Chemical Recycling

APR POSITION: The APR supports the opportunity to accelerate the plastics circular economy, and reduce dependency on non-renewable resources, through the intersection of mechanical and chemical recycling technologies. Design for recycling is, and will continue to be, essential for a circular economy. Chemical recycling should not result in packaging manufacturers disregarding design for recycling guidelines. Chemical recycling has the potential to expand opportunities for recycling of materials that are not recycled by mechanical processes today.

Value: Technology improvement and investment across the entire recycling value chain, including mechanical and chemical recycling, will reduce plastic waste in the environment and provide the most sustainable materials to the industry.

Key Messages:

- The APR supports the analysis and development of an intersection of mechanical and chemical recycling as a means to increase the types of products that can be recycled, improve the quality of recycled plastics, and accelerate the availability of the outputs.
- With the increased attention given to the plastic waste issue, as well as increased regulatory action and consumer goods commitments related to plastics recycling – recycled content, recyclable materials, and recovery – it is critically necessary for the industry to research all solutions. In this effort, chemical recycling is receiving renewed focus.
- Chemical recycling is not a replacement for mechanical or traditional recycling, but it is a compliment to these processes for materials that are rarely recycled mechanically.
- Chemical recycling should only include processes converting resin feedstock to resin. Feedstock to fuel or energy should not be considered recycling.

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