**What is PCR?**

Post-consumer resin (PCR), also known as post-consumer recycled content, is plastic material that can no longer be used for its intended purpose. It can be generated by households or by commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product. PCR is different than PIR (Post-industrial resin/recycled content). PIR is material diverted from the waste stream during a manufacturing process.

**What is the APR PCR Certification Program and why is it needed?**

The APR PCR Certification program provides transparency to support a reliable, robust PCR market. Reclaimers can choose from multiple APR-endorsed certification companies to conduct an independent audit and, upon successful completion, issue PCR certification. Brand companies and converters can commit to using certified PCR. In addition to taking a leadership role in reducing plastic waste, companies that buy or sell certified PCR are preparing for upcoming regulation and helping to protect against reputational and legal challenges.

The APR PCR Certification Program has three components:

1. APR endorses third-party companies to conduct certification process
2. Reclaimers hire these companies to conduct audits and, if successful, issue certifications
3. APR promotes certified PCR from reclaimers who are APR members to help buyers identify sources of PCR

APR does not collect a fee from the company seeking certification of postconsumer content or from the APR-endorsed certifying organization.

**Who is eligible to participate?**

- **Any plastics reclaimer** generating PCR pellet or flake can get certified through this program. APR members that receive certification are recognized on the APR website in a directory of certified PCR. **Any brand companies or converters** can use our listing to find certified PCR. **Certifying companies** can apply for endorsement from APR, to become an auditor.
Who are the APR-endorsed certifying companies? Is there a difference between their procedures?
See HERE for the current list of APR-endorsed certifying companies ("Find an Auditor."). All APR-endorsed certifying companies must meet APR's criteria and adhere to APR's guidelines, as defined by these operating procedures, to ensure a clear, consistent definition of PCR. The certifying companies do vary in size, business focus, and additional services, so APR recommends any company considering certification review their websites for more information.

What can I expect during the certification process?
A mass balance analysis will be conducted of all material flows within the recycling facility to ensure that enough PCR raw materials were purchased and used in production to consistently meet the recycled content claims within the certification period. There will also be an evaluation of the source of the recycled raw materials to determine the total percent (by weight) of PCR being used to manufacture the product. A site visit—whether virtual or in-person—will also be conducted. At the conclusion of the process, reclaimers will be provided with a certificate from the APR-endorsed certifying company. The certificate is valid for one year. Click here for additional information.

What does it cost to get my PCR certified?
The cost will vary based on the number of products being certified, suppliers, sites being audited, and other factors. You can expect the cost to begin at approximately $5,000 USD. Contact the APR-endorsed certifying companies to request a quote.

Why does this Program only include postconsumer resin (PCR) and not post-industrial resin (PIR)?
This Program was created to strengthen and increase plastic recycling. The APR Design® Guide for Plastics Recyclability helps companies design packaging from the start so that it can be recycled, and the APR PCR Certification program, which helps build a reliable, robust market for the production and consumption of recycled content in the form of postconsumer resin (PCR). This program strengthens the demand for PCR by providing confidence to buyers that the PCR they seek is legitimate, while simultaneously promoting the legitimate PCR for sale by plastics reclaimers.

PIR (post-industrial resin) typically has a specification that is consistent and predictable, which means it already easily finds a market and already has a strong
In order to move to a circular economy, and help turn old plastic packaging into new recycled content, we believe the industry must focus on strengthening the PCR market.

**Does this Program apply to chemically recycled PCR?**
This Program focuses on tracking the origin of the feedstock, which also applies to chemical recycling.

**What is not included in this Program?**
1. APR does not certify PCR content, nor does it concur with a certifying organization, but rather endorses companies that meet a set of requirements to conduct the certification process
2. APR does not adjudicate “percentage of PCR content” disagreements
3. APR membership is not a requirement for auditors or reclaimers
4. APR does not collect a fee from the company seeking certification of postconsumer content or from the APR-endorsed certifying organization

**Who is APR?**
The Association of Plastic Recyclers (APR) is an international trade association focused exclusively on plastics recycling, with membership spanning the entire industry. APR works to enhance the quality, increase the supply, and communicate the value of recycled plastics through technical resources, testing programs, design solutions, corporate training, regulatory leadership, and education programs. APR promotes the development of the plastics recycling industry by providing leadership for long-term industry growth and vitality that contributes to a circular economy. Simply put, APR is The Voice of Plastics Recycling®.

**How can I find a listing of certified PCR suppliers?**
APR lists certified PCR suppliers on its website [HERE](#). Please [contact us](#) to start the process.

**Does the Program apply to whole products?**
This Program currently certifies chain of custody from source to pellet and/or flake. APR is looking to expand the Program to certify chain of custody from source to end-product in the near future. If you are a brand company or converter, you can still play an important role by requesting or requiring certified PCR from your suppliers.

**Why should I get certified if it’s not required by law?**
PCR is becoming a requirement in many states. As of July 2022, it has been added into content mandate laws in California, Washington and New Jersey, and using PCR is an incentive in some states with EPR legislation, including Oregon, Maine and Colorado. APR has provided technical expertise and counsel to many state legislators as they discuss certification as a way to enforce these laws.
PCR is also a requirement of voluntary commitments—such as Ellen McArthur Foundation and US Plastics Pact. Buying or selling certified PCR can help to meet your company's voluntary commitments, and protect against possible reputational challenges.

**As a brand company or packaging manufacturer, what can I do?**
Supporting PCR Certification is important for both buyers and sellers of recycled content. As a brand company or packaging manufacturer, you play an important role by requesting certified PCR from your vendors. You can start by making sure your procurement teams know what questions to ask when inquiring about PCR and you can go further by requiring certified PCR in your contracts. [Click here for additional PCR Certification Procurement Guidance.](#)

**Do I really need to ask for certified PCR if I trust my suppliers?**
Certification benefits the entire industry. PCR Certification will be a simple step for reclaimers that have robust Quality Assurance (QA) procedures in place and are confident in their material sources, and it will encourage positive change in those who do not. PCR Certification will help build a more stable and reliable PCR industry.

**I already have to be FDA compliant to meet my customers’ internal requirements. Why another audit?**
Audits that support FDA and food-grade compliance are focused on the quality of materials for health purposes. PCR certification audits focus on the source of the materials for circularity purposes. Both are important, but the process is different. PCR certification is a relatively simple process. See [HERE](#) for an overview, and [contact us](#) to learn more.

**PCR supply is already low. Why should I narrow my options further by only buying certified PCR?**
PCR supply is low today and that is a challenge for many companies. And when buyers signal more demand, that is often what helps to change the market and lead to increased production and supply. This is true for certified PCR as well. Many reclaimers are waiting for buyers to demand certification. The purchasing practices of converters and brand companies are integral to developing a stable PCR market. Long term contracts provide reclaimers with the certainty to invest in increasing the supply and quality of the PCR they manufacture. And reclaimers will also make the investment to get certified, which helps build a more stable and reliable PCR industry.

Creating a reliable, transparent and robust market for PCR is necessary to build a truly circular economy, and taking the first steps today—whether it is giving procurement teams a list of questions to ask, or requiring certified PCR—will enable you to achieve long-term goals.