

Croatia Publishes Draft Regulation Limiting Volatile Organic Compounds

Today, the Croatian Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection published a draft regulation limiting the levels of volatile organics compounds (VOCs) in paints, varnishes and other finishes. A public consultation on the draft regulation will be open for the next 30 days.

The draft regulation would bring Croatia into compliance with requirements of the updated version of EU Directive 1999/13/EC on VOCs.

Download the Croatian draft VOC regulation at http://www.mzoip.hr/doc/Propisi/Obrazac_sadrzaja_14_11_2012.pdf.

Canada Seeks To Tighten Restrictions On Flame Retardant TBBPA

Last week, the Government of Canada published a draft screening assessment report on the flame retardant tetrabromobisphenol A (TBBPA) and two derivatives and opened a 60-day public consultation.

According to the draft screening assessment report, TBBPA may be environmentally persistent and released "*above the level expected to cause harm to organisms.*" (That conclusion was not carried by the two TBBPA derivatives.) Therefore, the Government of Canada "*will consider options to prevent or minimize releases of TBBPA to the environment*" unless the final screening assessment report recommends otherwise.

Get more information at <http://www.chemicalsubstanceschimiques.gc.ca/plan/approach-approche/tbbpa-eng.php>

Statistics & Trends

Dutch E-Waste Collection Down Year-To-Date

Last week, the Dutch WEEE compliance scheme Wecycle (NVMP Association) reported that WEEE collections for the first nine months of 2012 was down five percent from the same period last year. About 91 million kilograms of WEEE was collected from January through September this year.

Collection of end-of-life lighting was down six percent so far this year. More dramatic was the decrease in the information and communications technology (ICT) category of WEEE - 25 percent from a year earlier.

Wecycle projects that 2012 WEEE collections will total only 122 million kilograms, down from 128 million kilograms in 2011. It attributes the decline to the slow economy.

The Wecycle announcement is posted at <http://www.producenten-verantwoordelijkheid.nl/index.php?id=139>.

Romanian Government Helps Launch Beverage Container Reverse Vending Machine Program

On Monday, the Romanian Ministry of Environment helped launch a program that places reverse vending machines in shopping malls and hypermarkets to increase the amount of aluminum and PET beverage containers collected for recycling.

Consumers receive 0.5 new leu (RON) for each container accepted in the form of vouchers. According to the Ministry, only three percent of such aluminum beverage containers are currently recycled, but the Ministry wants to increase the rate to at least 50 percent.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests announcement is posted at <http://www.mmediu.ro/beta/comunicate-de-presa/ministrul-rovana-plumb-si-premierul-victor-ponta-au-lansat-proiectul-de-colectare-si-reciclare-a-deseurilor-de-ambalaje/>.

Washington State Launches Website To Help Explain Puget Sound Chemical Pollutants To Public

Last week, the Washington Department of Ecology launched a web site that "*explains what we currently know about toxic chemical pollution in the Puget Sound region.*" The content for the site comes from a government report titled "*Assessment of Selected Toxic Chemicals in the Puget Sound Basin.*"

The web site examines 17 chemicals and chemical groups including a number of metals, polybrominated flame retardants, phthalates, PCBs and petroleum-based compounds, their pathways in the Puget Sound and their harmful effects, among other topics.

The URL of the new site is http://www.ecy.wa.gov/puget_sound/toxicchemicals/index.html.

Mississippi DEQ Awards More Than \$250,000 In Tire Recycling Grants

Yesterday, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality announced it was awarding \$257,000 in recycling grants to counties and cities in the state. The largest grant - \$157,000 - was awarded to the Pine Belt Solid Waste Management Authority.

The funding for the grants comes from a fee placed on the sale of new tires in the state.

More information is available at http://www.deq.state.ms.us/MDEQ.nsf/page/Main_Newsroom?OpenDocument.

Brasilia Encourages PET Bottle Recycling To Help Produce New Stadium Seating

On Tuesday, officials of Brasilia (Brazil's Federal District) unveiled a plan to collect empty PET bottles to make seating for a new national stadium that is being constructed for the 2014 World Cup. The government is setting up 100 temporary bottle collection sites across the city to collect empty bottles beginning on Thursday. Residents providing bottles will receive a certificate acknowledging their participation in the civic pride-environmental awareness program.

The announcement said that the collected bottles will be transported to a seating manufacturer in Rio de Janeiro that will produce 3,500 special seats for the stadium. About 100 empty PET bottles are required to produce each seat.

More information is available at <http://www.brasil.gov.br/noticias/arquivos/2012/11/12/assentos-do-estadio-nacional-serao-fabricados-com-garrafas-pet/view>.

Business Initiatives

Coca-Cola Company Reports 37 Percent Container Recovery Rate

Last week, the Coca-Cola Company released a 2011-2012 Global Sustainability Report. Among the waste-related statistics was that the company distributed more than 10 billion PlantBottle™ recyclable plastic bottles. The company also reported it will build a new plant with JBF Industries Ltd to produce bioglycol, which it called the key ingredient in producing PlantBottle containers.

The report also said the 37 percent of the bottles and cans that Coca-Cola Company produces are being recovered. The company has set a goal to recover 50 percent of its bottles and cans by 2015.

Download Coca-Cola's 2011-2013 Global Sustainability Report at <http://www.coca-colacompany.com/media-center/coca-cola-releases-2011-2012-global-sustainability-report>.

Canadian Plastics Industry Weighs In On Bioplastics

On Tuesday, the Canadian Plastics Industry Association (CPIA) released a three-page communique to consumers outlining the positive attributes and limitations of bioplastics. Among the positions that CPIA takes are that bioplastics are not necessarily biodegradable but that PET bioplastic is "*recyclable just like PET made from natural gas and oil feedstocks - they are chemically the same.*"

The communique also says the bioplastics are not necessarily "*better for the environment*" than their non-biobased counterparts.

The CPIA communique can be downloaded at http://www.plastics.ca/files/file.php?fileid=newsatAaXSDcTI&filename=file_NR_What_are_Bioplastics.pdf.

The Green Perspective

Canadian Environmental Organization Report Links Health Problems With Men's Grooming Products

Today, Environmental Defence, a Canadian environmental organization, released "*The Manscape: The Dirt on Toxic Ingredients in Men's Body Care Products*," a 28-page report that indicates "*toxic chemicals with links to cancer, birth defects, sperm damage, obesity, asthma and other chronic health problems are found in commonly used men's body care products.*"

The report discusses results from an analysis of 17 sample products that found the presence of probable human carcinogens, chemicals known to harm male reproductive health and artificial musks, some of which have been shown to disrupt hormones in animals.

Environmental Defence called on Health Canada to "*strengthen federal cosmetics regulations to protect consumers when it comes to toxins in personal care products,*" and personal care products manufacturers to remove toxic substances from its products.

Download a copy of the Environmental Defence report at <http://environmentaldefence.ca/themanscape>.