

BillerudKorsnäs: new study shows that paper is better than plastic

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Research Institute has concluded a comparative study on the environmental performance of different packaging solutions. The study compares the lifecycles of plastic products versus corresponding paper products from BillerudKorsnäs. The results show that paper has considerably more favorable environmental qualities than plastic, such as 50-70% lower greenhouse gas emissions.

IVL's study looks at the entire product lifecycle, from material production up until it is thrown away or recycled. Although the transportation and packaging production of plastic products emits less greenhouse gas, the results show that the overall product lifecycle of paper products give rise to far less emissions. Material production of both paper and plastic packaging is the most energy intense part of production. But according to the study, which has been verified by Bureau Veritas, plastic production emits far more greenhouse gas than paper production.

"The results of the study challenge a common misconception that the production of paper packaging is more energy consuming and environmentally detrimental than the production of plastic packaging. An important reason why the production of the tested BillerudKorsnäs packaging materials emits less greenhouse gas is that their process is almost entirely run on renewable energy. Another reason is that the total energy consumption for production of these products is lower", says Lena Dahlgren, project manager, IVL.

Plastic littering a concern for the European Union

The EU parliament has recently introduced measures that will limit the use of plastic bags in Europe. The aim is to decrease their use from 200 plastic bags per person and year to 90 plastic bags per person and year before the end of 2019. Each member country will be free to decide how this goal will be achieved, but a possible solution might be to increase the use of paper bags.

"BillerudKorsnäs welcomes the EU initiative to deal with Europe's littering problems. Paper and board packaging are not the only solutions. It is important to reduce littering, regardless of material. But given a choice between plastic and paper, we believe that our products can contribute to solutions against both plastic littering as well as climate change, two of our times largest sustainability challenges", says Henrik Essén, SVP Communication and Sustainability, BillerudKorsnäs.

Please follow the link for the complete IVL report:

http://www.billerudkorsnas.com/PageFiles/891/Widjet_Sustainability_extra/LCA%20report%20BillerudKorsn%c3%a4s%202015%20-%20Final.pdf

BillerudKorsnäs provides packaging materials and solutions that challenge conventional packaging for a sustainable future. We are a world leading provider of primary fiber based packaging materials and have customers in over 100 countries. The company has 8 production units in Sweden, Finland and the UK and about 4300 employees in over 13 countries. BillerudKorsnäs has an annual turnover of about SEK 21 billion and is listed on Nasdaq Stockholm.

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