

San Francisco enacted its original plastic bag reduction ordinance in 2007. It applied essentially only to supermarkets. The ordinance was later amended to include all retail stores effective October 1, 2012. The Save the Plastic Bag Coalition argued that the city's Retail Food Code preempted the expansion. The appellate court disagreed and upheld the amended law.

Get more information at

<http://www.environmentcalifornia.org/news/cae/latest-victory-court-appeal-upholds-san-francisco-plastic-bag-ban>.

Statistics & Trends

European Carton Recycling Rate Increased Three Percent In 2012

According to the Alliance For Beverage Cartons and the Environment (ACE), a European industry association, the beverage carton recycling rate in the European Union rose to 40% in 2012, a three percent increase from 2011. By including cartons recovered as energy, the rate increased to 69%. ACE released the information late last month.

With exceptions for 1999 and 2005, the EU beverage carton recycling rate has steadily increased since 1995.

Increasing beverage carton recycling across Europe is fully in line with the Commission's vision to move towards a recycling economy as laid down in the EU Roadmap for a Resource Efficient Europe," said ACE Director General Katarina Molin.

Get more information at

<http://www.beveragecarton.eu/mediaroom/48/50/40-of-beverage-cartons-recycled-across-Europe-in-2012#.Uqm6Aifwr7E>.

Swan Ecolabel Tightens Award Requirements For LCD TVs And Computer Monitors

Late last month, the Swedish organization behind the Nordic ecolabel called "the swan," announced it has become the first ecolabel in the world to evaluate whether to approve a LCD TV or computer monitor based on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted during the manufacturing process. The ecolabel has called for eliminating the use of nitrogen trifluoride (NF3), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF6) in producing LCD flatscreens.

The Swan ecolabel organization also added another evaluation criteria - whether the device's power cord contains phthalates or flame retardants considered to be carcinogenic, mutagenic and toxic for reproduction.

"We continuously tighten the award requirements on the basis of new scientific information so that consumers can be confident that they are making a good choice for the climate, health and environment," said Swan ecolabel spokesperson Ove Jansson.

For more information, go to

<http://www.svanen.se/Nyheter/2013/11/Svanen-forst-i-varlden-begransa-vaxthusgaser-i-platt-TV-och-datorer/>.

Welsh Government To Provide £ 2.3 million To Support Local Recycling Efforts

Yesterday, the Welsh Minister for Natural Resources and Food said the national government would be providing £ 2.3 million to local governments to help improve their recycling infrastructure. The funding, which comes from the Welsh Collaborative Change Programme, will be used for capital expenditures.

The Welsh Government has set goals to have all sectors of the economy recycling 70 percent of their waste by 2025 and to achieve zero waste to landfill by 2050. To help reach those goals, local governments have been tasked with implementing widespread source separation of household waste, boosting recycling and minimizing residual waste sent to landfills.

The Welsh Government announcement can be found at <http://wales.gov.uk/newsroom/environmentandcountryside/2013/131210cpp/?lang=en>.

2012 Washington State Recycling Rate Remained Just Above 50%

Yesterday, the Washington Department of Ecology reported that the state's recycling rate for 2012 was 50.1%, a slight decrease from 50.7% in 2011. The amount of municipal solid waste sent to landfills increased by 20,000 tons.

The Department of Ecology stated that "*residents recycled over 4.4 million tons of material in 2012, equal to 3.5 pounds recycled per person per day. Glass, gypsum, and organic materials, including food and yard debris, showed the biggest increases in recycling. Metals and newspaper had the biggest declines.*"

The Department of Ecology announcement is posted at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2013/299.html>.

2013 Balance Sheets Improved For Two Major Nebraska Recycling Funds

Last week, the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) released its 2013 Annual Report to the Legislature. According to chapter 5 the report (covering the Waste Management Division), the ending balance in the Waste Reduction and Recycling Fund for the year ended June 30, 2013 was \$5,145,946, an increase of 24% over the previous fiscal year. The ending balance in the Litter Reduction and Recycling Fund for the year ended June 30, 2013 was \$765,555, an increase of 56% over the previous fiscal year.

Both funds are used to provide recycling and waste management grants to local governments and businesses.

The 2014 session of the Nebraska Legislature convenes on January 8.

Download the 2013 Nebraska DEQ Annual Report to the Legislature at [http://www.raymond.com/www.deq.state.ne.us/Publica.nsf/23e5e39594c064ee852564ae004fa010/67e271437e2afe7386257c2f006d7e6e/\\$FILE/DEQ%20Annual%20Report%202013.pdf](http://www.raymond.com/www.deq.state.ne.us/Publica.nsf/23e5e39594c064ee852564ae004fa010/67e271437e2afe7386257c2f006d7e6e/$FILE/DEQ%20Annual%20Report%202013.pdf).

West Virginia Awards \$2 Million In Recycling Assistance Grants

Last week, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) said it is awarding \$2 million in recycling assistance grants to 40 local waste authorities, towns, businesses and schools. The largest grant - \$148,865.75 - was given to the Marion County Solid Waste Authority to purchase recycling equipment.

The grants are part of the state's Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan and are funded by a \$1 per ton fee imposed on waste disposed in state landfills.

Get more information at <http://www.dep.wv.gov/news/Pages/2014-REAP-Recycling-Assistance-Grants-awarded--.aspx>.

Connecticut DEEP Awards \$180,000 Grant To Help Develop New EPR Policies

Yesterday, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) announced it awarded the Product Stewardship Institute, a Boston-based nonprofit organization, a \$180,000 grant to "*help reduce environmental and financial impacts of consumer products in Connecticut.*"

DEEP said the grant will develop extended producer responsibility (EPR) efforts targeting waste carpets, batteries, packaging, pesticides, and fertilizers. Connecticut already has laws requiring EPR for electronics, paint, mattresses, and mercury-containing thermostats.

The 2014 legislative session of the Connecticut General Assembly convenes on February 5.

The DEEP announcement is posted at <http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?Q=536508&A=4380>.

Business Initiatives

Dutch Compliance Scheme Finds Most Professional Lighting Installers Not Recycling Fixtures

The Dutch lighting compliance scheme LightRec said today that according to a recent study conducted by the research firm Mobius, electricians and professional lighting installers are recycling end-of-life lamps at a lower rate than consumers recycle compact fluorescent lamps and tube fluorescent lamps.

Perhaps more problematic is that professionals are recycling only an estimated 15% of the end-of-life lighting fixtures generated each year. Under the EU WEEE Directive, both lamps and fixtures should be recycled.

"Old fixtures can be harmful to the environment if they are not properly processed," said LightRec Jeroen Bartels. "In particular, the capacitors have to be removed before anything else is done."

Bartels elaborated that capacitors found in old fluorescent lamp fixtures often contain PCBs, and he said his organization would increase efforts in communicating with installation professionals on proper waste compliance.

The LightRec announcement can be found at <http://www.raymond.com/>.

US Scrap Industry Association Helps Launch New E-Waste Recycling Push

Today, the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industry (ISRI) announced it has teamed with Earth911 to launch Project Reboot, which ISRI said "aims to bring together businesses, corporations, and civic groups to educate the public on the need to responsibly recycle electronics."

Project Reboot seeks to educate electronics users on the needs to use "a recycler certified to handle electronics at the highest level of environmental, health and worker safety standards, and that guarantees secure destruction of all personal data."

The educational effort will include print materials and social media. The level of success will be measured by "surveying consumer knowledge and attitudes as well as available statistics on the collection rates of household used electronics."

Get more information at http://www.isri.org/ISRI/Whats_New/2012/Tis_the_Season_to_Recycle_Project_Reboot_Launch_ed_to_Increase_Electronics_Recycling.aspx.

Waste Sweden Supports Tougher EU Waste Export Regulations

On Monday, industry association Avfall Sverige (Waste Sweden) published its response to a consultation on tougher waste export regulations proposed by the European Commission. Essentially, Avfall Sverige said it supports the Commission's recommendations (amending EC Regulation No 1013/2006), noting that the changes would likely reduce illegal waste exports. Further, Avfall Sverige argued against advanced publication of the inspections schedule because that could limit the effectiveness of the inspections, resulting in fewer illegal waste interceptions.

Avfall Sverige also recommended giving local police new authority to help enforce the proposed regulations, explaining that a significant amount of the illegal waste shipments contain materials stolen locally.

Avfall Sverige's position is outlined at http://www.avfallsverige.se/fileadmin/uploads/Arbete/Remissvar/AvfallSverige_2013_24.pdf.

Brazilian Industry Group Highlights Study On Plastic Bag Laws And Household Spending

As Brazil closes in on national single-use plastic bag regulations, the Instituto Socio-Ambiental dos Plasticos (Plastivida) released data from a study conducted by the Economic Research Institute Foundation (FIFE) that found alternative food transport packaging costs and waste disposal would rise from 0.1335% of an average household budget to 0.328%. While the actual increase may seem small, the rate of increase - 146.1% - is significant. The survey data was released by the Brazilian plastics industry organization, Plastivida.

To give perspective to the increase, by comparison 0.393 % of the average family is spent on a Brazilian food staple - dried beans.

According to Plastivida, "*low-income consumers would be the biggest losers, as their current spending on grocery transport carts and waste disposal packagng practically do not exist because they use almost exclusively plastic grocery bags for these purposes.*"

For more information, go to
http://www.plastivida.org.br/2009/Releases_086.aspx

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Raymond Communications, Inc.
P.O. Box 4311
Silver Spring, MD 20914-4311 USA
<http://www.raymond.com>
email: circulation@raymond.com