



## NERC Northeast Recycling Market Report

Period covered October 1 – December 31, 2022

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## Background

The Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) supports recycling market development and opportunities for improvements in its 11-state region: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

In 2018, in partnership with the Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA), we formed a *Regional Recycling Markets Development Committee*. The Committee determined that having information about the value of commodities processed by the region's Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs)<sup>1</sup> would be helpful for assessing regional market trends and to serve as an educational tool for promoting improved residential recycling and participation. The results have been invaluable to recyclers, MRFs, and also municipalities and state agencies.

This is the 15th report. The first report covered the period April – June 2019 and focused on NERC's 11-state region. The scope of the participating states expanded in the first quarter of 2020 with the receipt of a grant from EPA Region 3. This report reflects information received from 14 MRFs in ten states. Among respondents are single stream, dual stream, and source separated MRFs. The survey is conducted quarterly.

These survey results reflect the differing laws and collection options in the participating states. Five of the states have beverage container deposit laws. As a result, fewer glass bottles, PET bottles and aluminum cans are processed in MRFs in those states. Those MRFs are also likely to have less revenue from those recyclables. In addition, the report reflects a mix of single stream, dual stream, and source separation to collect recyclables with single stream being the most common approach. The type of collection used will have an impact on MRF design and operation. Thus, the data from this report reflects the unique blend of facilities and statewide laws in the reporting states.

A special thank you to Robert (Max) Babits, RRS for providing technical support.

*At no time will any individual company information be shared with anyone outside of NERC staff. No participating facilities will be identified and no state-specific data will be released.*

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<sup>1</sup> Material Recovery Facility (MRF) is a facility that receives, separates, and prepares recyclable materials from the public for marketing to processors and end-user manufacturers.

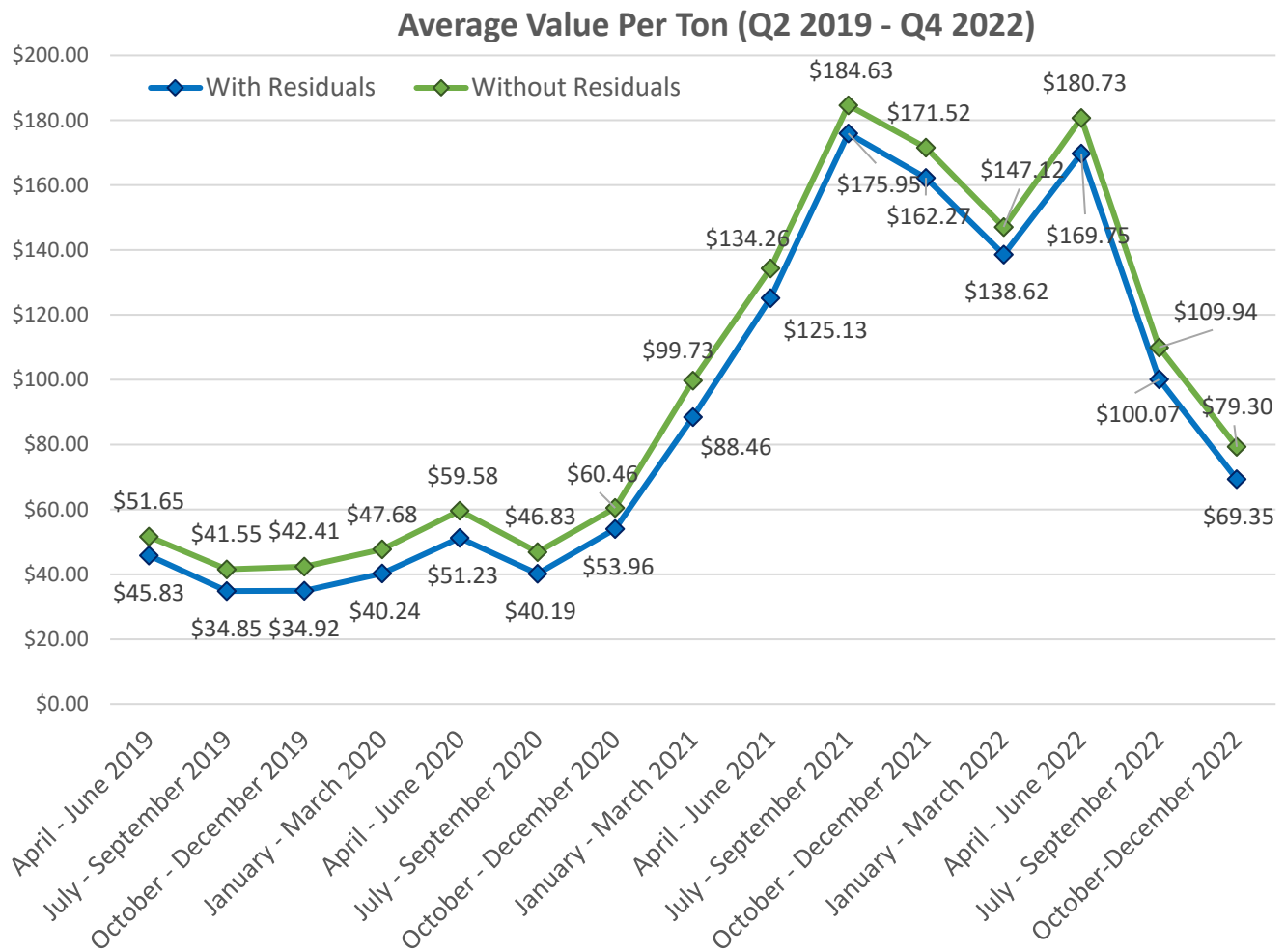
## Average Commodity Value per Ton of Marketed Materials

Survey respondents reported the average value received/paid for common commodities from residential recycling during the period October – December 2022. These values were then combined into a weighted average to reflect the blended value per ton for recyclables marketed in the region.

Residuals refers to the incoming material that cannot be marketed and goes to disposal. The value without residuals reflects the value of a ton of marketed material without the expense of handling residuals, while the value with residuals reflects the value of each ton processed with the costs of managing residuals taken into account.

| All Reporting MRFs | Blended Value<br>October – December 2022 | Percentage Change from<br>Previous Quarter |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Without residuals  | \$79.30                                  | -28%                                       |
| With residuals     | \$69.35                                  | -31%                                       |

The decreases this quarter can be attributed to national and regional trends.



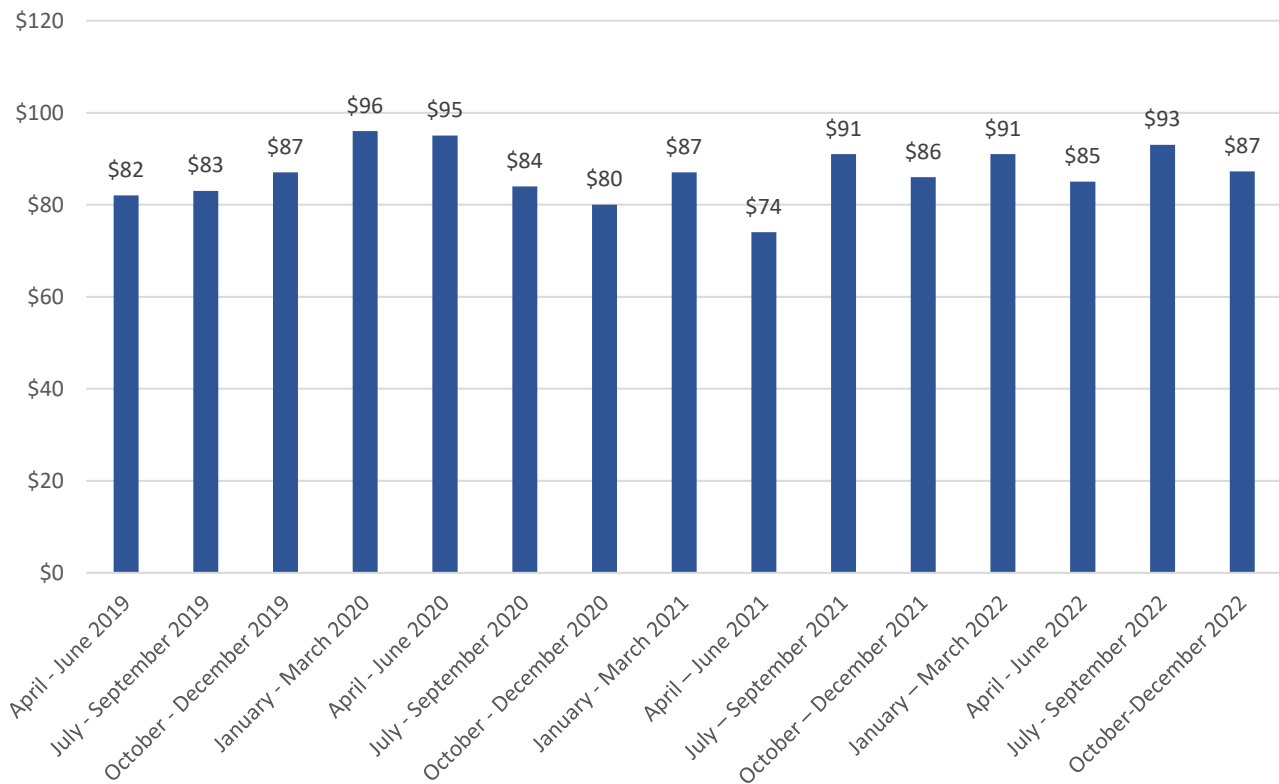
Of the responding MRFs, 71% were single stream and 29% dual stream/source separated.

|                          | Single Stream | Percentage Change from Previous Quarter | Dual Stream/Source Separated | Percentage Change from Previous Quarter |
|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Without residuals</b> | \$ 76.64      | -26%                                    | \$ 80.88                     | -38%                                    |
| <b>With residuals</b>    | \$ 67.16      | -29%                                    | \$ 74.51                     | -39%                                    |

## Processing Costs

Several MRFs reported processing costs<sup>2</sup> for the period October - December 2022. The average processing cost per was \$87/ton. This represents a decrease of 6% from the previous period. We have found that the average processing costs changes significantly from quarter to quarter – sometimes up and sometimes down. We do not have an opinion or explanation for this.

**Average Processing Cost Per Ton (Q2 2019 - Q4 2022)**



<sup>2</sup> Processing cost is the cost per ton to sort and prepare the commodities for sale.