



ASSOCIATION OF PLASTIC
RECYCLERS

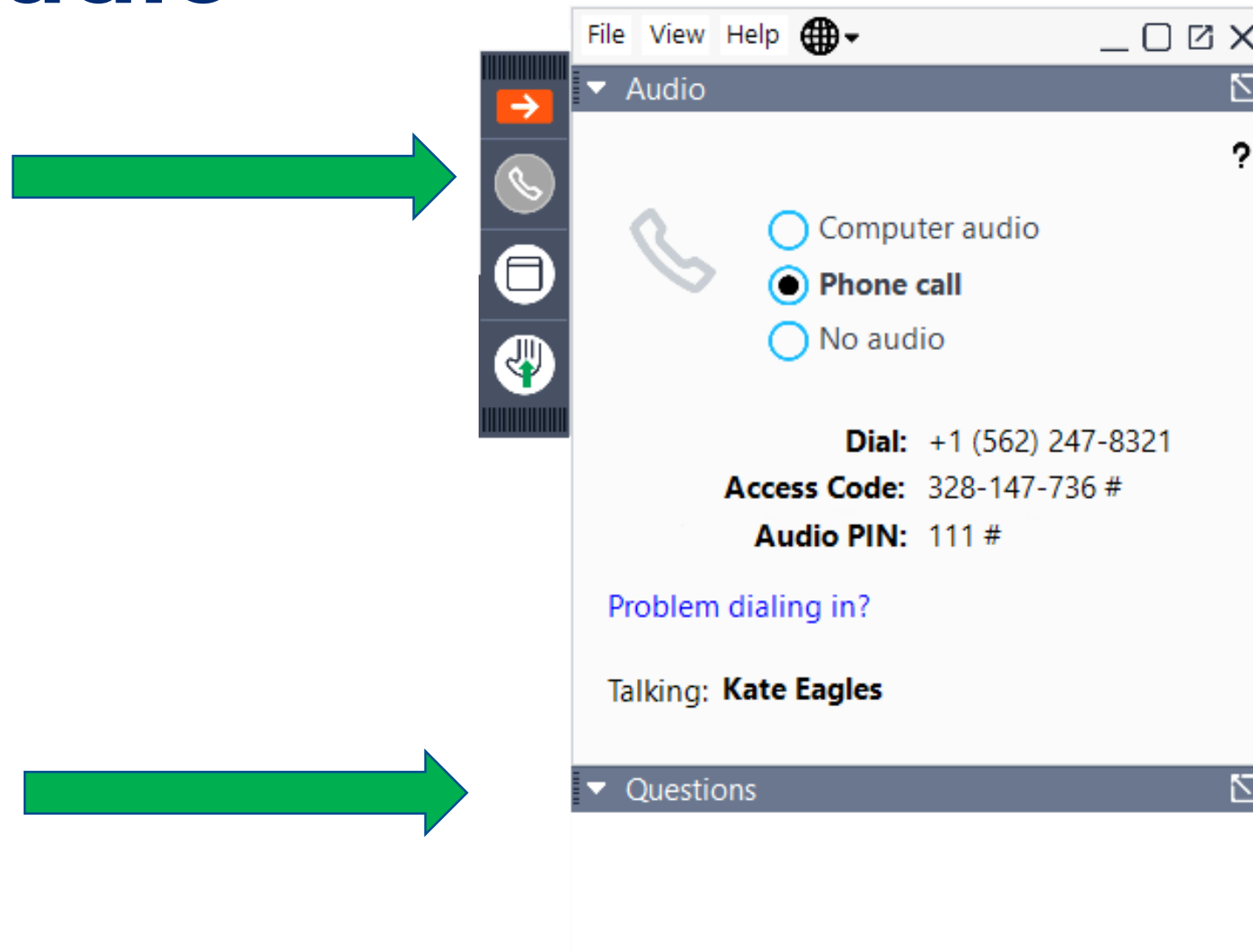
Plastics Recycling Myth Busters

Promoting fact-based information from industry
experts

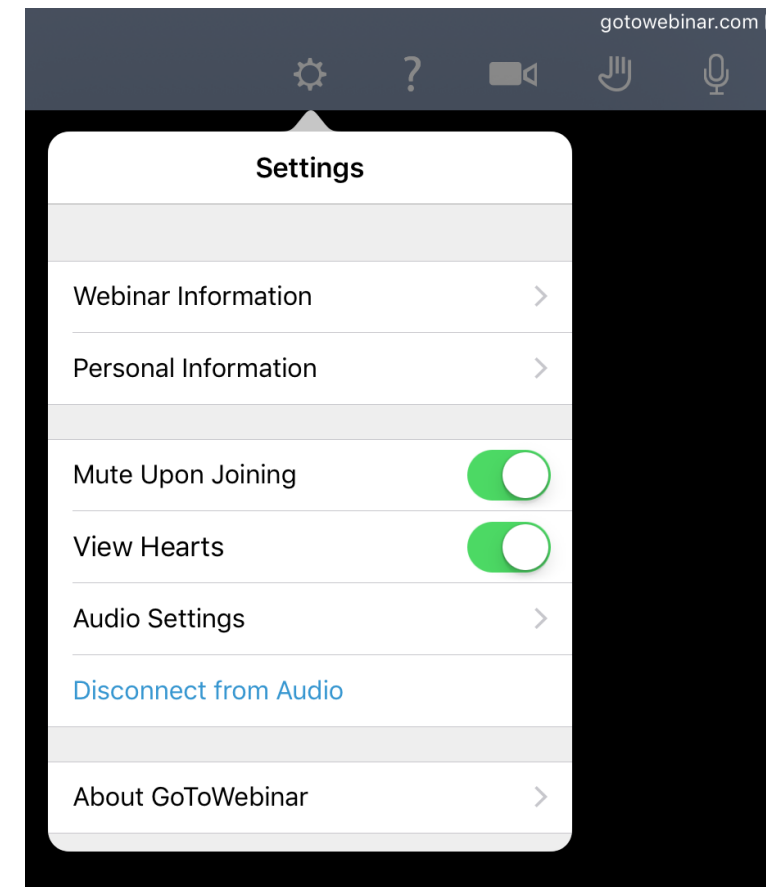
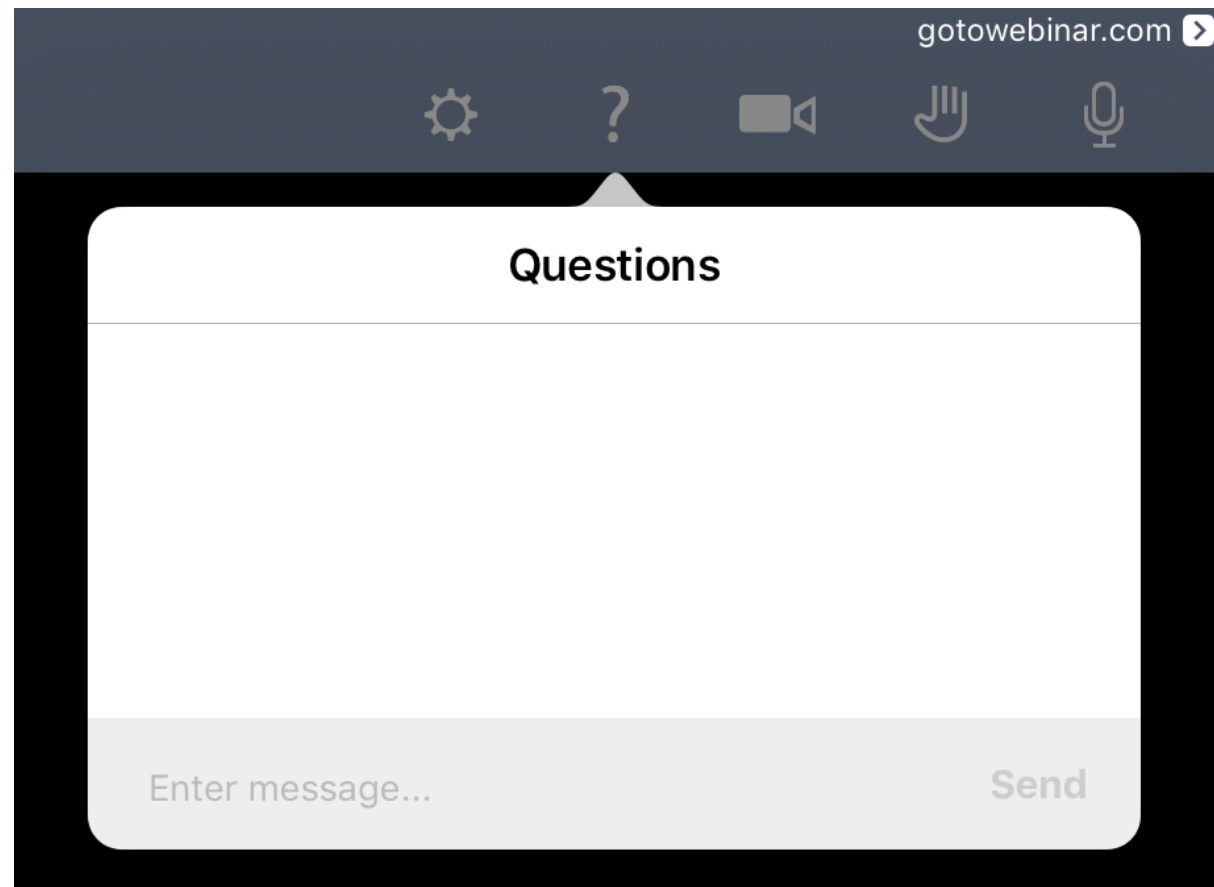
May 31, 2023

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Questions & Audio



Questions & Audio – Mobile Device



Today's Team



Kara Pochiro

VP Communications
& Public Affairs, APR



Kate Eagles

Program Director,
APR



Jimmy Lawler

Sales & Marketing
Manager, Sims
Municipal Recycling



Agenda

- ✓ Who is APR?
- ✓ Winning the story on plastics recycling
- ✓ Myth Busters
- ✓ Q&A



Who is APR?



Who is APR?



APR is a US-based international non-profit and the only North American organization focused exclusively on improving recycling for plastics.



**Reclaimers and Recyclers
are the CORE of APR**

APR Member Sampling

RECLAIMERS/RECYCLERS



AFFILIATES



[View all APR Members »](#)

Together, APR members span the entire value chain and shape the future of our industry.

- Reclaimers/Recyclers
- Brand Owners
- Retailers
- Converters
- Equipment Manufacturers
- Testing Laboratories
- Certifiers
- Label & Ink Manufacturers
- Resin Manufacturers
- Additives Manufacturers
- Researchers
- Technical Consultants
- And more!



APR Primary Goals



Increase Supply

Ensure used plastic gets into the recycling system and stays out of landfills and the environment



Enhance Quality

Guide companies on design and processing to reduce contamination and improve recyclability



Expand Demand

Identify solutions to expand the use of post-consumer recycled content and reduce extraction of natural resources



Communicate Value

Ensure policy makers and companies recognize the value of recycled content and the recycling process

What Do We Do?

Our mission is simple:
RECYCLE MORE PLASTICS
to reduce waste.



**“It’s easier for the world to
accept a simple lie than a
complex truth”**

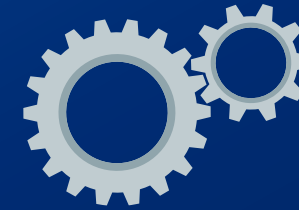
- Alexis de Tocqueville

The Facts About Recycling



Myth

Recycling plastics doesn't work and will never work.



Fact

Recycling plastics WORKS. In 2021 alone, North American recyclers processed 4.7 billion pounds of post-consumer plastic material.

<https://circularityinaction.com/2021PlasticRecyclingData>

Now you know.
#PlasticsRecyclingWorks



Recycling Works

It protects the environment and enables the circular economy.

Recycling Works!

Kate - Break down the 4.7

Jimmy - Sims processed over xxx plastics last year



The Facts About Recycling



Myth

Most of the plastics put in the bin do not actually get recycled.

<https://www.ball.com/getattachment/37f5f87f-d462-44c5-913f-d3075754741a/50-States-of-Recycling-Eunomia-Report-Final-Published-March-30-2021-UPDATED-v2.pdf>

Now you know.
#PlasticsRecyclingWorks



Fact

More than 70% of plastics collected for recycling get recycled. Programs vary across the U.S. Recycle only what your program accepts to ensure non-recyclables don't interfere.

Recycling Sorting Image by macrovector on Freepik

Plastics are Recycled

Jimmy -

*** I decided to use the 95% optical sortation stat on the next myth. If we can not think of something better for this one, let's just take it out

Plastics put in the garbage do not get recycled

Education

Access



The Facts About Recycling



Myth

Plastic is practically impossible to sort for recycling.



Fact

Optical sorting technology commonly used in recycling facilities can rapidly sort plastics at 95% accuracy. Sorting plastics is standard practice in the recycling process.

<https://plasticsrecycling.org/sortation-nir-metals-size>

Now you know.
#PlasticsRecyclingWorks

MRFs Sort Plastics Everyday

Kate - talk PET, HDPE, and PP recovery #s

Jimmy - MRF goals, etc

MRFs sort what should be in the bin



The Facts About Recycling



Myth

Most plastics are exported for recycling.



Fact

Exports have decreased since 2012. Through continued investment in domestic manufacturing, less than 8% of recovered plastics were exported in 2021.

<https://circularityinaction.com/2021PlasticRecyclingData>

Now you know.
#PlasticsRecyclingWorks

Exports Continue to Decrease

Jimmy - Sims sold to domestic markets, near ports

Kate –info from 202 on exports

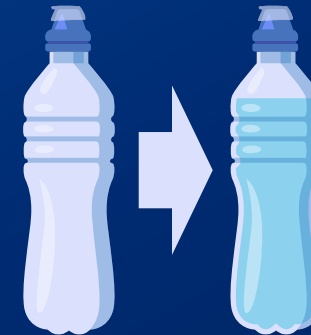


The Facts About Recycling



Myth

Bottle-to-bottle recycling does not exist. Most plastics are “downcycled.”



Fact

More PET bottles are made into new bottles than any other application. Markets have significantly shifted in recent years to more bottle-to-bottle recycling.

<https://circularityinaction.com/2021PlasticRecyclingData>

Now you know.
#PlasticsRecyclingWorks

Bottles are Recycled into New Bottles

Kate – feel free to add and additional data from the report. I added an abbreviated version of what you emailed me below.

I decided to just focus on PET on the myth slide, but good to add the HDPE you sent on this slide too. Just wanted to keep the “myth buster” simple!

- 2021 is the second year that the bottle end markets surpassed the fiber for recycled PET.
- The vast majority of Natural HDPE Bottles went into new bottles. The largest end use for Colored HDPE Bottles was pipe, followed by bottles
 - Other applications include construction, lawn/garden, automotive, film/sheet, and lumber/decking
- There is still a need for consistent durable goods markets to increase market breadth and depth for mixed color recycled post-consumer materials.



The Facts About Recycling



Myth

It is not beneficial to the environment or recycling if plastics are “downcycled.”



Fact

“Downcycling” is recycling! Using recycled content in place of new plastic reduces energy consumption and GHG emissions. We need to recycle plastics back into packaging and other long-lasting, useful applications.

<https://plasticsrecycling.org/images/library/2018-APR-LCI-report.pdf>

Now you know.
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Diverse Applications are Essential

Kate- Bottle to bottle is primary

key markets, resins are different, long-lasting durable markets

Technology looking at other options

Definition of “Circular Economy” – Kara will add this in



The Facts About Recycling



Myth

Plastics can cause fires at Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs).

Fact

Lithium-ion batteries that are inappropriately included in recycling bins can cause fires at MRFs. Plastics do not cause fires.

<https://plasticsrecycling.org/news-and-media/facts-about-fires-at-material-recovery-facilities>

Now you know.
#PlasticsRecyclingWorks

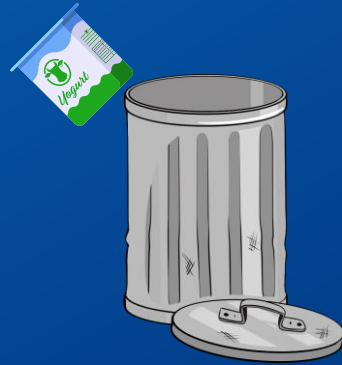
Plastics do not Cause Fires

Jimmy - Sims has fires every day

Never caused by bottles



The Facts About Recycling



Myth

Post-consumer Polypropylene (PP, #5) packaging and products have never been recyclable or recycled.

Fact

In 2021, 333.6 million pounds of PP were recovered for recycling including cups, tubs, and bottles.

<https://circularityinaction.com/2021PlasticRecyclingData>

Now you know.
#PlasticsRecyclingWorks

Polypropylene can be Recyclable and Recycled

Kate – data from report

Access study

Jimmy -Sims selling PP for over 10 years



The Facts About Recycling



Myth

Recycling enables the production of new plastics.

Fact

We can use less plastic by recycling more. Recyclers have the capacity to process much more material. When we collect and process more post-consumer plastic, we can make more products from recycled content and less from new plastic.

<https://plasticsrecycling.org/images/library/APR-Report-Recommit-Reimagine-and-Rework-Recycling-2022-8-9.pdf>

Now you know.
#PlasticsRecyclingWorks



ASSOCIATION OF PLASTIC
RECYCLERS

We Can Produce Less and Recycle More

Kara-

- Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle are all important.
- Reducing our use of plastic and reuse programs are appropriate strategies in some contexts.
- For much of the plastic we use every day, recycling is the best option.
- Recyclers have the capacity to recycle more plastics TODAY.



The Facts About Recycling



Myth

There's nothing I can do to improve recycling.



Fact

Everyone has a role to play. Producers can design for recycling and include recycled content, government can provide consistent and equitable collection services, and consumers can recycle right and buy recycled.

Now you know.
[#PlasticsRecyclingWorks](#)

Everyone Can Help Improve Recycling

Kara – add details about APR Programs, etc
Companies can specify the use of PCR



RECYCLING WORKS



when we all work together





ASSOCIATION OF PLASTIC
RECYCLERS



Thank you!



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