

A B S T R A C TPROCESS FOR RECYCLING MIXED
POLYMER CONTAINING POLYETHYLENE TEREPHTHALATE

The invention provides a process for recovering polyester polymers, particularly polyethylene terephthalate (PET) from a mixed polymer recycle stream, typically in the form of carbonated soft drink or other containers. This process comprises: (1) contacting the mixed polymer recycle stream with a solvent which selectively dissolves the polyester, (2) separating the selective solvent containing PET from the residual mixed polymer, (3) cooling the selective solvent to precipitate the polyester, and (4) separating the polyester thereby recovered. In a preferred embodiment, the mixed polymer recycle stream is chemically washed subsequent to water washing and prior to contact with the selective solvent. The polyester recovered is preferably combined with "virgin" polyester and further processed to increase its molecular weight.

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