

Press Release

Recyclates: Recycled Materials as the Next Step Towards Increased Sustainability for High-End Laboratory Consumables

Hamburg, June 2024

In life science laboratories, where precision and purity are non-negotiable, the demand for environmentally friendly solutions is now higher than it has ever been. Laboratories are grappling with the environmental impact of their activities, and they are aware that the ever-increasing demand for plastic consumables is not resource-friendly. Therefore, in order to become more sustainable, future laboratory consumables made from plastic materials must be able to be manufactured from renewable or recycled raw materials.

Eppendorf's commitment to sustainability is evident in many areas, including in the transition of laboratory consumables to biobased raw materials, beginning in 2022. At the same time, recycled materials also show great potential for those parts of a product which do not come into direct contact with the sample. Recycled materials, also known as recyclates, are generally known as re-used plastics made from PE (polyethylene), PP (polypropylene) or PET (polyethylene terephthalate), which have been discarded at least once by households or businesses and which are used for the manufacture of new products.

“The “Post Consumer Recyclate (PCR)” used for disposable racks for pipette tips is of industrial origin, obtained exclusively from leftover materials arising during the contact lens manufacturing process” says Brigitte Klose, Global Marketing Manager for Consumables at Eppendorf SE. “This type of “single source” intra-type collection of polypropylene from the production of medical products ensures that the recyclate will retain the purity and integrity which are a condition of the manufacturing process of laboratory consumables. We request documentation from our suppliers with respect to the traceability of the recyclate, as well as compliance of all processes with EN 15343:2007.”

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Since late May of this year, Eppendorf has initiated the transition to recyclates of those containers which enclose consumables. Initially, this transition pertains to racks for single-use pipette tips which are typically used in laboratories conducting sterile work. These single-use racks are indispensable for the utilization of the pipette tips. The racks provide the pipette tips with stability and protection, to the very last tip. Like the pipette tips, these single-use racks must be of the same purity and sterility, and thus far, they had been manufactured from highly pure fossil-based polypropylene. “This transition to recyclate will conserve this limited fossil fuel resource, and Eppendorf will achieve a savings of more than 166 tons of CO₂ per year” Klose says.

This change in the polypropylene used for the manufacture of the racks will influence neither the purity, nor the sterility or the stability of the epT.I.P.S.[®] pipette tips in single-use racks. Our customers can switch easily, without suffering any loss of quality. This is further verified by lot-specific quality certificates.

www.eppendorf.com/tips

www.eppendorf.com/sustainability

About Eppendorf Group

Eppendorf is an international leader in the life science industry, developing, producing and distributing equipment, consumables and services that are used in laboratories around the world.

The product portfolio of the divisions Liquid Handling, Consumables, Separation & Instrumentation and Bioprocess includes pipettes, pipette tips, centrifuges, mixers, ULT freezers and bioreactors for cell and gene research. Furthermore, Eppendorf offers a wide range of high-quality consumables. Eppendorf Group reported a total sales figure of 1.23 billion euros for the financial year 2022 while their research and development (R&D) investments amounted to 76 million euros.

Eppendorf products are used in academic and industrial research laboratories, for example in pharmaceutical, biotech, chemical and food companies. Other fields of application for Eppendorf products include clinical and environmental analytical laboratories, forensics and industrial laboratories for process analysis, production and quality assurance.

Eppendorf Group is headquartered in Hamburg, Germany, since 1945 and has production facilities and R&D sites in Europe, Asia and North America. The Group’s subsidiaries are spread across 33 countries. Today, the Group has more than 5,000 employees around the world. In their everyday work, all of these employees have one and the same mission, proclaimed by the company’s founder: Improving human living conditions.

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