimate ease of use for consumers

Avery Dennison has introduced a film to our Rapid-Roll® Portfolio that could be a game changer for plastic recycling in North America. Our new Recyclable Shrink Film is compatible with the PET recycling process.

When a PET bottle is wrapped with Recyclable Shrink Film and printed with washable inks, there's no need for the consumer (or recycler) to remove the label. The entire bottle can be moved through the recycling stream and turned into food-grade rPET.

This innovative product has received recognition from the Association of Plastic Recyclers (APR) as meeting or exceeding the organization's Critical Guidance Protocol for Clear PET Articles with Labels and Closures. It helps address a vexing problem for our planet.

Plastic pollution is a serious challenge

As the growing awareness of humanity's effect on the environment started to come into sharper focus in the 1960s and 1970s, the plastic industry began to promote the material's recyclability. The first plastic recycling plant opened in 1972, and a growing number of municipalities established recycling programs in the following years.

A half-century on, however, plastic pollution is a more serious problem than ever. According to Our World in Data, the world produced 460 million tons of plastic in 2019. The packaging industry produced about one-third of that. But only a portion of that tonnage less than 20% — was recycled.

And while a lot of plastic waste is sent to landfills or incinerated, much ends up in our waterways and oceans. The world's surface waters are estimated to contain more than 5 trillion plastic particles.

The ultimate ease of use for recycling

Our Rapid-Roll® Recyclable Shrink Film can help remove these barriers. When printed with washable inks, it provides consumers with the ultimate ease of use when recycling clear PET bottles: Simply throw the bottle in the recycling bin without removing the label.

This new film printed with washable inks eliminates the need for the recycler to sort or possibly reject bottles with labels left attached. The whole bottle, including the shrink label, recycles into food-grade rPET.

Our Recyclable Shrink Film offers several benefits:

- It's fully recyclable when used with washable inks, so there's no need for sorting or label removal. This addresses a consumer barrier to recycling, improves recycling center productivity, and increases the amount of PET bottles that can be recycled.
- It has excellent shrink properties, even with odd bottle shapes and designs.
- It provides an opportunity for 360-degree artwork, helping create shelf appeal for the product.
- It offers excellent printability, enabling a broad spectrum of color choices.

Recycling needs to be made more convenient

Today, nearly 60% of U.S. households have access to curbside recycling services, according to Statista.

But despite the plastic recycling problem's scope, consumers aren't pressed to become more diligent recyclers. A 2021 survey by the World Economic Forum revealed that while 75% of people worldwide think recycling is important, several barriers must be removed before they can act. In North America, one of the top reasons was the inconvenience. Not knowing how to recycle was another leading reason.

The fact is that curbside recycling programs are far from standardized. Different programs allow different materials to be recycled, or require certain materials to be broken down by the consumer. These requirements vary from community to community, contributing to consumer ambivalence and confusion.

Helping advance our sustainability goals

Delivering innovations that advance the circular economy is one of the key priorities of Avery Dennison's 2030 sustainability goals. Specifically, we're working to have 100% of our standard label products contain recycled or renewable content.

We recognize how providing innovative film products can positively affect our environment. Recyclable shrink film thus builds on the legacy of products such as our Rapid-Roll® Eklipse™: a light-blocking shrink film that allows brands with light-sensitive products to use clear plastic PET bottles (which are more easily recyclable than opaque/colored bottles).

Join us in making brands more sustainable

Recyclable Shrink Film is backed by outstanding service programs that ensure you get the product you need, on the original promise date, and in quantities that help you optimize production and minimize waste.

As with other products in our Rapid-Roll® Portfolio, Recyclable Shrink Film is now available and ready to ship with a five-day lead time. Contact your Avery Dennison representative to learn more about the product, receive samples, or discuss ways you can help brands be more sustainable than ever. You can also find more information about the innovative products in our Rapid-Roll® portfolio at label.averydennison.com.

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