

Investing in aluminium packaging sorting and recycling pays off

Brussels, 30 September 2020 - Several speakers stressed the need to invest now into the Circular Economy, during the European Aluminium web workshop on investing in better collection and sorting of used aluminium packaging for recycling. A recent study by HTP¹ performed for the Packaging Group of European Aluminium clearly demonstrates that it really pays off to invest in aluminium packaging sorting and recycling.

Both Andy Doran, chairman of the Packaging Group and Michael Langen of HTP, a leading German consultancy on waste management, stated that by using a second Eddy Current Separator² for the aluminium fraction in a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) or sorting station for lightweight packaging, 30% more aluminium can be sorted, up to a level of 89%. With the installation of an additional induction sensor sorter or a robot sorter, another 4-6% aluminium containing packaging can be easily sorted for recycling. And the depreciation time for such investments stays within a reasonable period of 3 to 4 years. Presentations from two European leading companies in advanced sorting technologies Steinert and TOMRA also demonstrated that these innovative sorting tools make a real difference.

Mattia Pellegrini, Head of the Waste Unit of EU Commission DG Environment mentioned that *“The new European Circular Economy Action Plan mandates the EU to work on an integrated approach to packaging, including the circulation of all packaging we use, keeping it in the economy and out of the environment”*.

Member of the European Parliament Maria Spyraiki added: *“The COVID-19 crisis makes the circular economy more relevant than ever. Raw materials are not inexhaustible. Repairability, recyclability, reusability and remanufacturing are the main opportunities in resilience!”*

“We call upon local authorities and waste management companies to make the necessary investments in order to be prepared for the new European recycling targets for packaging and a separate target for used aluminium packaging. On top, we are asking for a European harmonisation of the national waste collection level, while taking into account regional differences and respecting clear sorting instructions for the citizens”, concluded Andy Doran.

¹ [HTP Study 'Ideal Sorting Model for Aluminium Packaging'](#)

² Eddy Current Separators are the ‘magnets’ for non-ferrous metals like aluminium, rejecting and thus separating the aluminium from the other waste fractions.

About European Aluminium:

European Aluminium, founded in 1981 and based in Brussels, is the voice of the aluminium industry in Europe. We actively engage with decision makers and the wider stakeholder community to promote the outstanding properties of aluminium, secure growth and optimise the contribution our metal can make to meeting Europe’s sustainability challenges. Through environmental and technical expertise, economic and statistical analysis, scientific research, education and sharing of best practices, public affairs and communication activities, European Aluminium promotes the use of aluminium as a material with permanent properties that is part of the solution to achieving sustainable goals, while maintaining and improving the image of the industry, of the material and of its applications among their stakeholders. Our 80+ members include primary aluminium producers; downstream manufacturers of extruded, rolled and cast aluminium; producers of recycled aluminium and national aluminium associations are representing more than 600 plants in 30 European countries. Aluminium products are used in a wide range of markets, including automotive, transport, high-tech engineering, building, construction and packaging.