

"This funding boost means there will be more than 130 recycling drop-off sites across Melbourne where residents can recycle old TVs and computers for free," said Smith.

Australia's analog-to-digital TV transition will be completed by the end of this year. While Australian consumers can use set-tops and devices to keep their analog TVs functional, many consumers in states and territories where the transition has already occurred have opted to buy new digital TVs.

Get more information at

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/en/News-and-Events/Media-Releases/Funding-boost-for-TV-and-computer-recycling>.

Hong Kong Offers \$10 Million In Funding For Sustainability Public Awareness Projects

On Monday, Hong Kong's Council for Sustainable Development announced it has 2014 funding available for "*projects that will raise public awareness of sustainable development and promote sustainable practices in Hong Kong.*" In particular, the Council is interested in funding requests that address waste reduction at the source, building a sustainable community, promoting sustainable lifestyles or practices, and sustainability reporting.

The grants will come from Hong Kong's Sustainable Development Fund, budgeted at \$10 million annually. No pre-set level of maximum funding for projects has been set, and submissions must be received by February 24, 2014.

For more information, go to

<http://www.susdev.gov.hk/html/en/sdf/index.htm>.

Pilot Facility In Brazil Is First Step Toward National Waste-To-Energy Plan

On November 27, the Brazilian national development bank (BNDES) announced it was providing R\$ 10.5 million in funding for the construction and operation of a organic waste-to-energy plant to be built on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. The pilot facility will be managed by Comlurb, a local waste firm.

According to BNDES, experience acquired from the pilot facility's operation will be used by the national government to help develop a national waste-to-energy plan, supporting the National Policy of Solid Waste. Minas Gerais Federal University and Methanum Engenharia Ambiental, a Brazilian methane technology company, are also participating in the project.

The BNDES announcement is posted at

<http://www.bnamericas.com/news/waterandwaste/brazils-bndes-funds-solid-waste-to-energy-studies>.

Mississippi Landfilled 3.9% Less Municipal Solid Waste In 2012

According to a new annual report released last week by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the state landfilled 3,180,139 tons of solid waste in 2012, a decline of 252,714 tons or 3.9% from 2011.

The state's recycling rate remained relatively low - only 100,097 tons of material was processed at recycling and reuse facilities. However, the annual report states that 891,830 tons of material were "*distributed by Beneficial Use Determination (BUD) holders for legitimate end uses in the State of Mississippi,*" mostly for construction projects.

Download the 2012 Status Report on Solid Waste Management Facilities and Activities at [http://www.deq.state.ms.us/mdeq.nsf/pdf/SW_2012SolidWasteAnnualReport/\\$File/2012%20Annual%20Report.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.deq.state.ms.us/mdeq.nsf/pdf/SW_2012SolidWasteAnnualReport/$File/2012%20Annual%20Report.pdf?OpenElement).

New Jersey Provides \$18.6 Million To Help Local Governments Recycle

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced it will be providing \$18.6 million to local and county governments to support their recycling efforts under the state's Recycling Enhancement Act. Funding for the grants comes from a \$3 per ton surcharge on landfilled waste.

According to DEP, the state's municipal solid waste recycling rate has been 40% for the past two years. However, the state's goal is to recycle 50% of MSW and 60% of all solid waste.

The New Jersey DEP announcement is posted at http://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2013/13_0102.htm.

Business Initiatives

Latest Results From Voluntary UK Grocers Recycling Agreement Are Mixed

2012 results for the Courtauld 2 agreement, a voluntary waste reduction pact signed by leading UK grocers and packagers, were mixed, according to information released today by the Waste Resources Action Program (WRAP). Signatory companies reduced the "*carbon impact of grocery packaging*" by 10%, meeting the target. They reduced grocery packaging weight by 10.7%. and they exceeded the supply chain product and packaging waste reduction target of 5%, achieving a 7.4% reduction.

However, the signatories came up short in meeting a key 4% reduction target for household food and drink waste target. For 2012, the reduction was only 3.7%.

"*I am proud to say that Courtauld 2 has helped prevent 1.7 million tonnes of waste, the value of which is worth 3.1 billion pounds,*" said WRAP Chief Executive Liz Goodwin.

Download the 2012 Courtauld 2 results at

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Courtauld%20Commitment%202%20Final%20Results.pdf>

Industry Study Documents Effects Of Biodegradable Plastic On Plastic Recyclate Quality

Last month, European Plastic Converters (EuPC), an industry association, released results of "*independent industrial tests*" of the effect of biodegradable plastic - in particular types used in manufacturing single-use plastic bags - in traditional plastic recycling streams. According to EuPC, "*four mixtures of degradable plastic bags and one virgin LDPE recycling material*" were used in the tests that were conducted over six months and involved more than 3,700 measurements.

"Although all the materials could be processed, the results show that even in quantities as low as 2%, degradable plastic films cause significant, detrimental impacts to the quality of plastic recyclates," said EuPC. *"These impacts are not only detrimental in terms of mechanical properties of the recycled material, but also involve visual impacts on the newly produced film."*

The EuPC called on EU legislators and waste management authorities to "*push for increased separation and collection of degradable plastics.*"

More information is available at

<http://www.plasticsconverters.eu/uploads/EuPC%20publishes%20results%20of%20independent%20tests%20on%20degradable%20plastics.pdf>.

French Trade Groups Team With Government To Share Sustainability Marketing Best Practices

On Tuesday, the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME) in cooperation with several marketing and advertising trade groups launched a web site for companies to share ideas and best practices that encourage sustainability through marketing. ADEME said that marketers have the ability "*to change the attitudes of customers and, ultimately, improve the balance between supply and demand.*"

The new web site features a resources section and a growing library of best practice documents provided by participating companies and addressing topics such as recycling, product eco-design, reducing the environmental impact of packaging and using natural resources sustainably.

The next call for submitting best practices will be held in March, and ADEME said all companies are invited to participate.

The URL of the new web site is

<http://www.reussir-avec-un-marketing-responsable.org/par-marque>.

Deutsche Umwelthilfe Calls For New Environmental Labels On Disposable Plastic Beverage Bottles

Last week, the German environmental organization Deutsche Umwelthilfe (DUH) called on German legislators to require new environmental labels on disposable plastic beverage packaging. Such labels would encourage more German consumers to use refillable beverage containers made of glass, DUH argues.

"Currently, only about half of all drinks in Germany are bottled in environmentally friendly reusable bottles, although the Packaging Ordinance in force calls for a 80 percent share of ecological beverage packaging," said Thomas Fischer, a DUH spokesperson.

Germany consumes 500,000 tons of plastic annually to produce plastic bottles. A 0.7-liter returnable glass bottle over its lifetime can contain the equivalent drink volume as 70 0.5-liter disposable plastic bottles, thereby providing a significant saving in energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions during manufacturing, according to DUH.

The Deutsche Umwelthilfe communique can be found at [http://www.duh.de/pressemitteilung.html?&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=3224](http://www.duh.de/pressemitteilung.html?&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=3224)

Researchers Find Fish Suffer Liver Damage After Ingesting Plastic Marine Debris

Results released last week from research on fish ingesting bits of plastic marine debris found that the fish *"bioaccumulate these chemical pollutants and suffer liver toxicity and pathology."*

Specifically, researchers fed groups of medaka (a species of fish) virgin polyethylene (LDPE) fragments and marine polyethylene fragments in a controlled environment. While *"liver stress"* was found in both groups, *"general patterns show a greater concentration of PBTs [persistent bioaccumulative and toxic substances] in fish exposed to the marine-plastic treatment."*

The study has received attention from some environmental groups and news media that question whether consumption of such fish present a health risk to humans. could lead to harm problems for humans.

Download the *Scientific Reports* study at <http://www.nature.com/srep/2013/131121/srep03263/pdf/srep03263.pdf>.

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