

The Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment announcement is posted at <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ienm/nieuws/2013/04/16/mansveld-pakt-microplastics-in-cosmetica-en-verzorgingsproducten-aan.html>.

California DTSC Publishes Latest Changes To Draft Safer Consumer Products Regulations

Last Wednesday, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) published the latest revisions to the Safer Consumer Products (SCP) regulations it is preparing and launched a 15-day public consultation. Twenty pages of revisions are covered in the latest version.

The landmark state legislation calls for creation of a list of chemicals of concern and priority products for which safer alternatives would be assessed. The regulations result from the passage of AB 1879 in 2008 and have been under development for several years.

Download the latest SCP revisions at http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/LawsRegsPolicies/Regs/upload/5-SCP-Regs_Summary-of-Changes-April-20131.pdf.

Eau Claire, Wisconsin City Council To Consider Plastic Bag Reduction Options

Later this month, a Sustainable Bag Committee established by the Eau Claire City Council will begin investigating options to reduce, reuse and/or recycle plastic and paper bags in the city of approximately 65,000 residents. The committee is charged with recommending a course of action to the city council by October.

According to city council documents, Eau Claire residents consume about 21 million single-use bags annually. If the city council decides to enact a ban or tax on single-use bags, it would be the first such municipal ordinance in Wisconsin.

Get more information at <http://www.eauclairewi.gov/index.aspx?page=804>.

Statistics & Trends

Eco-Systems Says French E-Waste Collections Up 1.5 Percent In 2012

Earlier this month, French e-waste collection scheme Eco-Systems announced that in 2012 it collected about 334,000 tons of e-waste or 37.5 million devices - an increase of 1.5 percent from 2011. Collection of waste TVs declined by nine percent, which Eco-Systems attributed to completion of the French transition from analog to digital TV transmission. However, collection of other WEEE categories, in particular small appliances, increased.

Eco-Systems also said that with assistance from its partner organizations, 478,000 devices and appliances were refurbished/reused - a six percent increase from a year earlier.

More 2012 Eco-Systems recycling data is available at http://www.eco-systemes.fr/backoffice/upload/CP_Bilan_perspectives_Eco-systemes_5%20millions_d_appareils_supplementaires_recycles_en_2012.pdf

European Food Safety Authority Seeks Experts To Serve on Next CEF Panel

On Monday, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) announced that it is seeking experts to serve on its Scientific Panel on Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings and Processing Aids (CEF Panel) starting next year.

The CEF Panel focuses on the safety assessment of food contact materials including recycling of plastics for use in food contact materials. It is also conducting a re-evaluation of the human risks associated with exposure to BPA through the diet and other avenues of exposure.

EFSA's call for expressions of interest to join the CEF Panel is open through June 17.

Get more information at

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/130415a.htm?utm_source=homepage&utm_medium=ifocus&utm_campaign=callexperts2013.

EU Environment Commissioner Calls On Industry To Stop "Over-Packaging"

Last week at an international conference on marine litter, EU Environment Commissioner Janez Potocnik said that 60 percent of plastic waste is packaging waste and that the private sector needs to create less packaging to reduce marine litter.

"We need to make a distinct effort to reduce over-packaging," said Potocnik. "The objective should be to package as smart as we can. Packaging is fine where it clearly serves a useful purpose but it should be avoided where it is simply superfluous."

Potocnik also said the recycling rate of plastic packaging needs to increase, and that achieving an increase *"starts in the product design phase."*

Commissioner Potocnik's complete remarks are available at http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-312_en.htm?locale=en.

Victorian Environmental Ministry Addresses Waste Being Dumped At Charity Stores

Well meaning or not, Victorians have been leaving used goods that are essentially not reusable (or at least not resellable) in increasing amounts at the state's charity shops. Often the items are left after normal business hours.

To help combat *"illegal dumping of unusable goods"*, Victoria's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change announced earlier this month it is making \$500,000 available to charity shops to try a range of deterrents.

"Fences, cameras and surveillance systems, sensor lighting and a raft of signage, using deterrence and social marketing messages, will all be trialed and assessed," said Environmental Minister Ryan Smith

Smith noted, *"Too often old TVs, couches, mattresses and other unusable, unwanted goods are dumped outside or adjacent to charity stores. Many of these goods can't be resold and must be sent to landfill, costing charities and the community money and time."*

The announcement by the Victorian Ministry can be reviewed at http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/resources/documents/130403_Smith_-_From_dumping_to_donation_new_trial_to_give_charities_a_helping_hand.pdf.

Illinois EPA Distributes \$100,000 In Grants To Build E-Waste Recycling Awareness

On April 13, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency announced it is providing nearly \$100,000 in grants to 49 Illinois counties this year to *"build awareness of electronics recycling programs."*

Under the Electronic Products and Recycling Act, the state has set a 2013 goal to collect and recycle more than 47 million pounds of waste electronics or 3.6 pounds per capita. The awareness building grants are hoped to help the state achieve that goal, directing consumers to drop off their e-waste through a network of more than 500 collection sites.

"Protecting our environment starts with everyone doing their part," said Illinois Governor Pat Quinn at a media event. *"As Illinois celebrates Earth Month, we need to ensure everyone knows how they can safely get rid of the electronics they no longer use."*

The Illinois EPA announcement can be found at <http://www3.illinois.gov/PressReleases/ShowPressRelease.cfm?SubjectID=29&RecNum=11084>.

US DEA To Conduct Sixth National Waste Drug Take Back Day

On April 27, the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) will hold its sixth National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. A number of state environmental agencies are promoting the national collection event.

At the take back day held last September, 244 tons of prescription drugs were collected at 5,200 sites staffed by DEA personnel and state and local law enforcement officials. Since the collection events began three years ago, more than a 1,000 tons of prescription drugs have been collected and destroyed.

Meanwhile, DEA is drafting regulations to implement the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010, which is expected to accelerate the collection and safe disposal of prescription drugs

by authorizing non law-enforcement officials to collect controlled substances under specific conditions.

Get more information at http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html.

Business Initiatives

Waste Norway Director Calls For Government Zero Waste Policy

Last week, Hakon Jentoft, Director of Avfall Norge (Waste Norway) called for new waste management targets and said the five-step waste hierarchy should be replaced with a nine-step model. He also said that Norway and the European Union should focus ultimately on zero waste because waste is in effect resources.

"Nothing disappears from the earth. All minerals and other substances are still here, but they take the form of infrastructure, furniture, clothing and other products that we use," said Jentoft. "Urban mining will provide much waste that can be converted into resources. It is said that the world's largest deposit of copper is New York City."

Jentoft also said that zero waste is the key to decoupling EU economic growth with increasing consumption of resources.

Hakon Jentoft's remarks is available at <http://www.avfallnorge.no/nyheter1.cfm?pArticleId=28605&pArticleCollectionId=2556>.

US Composting Council Takes Concerns About Persistent Herbicides To EPA

Today in a position statement release, the US Composting Council requested that the Environmental Protection Agency *"take significant steps to prevent the tainting of compost with herbicides that persist through the composting process and can still impact sensitive plants."* Specifically, the Council wants to require *"compostability testing"* of all existing and future herbicides.

A seven-page position statement by the Council said in part, *"Ultimately, if these compounds continue to be used, compost producers will have no choice but to refuse to accept any feedstocks that may contain them. As a result, some of these organic materials will be landfilled or burned instead of composted. In landfills, organic materials contribute to emissions of methane, a potent greenhouse gas."*

The Composting Council's position statement on the matter can be reviewed at <http://compostingcouncil.org/admin/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/USCC-Position-Statement-on-Persistent-Herbicides-FINAL.pdf>.

South Korean Government To Support SMEs In Environment Technology Sector

On Monday, the South Korean Ministry of Environment and the Korea Environmental Industry & Technology Institute announced they will be managing three support programs for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) seeking to commercialize new environmental technology.

In the first program the two government agencies will provide "*one-on-one consulting on management strategy to improve corporate structure and fundamentals, and investment consulting to set up effective investment strategies.*" In the second program, they will provide from 50 million to 100 million won of direct financial support to develop prototypes. In the third program, they will help SMEs attract domestic and international capital to bring their technologies to market.

The deadline for SMEs to apply for program assistance is April 25.

Get more information at

http://eng.me.go.kr/board.do?method=view&docSeq=11384&bbsCode=new_news.

The Green Perspective

Deutsche Umwelthilfe Calls For German Single-Use Bag Tax To Reduce Waste

Today, the German environmental group Deutsche Umwelthilfe (DUH) proposed that a 22-cent tax be placed on each single-use plastic and paper bag distributed by retailers in Germany.

"The introduction of a tax will substantially reduce the volume of environmentally harmful disposable bags and quickly move industry to offer customers attractive reusable bags," said DUH Director Jurgen Resch.

According to DUH, the tax should apply to paper bags because they "*have hardly less environmental impact than plastic would.*"

While a possible bag tax has been discussed in the German Parliament, but no bill to implement such a tax has been introduced.

The DUH announcement is posted at

[http://www.duh.de/pressemitteilung.html?&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=3082](http://www.duh.de/pressemitteilung.html?&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=3082).