

Brazilian Environmental Ministry Extends Deadline for Drug Product Stewardship Plans

Under the 2010 National Policy for Solid Waste, product stewardship plans are being developed for a number of categories of products. The original deadline for pharmaceutical manufacturers to submit stewardship plans was this week. However, on January 30, the Ministry of Environment said it is giving drug makers and importers another 60 days to submit their plans. The call for plans opened last October.

The request for additional time was made to the Steering Committee for the Implementation of Reverse Logistics Systems by the Brazilian pharmaceutical manufacturers association.

"It is essential that the sectoral agreement covers all stages of the life cycle of drugs," said Secretary of Urban Water Resources and Environment, Ney Maranhao. *"The goal is to ensure the environmentally sound disposal of medicines and their packaging after use by consumers."*

The MMA announcement can be found at

<http://www.mma.gov.br/informma/item/9906-ind%C3%BAstria-farmac%C3%AAutica-tem-mais-60-dias-para-adaptar-se-%C3%A0s-novas-regras>.

Swedish Testing for Harmful Chemicals in Children's Products and Toys to Increase

The Swedish Chemicals Inspectorate (KEMI) said on January 31 that this year it will focus more attention on hazardous chemicals in children's products and toys, part of the Ministry of Environment's Action Plan for Toxic Free Living released last year. KEMI reiterated earlier findings that testing of 550 sample toys found that 15 percent did not meet Swedish requirements.

The agency also said that it plans to make recommendations in June for a new Action Plan for Toxic Free Living that will cover 2015-2020.

The KEMI announcement is posted at

<http://kemi.se/sv/Innehall/Nyheter/Fortsatt-fokus-pa-varor-och-barn/>.

California DTSC Files Criminal Complaint Against Metal Recycling Firm

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) said yesterday it filed criminal complaints against three metal recycling facilities. DTSC alleged the facilities, which are owned by the same person, *"failed to remove designated Materials that Require Special Handling (MRSH) from major appliances before they were crushed, baled, shredded, sawed or sheared apart, disposed of, or otherwise processed in a manner that could result in a release or could prevent the removal of MRSH."*

DTSC said examples of MRSH include mercury-containing switches, refrigerants and oil.

DTSC also alleged that the facilities owner "*violated the California Hazardous Waste Control Law relating to the handling, disposal, and storage of hazardous and universal wastes*" at two of the facilities.

Get more information at

http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/PressRoom/upload/News_Release_T-3-14.pdf.

US Energy Department Sets New Efficiency Standards for External Power Supplies

External power supplies have become ubiquitous in modern life, charging everyday devices from mobile phones to laptop and tablet computers to power tools.

On February 3, the US Department of Energy (DOE) published a final rule establishing energy conservation standards for external power supplies. According to the DOE, the new standards could save up to \$3.8 billion in reduced energy costs and cut CO₂ emissions by 47 million metric tons over the next 30 years.

Older standards have been in place since 2007.

Download the DOE final rule at

http://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2014/02/f7/eps_ecs_final_rule.pdf.

Statistics & Trends

Scottish Government Launches National Food Waste Prevention Campaign

According to the Scottish Government, about one-fifth of all food and drink - about 630,000 tons - is wasted, and that costs the average Scottish family 470 pounds sterling a year. On February 4, government leaders launched a public awareness campaign seeking to reduce food waste, save consumers money, and reduce food waste sent to landfill and greenhouse gas generation.

"If we used up all the food and drink we currently waste, it would cut carbon emissions equal to taking one in four cars off Scotland's roads," said Environmental Secretary Richard Lochhead at the campaign's launch.

The awareness campaign will feature TV advertising, outdoor, media, press and social media, and community events, and will offer food waste prevention strategies and advice developed by the government-funded agency Zero Waste Scotland.

More information about the campaign is available at

<http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Cut-food-waste-save-more-money-and-help-the-environment-8f4.aspx>.

UK Waste Transfer Records Go Digital

In the United Kingdom, transfers of waste have been documented on paper using Waste Transfer Notes (WTNs). Last week, the paper-driven system gained an electronic counterpart called electronic duty of care (Edoc) was launched.

Edoc, which received funding from the European Commission's LIFE+ Program and was developed largely by the UK Environment Agency, is supported by Welsh Government, the UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Northern Ireland Environment Agency the Waste Resources Action Programme, and the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management, among other institutions.

The supporting institutions and agencies say the online waste transfer documentation system can save businesses time and money while cutting government red tape.

Get more information at
<http://edoconline.co.uk/>.

High Volume MRF Proposed for British Columbia

Belcorp Environmental Services Inc said late last month that it plans to build a material recovery facility (MRF) capable of processing 260,000 tons of recyclables. The proposed facility would be built in Coquitlam, British Columbia at a cost of approximately \$30 million.

Belcorp Environmental Services is still awaiting license approval from Metro Vancouver, but Coquitlam officials have approved the facility that will be constructed without taxpayer funding. The facility will process about 26% of Metro Vancouver's municipal solid waste.

For more information go to
http://rcbc.ca/files/u7/BESI_CoquitlamMRRF_Release_Jan20-14.pdf.

431 US Colleges and Universities to Participate in 2014 RecycleMania

Keep America Beautiful announced on Monday that "*461 schools, with more than 5.3 million students and over 1.2 million faculty and staff*" will be participating in the 2014 RecycleMania, a tournament to find which schools can reduce, reuse and recycle the most waste.

Separate competitions in 11 waste categories include paper and paper-based packaging, aluminum, plastics bottles, electronics and food organics.

Last year, 523 schools entered the tournament, diverting 90.8 million pounds of waste.

Get more information at
<http://recyclemaniacs.org/>.

Plastic Bag Use Reduced Substantially in Dutch Retail Association Pilot Project

In collaboration with the Sustainable Packaging Knowledge Institute, the Dutch Retail Council reduced single-use plastic bag consumption in a pilot study by 48 to 77 percent, depending on the study site. The three-month study, which was conducted in nine stores in three Dutch cities, concluded at the end of December.

According to the Dutch Retail Council, a combination of charging fees for bags along with "*a targeted communication campaign aimed at both customers and store employees,*" reduced consumption the most. Fees for medium and large size plastic bags were set at a 10-cent minimum and small bags were available at no charge. Store employees are instructed to briefly explain the environmental reasons for charging fees before providing any bags.

The Dutch Retail Council also said that 81% of shoppers surveyed as part of the pilot reactivate positively to the more engaged approach by store employees.

Get more information at
http://www.rndweb.nl/view.cfm?page_id=67195.

BPF Announces Recycled PET Tray Packaging Project

On February 4, the British Plastics Federation (BPF) announced a three-year project recently launched "*to produce prototypes of fully recyclable PET trays for food preservation by using recycled PET (R-PET).*" BPF is a participant in the project, which is called Greenpack.

BPF said the study is "*inspired to replication and spreading of the recycling model of the 100% PET soft drink bottles, in the post-consumer phase, adapting its characteristics to the specific food package features.*"

Funding for Greenpack is being provided by the European Commission.

Get more information at
<http://www.bpf.co.uk/Innovation/Greenpack.aspx>.

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