

Access to curbside recycling has been rising for years, so why doesn't it have a stronger effect on the beverage container recycling rate?

Many beverages are consumed and discarded away from home, where recycling services are not available. Up to 50-70% of beverages are consumed in households, and the remaining 30-50% of beverages are consumed away-from-home, at bars, restaurants, offices, parks, educational institutions and on-the-go.¹ Furthermore, curbside recycling is often NOT provided to multi-family residences, and these comprise around one-third of the U.S. housing stock, per the U.S. census. At best, curbside recycling can deliver a 40-45% recycling rate for beverage containers, as the experiences in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, Canada show.²

Container deposits and curbside recycling are complementary

Independent research from the Congressional Research Service (CRS), which prepares reports for the U.S. Congress, states that both a deposit return program and curbside recycling are necessary to achieve

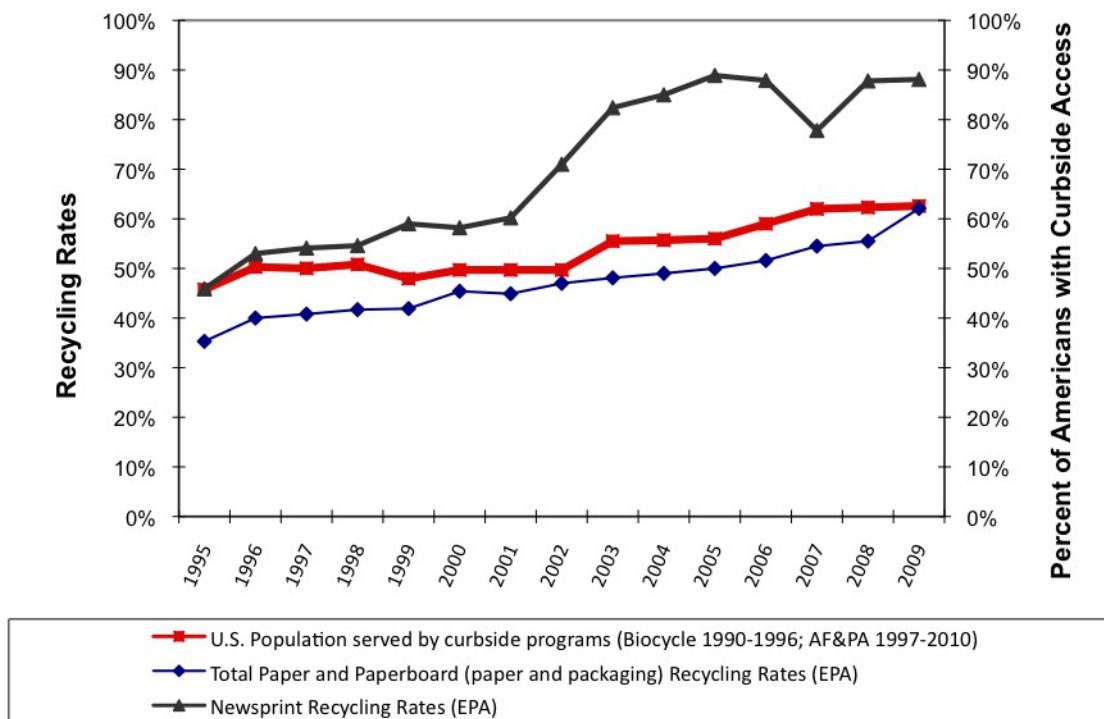
¹ Away-from-home consumption of beverage containers as a share of total sales, is estimated to be between 30%-63% for plastic bottles; 13%-75% for aluminum cans; and 25%-55% for glass bottles. See all studies and methodologies that reference away-from-home ratios at: www.cmconsultinginc.com, *Who Pays What, 2012.*, Away-from-home market shares. The American Beverage Association (ABA) suggests an away-from-home consumption rate of 30%, but does not specify by container or beverage type.

high recycling rates and that having both programs result in less costs for curbside recycling. Specifically,

“Both systems can serve as elements of comprehensive recycling programs. Neither constitutes a comprehensive program by itself. Neither excludes the use of the other.”

“Deposit systems skim potential sources of revenue from curbside programs, but they also reduce the operating costs of curbside programs. Local governments would appear to achieve greater diversion of solid waste from disposal at a lower cost per ton if both a bottle bill and a curbside collection program were in place.”¹

**Comparing Curbside Recycling Access and
Paper/Paperboard & Newspaper Recycling Rates
(1995-2009)**



© 2012 Container Recycling Institute

¹² CM Consulting, *Who Pays What 2010*, p. 11.

³ *Bottle Bills and Curbside Recycling: Are They Compatible?* James E. McCarthy, Specialist, Environment and Natural Resources Policy Division. January 27, 1993.