

Joint CPI/OPRL public line on Recycling Labelling Rules 2019

As part of the review of its recycling labelling rules OPRL will be adopting tighter limits on the levels of non-fibre content in coated paper and board packaging. These limits reflect the position supported by the majority of the paper packaging supply chain in discussions convened by CPI and represent the first stages of a journey towards the CPI's published aspiration of a 5 percent ceiling on plastic content on coated paper packaging.

The result will be to drive early reductions in plastics usage on paper packaging, and a halving of the current ceiling by early 2023.

From January 2020 a reduced ceiling of 15 percent single sided coating will apply with a further reduction to 10 percent to be adopted in January 2023. The same ceilings will apply to plastic windows in card packaging, which should be easily removable, and to peelable plastic liners which should always carry a call to action for the consumer.

These measures will encourage early adoption of reduced plastic content and help drive up quality levels in the feedstock reaching paper mills.

During 2020-23 it is anticipated that new processes and coated paper packaging products will be developed and tested, taking account of product protection/shelf life and other performance requirements. OPRL will continue to work with CPI to monitor the speed of innovation and adoption, and to assess the extent to which these enable faster progress towards the shared ambition of a 5 percent ceiling.

From January 2020 OPRL's PREP UK tool will adopt the new 15 percent ceiling as the threshold for single sided coated paper packaging to be considered recyclable but at lost value. A more stringent 10 percent ceiling will apply as the threshold for assessment as recyclable at full value. Both categories qualify as recyclable under the Labelling Rules, but it is hoped that this differentiation provides a strong signal to packaging developers and specifiers to move to the higher standard as early as possible.

Paper packaging with more than 15 percent plastic single sided coatings can, exceptionally, be considered as recyclable where the recovery supply chain demonstrates that high fibre yields are achievable at paper mills. OPRL is watching with interest the development of industry-endorsed testing protocols by CEPI and others and will look to these to confirm the status of these exceptions.

Confederation of Paper Industries

OPRL LTD

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