



Used plastic: Genuine only with RAL Quality Mark!

22-Aug-2019 - Mainz

Many consumers are uncertain and ask: Does it really help to separate trash and toss plastic into the Yellow Bag or does everything end up in the incinerator anyway? Do companies practice effective recycling or is it all just for show?

That's where the newly created RAL Gütezeichen (Quality Mark) for “% of recycled plastic” comes in. It is the first independent quality mark that provides information about a product's proportion of recycled plastic material obtained from the Yellow Bag or Yellow Bin. The reuse of production and industrial waste is expressly excluded in the RAL mark that reports percentage of recycled plastic in order to encourage the reuse of plastic material from household waste.

The objectives for the quality mark are to give consumers the assurance that they are buying a truly resource-saving product and to boost acceptance of recycled products. "The RAL Quality Mark makes the use of recycled plastic transparent and thus promotes understanding of the need for diligent trash separation as the basis for a genuine circular economy," said Dr. Ina-Maria Becker, Chairperson of the Quality Assurance Association Recycles from Close-to-Home Recyclables Collections. "It also shows that packaging from the retail shelf is returned to the retail shelf. The valuable plastic remains in a closed loop, where it is reused again and again."





Alexander Schau, packaging developer at Werner & Mertz, accepted the certificate from Dr. Ina-Maria Becker, Chairperson of the Quality Assurance Association Recyclates from Close-to-Home Recyclables Collections. Photo: Werner & Mertz

RAL Quality Mark supports the goals of the Recyclate Initiative

Werner & Mertz of Mainz, one of the founding members of the RAL Quality Mark, has been engaged in high-quality processing and recycling of used plastic from the Yellow Bag since it established the Recyclate Initiative in 2012.

"We think the recycling or upcycling of used plastic from household collections is the most effective approach to counteract the polluting of our planet with plastic," said Alexander Schau, packaging developer at Werner & Mertz. "When plastic is kept in a closed loop, it is a highly sustainable material. The quality mark makes it possible for the consumer to recognize immediately what high-quality packaging is created from Yellow Bag material."

In addition to Werner & Mertz, other cooperation partners in the Recyclate Initiative, namely, The Green Dot, ALPLA and honorary member NABU, also are members of the RAL quality association.

There's still a lot of room for growth in the recycling of plastic waste from the Yellow Bin and recycling bins because manufacturers often reject recyclates made from this waste. Companies like Werner & Mertz, however, show with the RAL Quality Mark Recyclates from close-to-home recyclable collections that high-quality packaging and products can be made from it," said NABU National Director Leif Miller. "The new label supports the recycling of plastic and shows consumers that separating trash is worth the effort and contributes to environmental and resource protection."



The RAL Quality Mark provides the portion of recyclates from the Yellow Bag in the entire packaging, including label and cap. The figure in percentage is made up of the weight of those components. For the packaging of emsal Parkett, for example, the bottle is made of 100% of recyclates from the Yellow Bag and the cap and label each of 0% recyclates for a total share of recyclates equal to 84%. Graphic: Werner & Mertz

Extensive certification process for complete traceability

So that the portion of recyclates from the Yellow Bag in the packaging can be completely guaranteed, all the process steps – from sorting and reprocessing to the use of recyclates in individual products – are documented and inspected at all production sites.

The audit at Werner & Mertz includes all the production sites for ALPLA and Werner & Mertz (Mainz and Hallein) which are relevant for the product to be certified. Independent appraisers and technical experts contracted by the RAL quality association carry out the certification. Regular checks by the company itself and third-party inspections every two years ensure that the information provided is transparent.

The first step was an audit of the PE packaging from Werner & Mertz, which includes packaging from the brands emsal, green care Professional and the new shower gel bottle for Frosch Senses. In the next step the PET packaging will be validated.



In the first step, an audit was conducted of the PE packaging from Werner & Mertz, including packaging for the brands emsal and bionicdry and the new shower gel bottle for Frosch Senses. Photo: Werner & Mertz

Press contact:

Werner & Mertz GmbH
Corporate Communication
Birgitta Schenz
Rheinallee 96
55120 Mainz

BSchenz@werner-mertz.com
Telefon +49 6131-964-20 28
Fax +49 6131-964-23 30