

EU Environmental Council To Consider End To Cadmium And Mercury Battery Ban Exemptions

The EU Environmental Council is scheduled to meet on October 25 to consider a number of issues including adoption of proposed changes to the EU Battery and Accumulator Directive.

The Council will consider a recommendation by the European Commission to end exempting nickel-cadmium batteries used for power tools. In March, the Commission reported that suitable replacement technology (lithium ion) not only exists but is already being voluntarily phased in by cordless tool manufacturers.

The end to a second exemption - this one for mercury-containing button batteries or cells - will also be considered. Again, lithium has become a viable replacement technology and is already being phased in by battery producers.

Get more information at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/homepage>.

Massachusetts DEP Uses Hidden Cameras To Catch Illegal Dumpers

Last week, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) said it is using digital cameras equipped with motion sensors to document vehicles that illegally dump waste or "fly tip." The cameras photograph the license plates of the vehicles used to dump.

The technology is being deployed in "public spaces" in the city of Lawrence and appears to be particularly effective at night. According to MassDEP, the cameras have documented more than a dozen such environmental crimes since June. Violators have been fined \$300 each and their identities made public.

The MassDEP announcement is posted at <http://www.mass.gov/dep/public/press/1012stfo.htm>

Statistics & Trends

US Recycled 2,624 Million Pounds Of Plastic Bottles In 2011

According to a 14-page report released today by the American Chemistry Council (ACC), recycling of plastic bottles in the United States last year increased by 45 million pounds from a year earlier. A total of 2,624 million pounds of plastic bottles were recycled.

The amount of PET bottles collected last year increased by 47 million pounds for a total of 1,604 million pounds.

The largest percentage increase for a bottle material was for polypropylene at 24 percent. Nearly 44 million pounds of the material was collected. However, the amount of HDPE bottles collected dropped slightly to 974 million pounds.

The report was prepared by the ACC, the Association of Postconsumer Plastic Recyclers, the National Association for PET Container Resources and Moore Recycling Associates, Inc.

Download a copy of the 2011 plastic bottles recycling report at plastics.americanchemistry.com/Education-Resources/Publications/2011-National-Post-Consumer-Plastics-Bottle-Recycling-Report.pdf.

Thailand Issues First Label Identifying A Nanosubstance-Containing Product

Late last month, the Nanotechnology Association of Thailand issued its first label identifying a product containing a nanosubstance - in this instance a antibacterial paint containing nanosilver. The award of the new label, which is called "NanoQ," is valid for two years after which the producer must submit a fresh product sample for retesting and label reissuance.



The Nanotechnology Association of Thailand said that it is encouraging all manufacturers of nanosubstance-containing paint, ceramics, textiles, and household plastics to submit their products for testing and award of the label.

The Nanotechnology Association of Thailand announcement is posted at <http://www.asia-anf.org/NewsDetails.php?NewsId=368>

Brazilian Stewardship Program Recovers More Than 28,000 Tons Of Pesticide Containers

The Instituto Nacional de Processamento de Embalagens Vazias (inpEV) announced on Tuesday that from January through September of this year it had collected 28,652 tons of empty pesticide containers - an increase of five percent from the same nine month period last year.

The program that inpEV administers, which started in 2002, is often cited as a model to which other product stewardship schemes under development in Brazil should aspire. Many of the pesticide containers are cleaned and returned to manufacturers for reuse, and those which are not are incinerated under controlled conditions.

The inpEV announcement is posted at <http://www.inpev.org.br/educacao/noticias/br/noticiaView.asp?noticiald=73333333424334233342344324344343433337D282239426241D6639D5724D5052D59487468BCD>.

Scottish Government Food Waste Prevention Campaign Is Landfill Diversion-Minded

According to the Scottish Government, about 20 percent of food purchased by Scottish consumers goes to waste. A national campaign launched on Monday by the Scottish Government aims to reduce food waste and to not only save consumers money but to help reduce biodegradable waste otherwise disposed in landfills - a European Union requirement. Scotland plans to ban landfill disposal of food waste by 2020.

According to the Scottish Government announcement, "*Reducing food waste is seven times better for the environment than any recycling option, but sometimes it can't be avoided and food recycling services are now being rolled out in towns and cities across Scotland. Recycling our food waste can generate renewable energy and be turned into a fertiliser to benefit Scottish farmers.*"

The full Scottish Government announcement is posted at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2012/10/food_waste08102012.

Belgium Lures Young With Free WiFi To Not Litter

The Government of Belgium and Fost Plus, the Flemish packaging compliance scheme, are providing the use of free WiFi near public trash containers and recycling bins to encourage residents to not litter. Many of the WiFi hotspots are near trash containers located near schools in an attempt to reduce student littering.

The government and Fost Plus are also providing apps, free posters, and online games to help improve students attitudes about litter prevention and the need to recycle packaging waste while "on the go."

Get more information at <http://www.indevuilbak.be>.

Business Initiatives

EU Retail Forum Issues Paper On How To Minimize Waste

On Tuesday, the EU Retail Forum, a business sustainability platform supported by the European Commission, issued an eight-page paper that reviews EU waste related regulations and outlines current environmental challenges. However, much of the document focuses on minimizing food waste.

Among the recommendations offered to retailers were 1) reducing packaging sizes and increasing loose (bulk) food stuffs, 2) educate consumers on the meanings of "use by" and "best before" dates, 3) advise consumers on how to handle, store and use food more efficiently, and 4) help organize food redistribution networks.

The paper also has recommendations for actions that producers, government policy makers and consumers can each take to minimize waste and use resources more efficiently.

Download the EU Retail Forum paper at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/industry/retail/pdf/IP%20Waste%20minimisation.pdf>.

Possible Chinese Ban On Plastic Waste Imports Worries UK Industry Association

The United Kingdom's Packaging and Films Association (PAFA) said this week that it is concerned that the UK recycling target for plastic waste will likely not be met if China imposes a ban on plastic waste imports. Malaysia recently implemented such a ban.

According to the PAFA, reports from three Chinese government agencies indicate China "*will consider strictly enforcing regulations that prohibit the import of unwashed, post-consumer plastics as well as banning the transfer of imported waste to a company other than that allowed by the import licence.*" PAFA said much of the 67 percent of plastic waste that is exported goes to the Far East, according to PAFA.

Last month, the British Plastics Federation also said the UK plastic recycling target would likely not be met unless local governments did more to boost collections.

The complete PAFA statement may be reviewed at <http://www.pafa.org.uk/attachments/article/101/Exporting%20plastic%20waste%20to%20the%20far%20east.doc>

The Green Perspective

Danish Information Center Warns Parents About Purchasing PVC Rain Gear

Children's products made from PVC are again the target of environmentally-focused organization - this time the Danish Information Center for Environment and Health. The Center warned parents to avoid buying rain coats and boots made from PVC because it says the material contaminates the environment and could contain phthalates, some of which have been banned in Danish children's products. The Center suggested buying children's boots made of natural rubber and rain coats made from other plastics.

The Center also raised concerns about metal zippers that could contain cadmium or lead and coat fabrics treated with potentially harmful rain repellent chemicals.

The Danish Information Center's announcement is posted at <http://www.forbrugerkemi.dk/nyheder/toj/vaerd-at-vide-om-regntoj-og-gummistovler>.

EWG Identifies Household Cleaning Products Containing Formaldehyde-Producing Chemical

In the alphabet soup of environmentally suspicious chemicals, HHT may be relatively unknown. However, last week, the US-based Environmental Working Group (EWG) identified a company that produces cleaning products containing HHT or Hexahydro-1,3,5-tris(2-hydroxyethyl)-s-triazine. According to EWG, HHT "*releases formaldehyde during product use.*"

EWG said that the company produces "a line of cleaners marketed to parents of babies." However, EWG also noted that "the company is making plans to remove the preservative from its entire line."

EWG, which produces a *Guide to Healthy Cleaning*, said it plans to conduct more research on the use of toxic preservatives in household cleaning products.

The Environmental Working Group announcement can be reviewed at <http://www.ewg.org/release/cleaning-products-marketed-safe-babies-contain-known-human-carcinogen>

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