DATA
More than 6 million kilograms of EPS were recycled in 2018. This figure includes 2.8 million kilograms of post-use material and 3.9 million kilograms of post-industrial recovery. Post-use is defined as any material that is recycled after its intended end-use while post-industrial recovery includes EPS facility scrap that is recycled but never served its intended purpose as a packaging material or other end-use application.

The figures from 2011 through 2017 reference data from the Canadian Plastics Industry Association's (CPIA) annual Post-Consumer Plastics Recycling in Canada Report. The 2018 Canadian EPS Recycling Report was conducted by the EPS Industry Alliance (EPS-IA) and reflects both post-use and post-industrial expanded polystyrene recycling in Canada.
The 2018 Expanded Polystyrene Recycling Rate Study was conducted by the EPS Industry Alliance to gather data to reflect both post-use and post-industrial recycling activity. The 2018 results are based on data received from 8 EPS manufacturers and recyclers in Canada.

Canadian participation in the EPS recycling survey is voluntary and the reported data is based on the responses received. Many companies have limited resources to put towards participation in the survey, and some companies may choose not to respond due to their confidentiality policies. Therefore, because there is not 100 percent participation, the presented totals represent the minimum amount of EPS recovered for recycling.

Newer EPS recycling technologies to facilitate EPS collection and reprocessing launched in 2018 indicate growth rates will continue on an upward trend in the future. Like all industries, recycling is driven by market shifts and commodity price fluctuations and, in 2017, China’s import restrictions had a severe impact on all recyclables. Despite this, EPS recycling in Canada has proven to be sustainable.

Not everything can be recycled all the time. In order for materials to be recycled, stable markets must exist and there must be a demand for the end products. Each province and community has its own guidelines for which plastics are accepted, and these can vary. Some locations also offer consumer drop-off access. To find out if EPS recycling is available in your area, visit www.epsindustry.org. For consumers that do not have access to a local drop-off center, the EPS-IA sponsors a Mail-Back Program intended for smaller quantities of EPS which can be mailed via Canada Post (or other carrier) to more than 30 U.S. locations. Full instructions and a list of Mail-Back locations are available on the EPS-IA website.

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