

Hong Kong Chief Executive Announces Support For Extend Producer Responsibility Programs

Today, Hong Kong Chief Executive CY Leung gave a policy address highlighting important issues for the district in 2013. Among them were environmental issues.

"We will focus on waste reduction at source, while progressively implementing Producer Responsibility Schemes and the polluter-pays principle to boost the recovery and recycle rates of resource materials," said Leung. "On the other hand, with the use of the advanced Integrated Waste Management Facilities, we can turn waste into a resource. This can also reduce waste and alleviate the pressure on landfills. Expansion of landfills is an integral part of the overall strategy of waste management. To make this basket of policies a success, all of us should play our part."

Leung also said that Hong Kong will look into expanding port cargo facilities to support more recyclable materials exports and *"build modern facilities in phases for recovery of organic waste so that it can be converted into energy, compost and other products."*

The Chief Executive's policy address can be accessed at <http://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/2013/eng/p133.html>.

Statistics & Trends

San Francisco Collects More Than Five Tons Of Waste Meds In Recently Launched Program

The San Francisco Department of the Environment said last week that a waste medications program launched in April 2012 has collected more than five tons of expired or unwanted pharmaceuticals. The program has 23 voluntary collection sites - 13 in pharmacies and 10 in police stations. The Department's web site includes a map of the collection sites across the city.

Residents are requested to place their medications in plastic zip lock bags and deposit them in designated green drop boxes. Only drop boxes in police departments are to receive controlled substances.

The San Francisco Department of the Environment announcement is posted at <http://www.sfenvironment.org/news/update/safely-dispose-of-unwanted-or-expired-medicines-in-san-francisco>.

Tijuana Opens First Urban Composting Center

Municipal composting facilities are common in California, but south of the border in Mexico, urban composting has been largely absent. However, today the situation changes with the opening of a composting facility in Tijuana, Mexico. According to the US EPA, which provided \$73,000 in project funding, the facility will be *"the first center of its kind ever created for Mexican residents in the border region."*

Operated by Tijuana Calidad de Vida, a non-governmental organization, the facility is expected to produce about 150 tons of compost annually. Additionally, the facility will serve as *"an education*

venue to increase public awareness about composting as a practice to divert reusable, organic material from landfills as well as increase local expertise on composting best practices."

For more information, go to <http://www.raymond.com/www.calidad-de-vida.org>

Austin Begins Curbside Organic Waste Collections

Last week, the City of Austin, Texas launched a pilot program to collect organic waste at curbside in 96-gallon bins. Residents can place yard trimmings, food scraps, and food-soiled paper in the containers, and the materials are taken to a composting facility. The collections are weekly, and 7,900 households are participating in the pilot. If the year-long pilot program proves successful, city officials plan to expand the program to all residents by 2016.

In a related effort, the City of Austin is providing free classes on backyard composting. Residents that successfully complete the class are eligible to purchase a home composting system at a reduced cost.

More information on Austin's organic waste collection pilot is available at <http://www.austintexas.gov/news/city-launches-curbside-organics-collection-pilot-program>

German Environmental Agency Promotes Quality Of Recycled Paper

Today, the Federal Environment Agency of Germany (UBA) released a brochure that highlights the print quality of recycled paper and hopes the information will encourage increased sales. The colorful, 19-page brochure, which is printed on recycled paper, was designed to dispell rumors that recycled paper produces lower quality visual output.

"The appearance of this document clearly shows that high-quality printed products can also be produced in an environmentally and climate-friendly," said UBA President Jochen Flasbarth. *"It is a valuable aid for promoting the purchase of recycled paper."*

While the physical appearance of the brochure serves as a demonstration of recycled paper quality, the contents of the brochure discuss environmental benefits of using fiber from sustainable forests and recycling waste paper to reduce CO₂ emissions and water consumption.

Download an electronic version of the brochure at <http://www.raymond.com/www.umweltbundesamt.de/uba-info-medien/8156.html>

Danish EPA Begins Providing Smart Phone Versions Of Its Guidance Documents

Yesterday, the Danish Environmental Protection Agency announced that the first of what it expects will be many paper environmental guidance documents is now available as a smart phone download. The guidance discusses "green waste" in the EU.

"The mobile platform allows you to view pictures, descriptions and information about what waste is determined to be green. It will provide clarification, resulting in fewer violations of the rules, and thus fewer fines for businesses," said Danish EPA Director Lars Hindkjaer.

The guidance was prepared for municipalities, businesses and other waste management providers.

The Danish EPA announcement and a link to the e-guidance are available at http://www.mst.dk/Virksomhed_og_myndighed/Affald/Nyheder+affald/Mobilvejledning.htm.

German Ecolabel Scheme Adds Eight Product Categories

According to the latest edition of the newsletter from the Blue Angel, Germany's ecolabeling scheme, eight new product categories are now eligible to apply for the award. They include video conference systems, telephone equipment, small network attached storage systems, uninterrupted power supplies, laundry driers, replacement catalytic converters, sanitary wares (using hot water), and climate friendly supermarkets.

Nearly 11, 500 individual products and services worldwide have been evaluated by the Blue Angel scheme and approved to display the ecolabel symbol. The scheme is managed in part of the German Ministry of Environment and the Federal Environmental Agency.

The Blue Angel announcement can be reviewed at http://www.blauer-engel.de/en/blauer_engel/press/newsletter/newsletter_33.php#article2.

Business Initiatives

UK Environmental Services Association Calls For Changes In National Hazardous Waste Policy

Today, the Environmental Services Association (ESA) of the United Kingdom released a 13-page report on the UK's hazardous waste policy that calls for policy changes.

According to ESA, *"The Government's 2010 Strategy for Hazardous Waste Management says all the right things, and ESA members are fully behind it. But there is evidence that it is not taking effect on the ground, and that some of the UK's hazardous waste is not being handled at state of the art facilities, as the Strategy intended."*

Among the recommendations in *Raising Standards - Making Defra's hazardous waste strategy a reality* - ESA recommends stronger promotion and enforcement of the Waste Hierarchy Guidance for hazardous waste, collecting better data on hazardous waste movements and treatment, and a government review of permits for hazardous waste treatment to ensure they reflect the best available technology. The report also offers suggestions for improving the treatment of specific types of hazardous waste.

Download a copy of the report at http://www.esauk.org/esa_reports/ESA_raising_standards.pdf.

European Industry Association Says Battery Recycling Fell In 2011

Late last month, the European Battery Recycling Association (EBRA), whose members "*represent the largest majority of the total European market for battery recycling,*" released recycling data for 2011. According to collections information from EBRA members, the overall battery recycling rate decreased five percent from 2010.

There were significant differences in the rates among battery types. For example, button battery recycling fell 70 percent, while industrial nickel-cadmium battery recycling increased 26 percent.

Among countries, EBRA said France recycled the greatest amount of batteries, followed by Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

Download the 2011 EBRA data at http://www.ebra-recycling.org/sites/default/files/EBRA%20PR-%20BatteryStatistics_year2011_0.pdf.

The Green Perspective

ChemSec Offers Chinese Language Version Of Its Substitute It Now List

On Monday, the International Chemicals Secretariat (ChemSec), a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the use of hazardous chemicals, announced that its Substitute It Now! (SIN) list of "safer alternatives" is being translated into Chinese. Greenpeace East Asia is collaborating with ChemSec on the project.

ChemSec said that China is the largest producer of chemicals in the world and that the Chinese version of the SIN list will "*make it easier for Chinese companies and suppliers to use the SIN List as part of a progressive chemicals management policy.*"

ChemSec noted that Chinese chemical makers will be required to provide the Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection with information on their products starting on March 1. ChemSec hopes the SIN translation will accelerate the transition to safer chemical products in the years ahead.

The ChemSec announcement is posted at <http://www.chemsec.org/news/news-2011/october-december/1111-making-it-easier-for-chinese-companies-to-use-the-sin-list>.

DUH Wins Court Fight With Brewer Over "Returnable" Beer Bottles Claim

Last week, the German environmental organization Deutschen Umwelthilfe e.V. (DUH), claimed victory in a long running battle with Radeberger Gruppe KG over claims that the Corona Extra beer it imported from Mexico and distributed was in returnable bottles. DUH argued the claim was both deceptive and violated the German Packaging Ordinance. DUH claims the glass bottles were in reality disposable.

According to DUH's announcement, the Frankfurt Regional Court agreed. DUH claims that the empty bottles, distributed in Germany before July 4, 2012 were shipped back to Mexico empty, but refilled only once, then resold as non-returnable or throwaway bottles in other countries.

The DUH announcement is posted at
[http://www.duh.de/pressemitteilung.html?&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=2999](http://www.duh.de/pressemitteilung.html?&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=2999).

Copyright 2013
Raymond Communications, Inc.
P.O. Box 4311
Silver Spring, MD 20914-4311
<http://www.raymond.com>