
EFSA Approves More Methods For Producing Recycled PET For Food Contact Applications

Last Friday, the Panel on Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings and Processing Aids for the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) issued a scientific opinion on "Sky-Light MPR," a method to recycle PET for use in food contact applications such as packaging. The process heat washes PET flakes in a continuous reactor under vacuum, and the resulting product demonstrates chemical migration of less than 0.15 ug/kg, EFSA's safety threshold.

As a result, the EFSA panel concluded that "*recycled PET obtained from the process Sky-Light MPR and intended for the manufacture of recycled thermoformed trays and containers made with up to 100% recycled post-consumer PET and used for contact with all types of foodstuffs except packaged water, for long-term storage at room temperature, with or without hotfill, is not considered of safety concern.*"

The EFSA Panel's scientific opinion on Sky-Light MPR can be reviewed at <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3450.pdf>.

Last month, the panel approved other methods for preparing rPET for food contact applications. Links to those scientific opinions can be found at <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/fip/fipsdocs.htm?p=10>.

New Zealand Approves Voluntary Public Places Packaging Stewardship Scheme

Last week, New Zealand's Environmental Minister, Amy Adams, approved a voluntary stewardship scheme to take back beverage containers, food packaging and plastic and paper bags at recycling bins placed in public places such as local parks, sports stadiums, and tourist destinations. The scheme is being administered by Love NZ, a public-private partnership.

The scheme began as a pilot project with money from New Zealand's Waste Minimization Fund, which also establishes the legal framework for product stewardship in the country. Much of the scheme's funding will now come from packaging producers such as Coca Cola Amatil, Tetra Pak and Packaging House.

Get more information on the Love NZ public place scheme at <http://www.lovenz.org.nz/>.

Statistics & Trends

Swedish Municipal Source Separation Of Waste Reaches 60 Percent Level

According to data released yesterday by the industry association Waste Sweden (Avfall Sverige), approximately 60 percent of the country's municipalities (179 municipalities) have established systems for source separating waste. Sixty-five of the 179 municipalities mandate source separation by residents.

The data also shows that 75 municipalities plan to implement household source separation of food/organic waste.

The Waste Sweden data is available at

http://www.avfallsverige.se/fileadmin/uploads/Rapporter/Biologisk/matavfallsinsamling_nov_2013.pdf.

New York City Begins E-Waste Collection Program At Larger Apartment Buildings

The Department of Sanitation for New York City (DSNY) launched a program this month to pick up e-waste from apartment buildings having at least 10 living units. Fifty-one sites have signed up for the program, which is called e-cycle NYC. Participating buildings can use e-waste collection bins, room cleanouts or outdoor electronics recycling events, depending on the number of units in the building.

According to DSNY, the program meets the needs of New Yorkers because "*50 percent of the city's population lives in apartment buildings without easy access to vehicles.*"

Beginning in 2015, it will be illegal for NYC residents to discard e-waste in their trash.

The DSNY announcement is posted at

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dsny/html/pr2013/110713.shtml>.

San Jose Opens World's Largest Dry Fermentation Anaerobic Digestion Plant

Earlier this month, the City of San Jose, California and Zero Waste Energy Development Company started the first phase of operations at what the city called the world's largest dry fermentation anaerobic digestion facility. Once all three phases are in operation, the facility will process 270,000 tons of organic waste each year.

Source separated food waste and organic residuals from municipal solid waste will be used to produce biogas and compost. In its first phase the facility will generate about 1.6 MW of power annually.

San Jose, home to "Silicon Valley," has set a goal to send zero waste to landfill by 2022.

The City of San Jose announcement is posted at

<https://www.piersystem.com/external/content/document/1914/1960690/1/San%20Jos%E9%20Announces%20World%19s%20Largest%20Dry%20Fermentation%20Anaerobic%20Digestion%20Facility.pdf>.

Brazil Extends Cooking Oil Recycling Program To College Campuses

Last week, Brazil's Secretary of State for the Environment (SEA) and administrators of ten Brazilian colleges launched an effort to bring the Programa de Reaproveitamento de Oleo Vegetal (PROVE), a program that recycles used cooking oil into biodiesel fuel, to their campuses. SEA is providing funding and technical resources to establish cooking oil recycling facilities at the colleges.

According to the government, 45 waste collection cooperatives already gather about 400,000 litres of used cooking oil annually. The college program is an expansion of that effort.

"With the arrival of PROVE at these schools, students gain a great tool for education and environmental awareness," said PROVE Director Eduardo Caetano. "And waste oil is one of the most damaging enemies that the environment is because it is very quiet. You only realize the damage after pollution has occurred."

Get more information at

<http://www.rj.gov.br/web/sea/exibeconteudo?article-id=1851040>.

First European Recycler Achieves e-Steward Certification

The nonprofit the US-based Basel Action Network (BAN) announced today that ITAD Works, Ltd., a UK firm, has become the first European organization to be certified as an e-Stewards(R) recycler. The e-Stewards certification program was launched by BAN in 2010.

The e-Stewards certification program and a similar certification program run by R2 Solutions, which is also US-based, are gaining market attention internationally.

Get more information at

<http://www.e-stewards.org/>.

Business Initiatives

EU Photovoltaic Modules Industry Begins Work On Mobile Recycling Project

Yesterday, PV Cycle, the leading European compliance scheme for photovoltaic modules, said that a mobile recycling research project has been approved to receive funding under the European Union's Eco Innovation Programme. The project, which is called Photovoltaic Panels Mobile Recycling Device (PV MOREDE), is an international effort involving PV CYCLE, Italy's La Mia Energia, the University of Florence and Spain's Leitat Technological Centre.

According to the announcement, PV MOREDE is being developed *"to treat PV modules directly where they are installed, allowing a cost-effective and easily accessible waste treatment for small quantities of PV panels. Treatment costs are expected to decrease by up to 40% per treated PV panel tonne."*

By 2016, the mobile technology is expected to be in use in Germany, Spain, France and Italy, recovering glass, copper and aluminum from up to 270,000 panels annually.

The PV Cycle announcement is posted at

<http://www.pvcycle.org.uk/press/mobile-recycling-unit-for-pv-end-of-life-treatment/>.

Leading Dutch Home Goods Retailer Installs Take Back Bins For Waste CFLs

LightRec, part of the Wecycle Dutch EEE compliance scheme, said last week that Home Goods Retailer Leen Bakker, which operates 115 stores in the Benelux region, will begin collecting waste compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) using special take back bins provided by Wecycle. The additional bins increase the number of Wecycle waste lamp collection sites to roughly 1,200 Netherlands locations.

While some Leen Bakker stores were already taking back waste lamps at their customer service counters, the new bins, which will be positioned near store entrances, are expected to raise consumer awareness of lamp recycling, make drop-offs more convenient, and increase collections significantly.

Waste lamps are a category of WEEE for which take back is mandated by the EU WEEE Directive.

Get more information at

<http://www.lightrec.nl/nieuws/nieuws/wecycle-opent-115-inleverpunten-voor-spaarlampen-bij-leen-bakker.html>.

Northern Ireland Retail Survey Finds Consumers Oppose Tax On Reusable Bags

According to a survey sponsored by the Northern Ireland Retail Consortium, 94% of consumers in Northern Ireland are opposed to a government plan to extend the current five-pence tax placed on single use carrier bags to reusable bags. The survey findings were announced last week by the British Retail Consortium (BRC).

The survey also found that 92% of consumers did not know about the planned extension of the bag tax and that 77% use reusable bags to avoid having to pay the tax. However, 11% of respondents said they would switch back to single use bags if reusable bags are also taxed.

"The people of Northern Ireland have already made changes and have shown that they are embracing their environmental responsibilities," said Aodhan Connolly, the Director of the Northern Ireland Retail Consortium. "In fact the poll shows that 81% of Northern Ireland consumers are buying reusable bags in the 6-20p ranges. They should be commended for this, not penalised with another tax."

The BRC announcement is posted at

http://www.brc.org.uk/brc_news_detail.asp?id=2535.

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