

A bill introduced in the Alabama Legislature late last month would give a state agency the authority to set waste collection rates. SB 242, which was introduced by Senator Tom Whatley, states "*rates charged by waste management companies for the collection and transportation of garbage, household waste, or any other nonhazardous and nonmedical solid waste shall at all times be subject to the approval of the Alabama Public Service Commission.*"

The law would take effect one month after the day it is approved by the legislature and signed by the governor.

A copy of the proposed law can be found at

<http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/acas/ACTIONViewFrameMac.asp?TYPE=Instrument&INST=SB242&DOCPATH=searchableinstruments/2013RS/Printfiles/&PHYDOCPATH=//alisondb/acas/searchableinstruments/2013RS/PrintFiles/&DOCNAMES=SB242-int.pdf,.>

Brazilian Senator Criticizes Cities On Poor National Solid Waste Policy Implementation

Last week, Brazilian Senator Cicero Lucena issued a communique drawing attention to the fact that less than 10 percent of Brazilian municipalities filed modern waste management and recycling plans called for by the National Solid Waste Policy of 2010. In order to receive federal funding to transition to a recycling/waste diversion, municipalities needed to submit plans to the Ministry of Environment last fall.

Senator Lucena's communique expressed doubt that a August 2014 deadline to close the nation's many open air dumps and establish municipal recycling program will be met.

"I consider myself an optimist but I can not convince myself that the deadline will be met in 2014, the year of national elections and the World Cup [being hosted by Brazil]," said Lucena.

Senator Lucena said he hoped the poor start to municipal implementation will be the focus on the 4th National Conference on the Environment scheduled for October.

Senator Lucena's remarked are posted at

<http://www12.senado.gov.br/noticias/materias/2013/03/05/cicero-lucena-alerta-para-fracasso-da-politica-nacional-de-residuos-solidos>.

Norwegian Government Agency Fines Retail Chain \$400,000 NOK For Selling Toxic Children's Products

Last Thursday, the Norwegian Climate and Pollution Agency (KLIF) said it is fining Plantasjen Logistikk AS, a leading Norwegian retail chain, 400,000 kroner for selling products that contain high levels of DEHP, lead and short-chain chlorinated paraffins. The agency is also confiscating 500,000 kroner in company profit.

The penalties were assessed after KLIF tested sample products from the retailer's store shelves. While KLIF routinely tests products for hazardous substance levels, the monetary punishment in the case of Plantasjen Logistikk AS was usually high and highly publicized, likely meant to send a message to other major retailers.

"We take a very serious view that Plantasjen Logistikk has not complied with the environmental regulations for the products they sell," said Ellen Hambro, KLIF Director. "It is worrisome that nearly half of the products in our random sampling contained banned substances."

The KLIF announcement is posted at <http://www.klif.no/no/Aktuelt/Nyheter/2013/Mars-2013/Plantasjen-botelagt-for-ulovlige-produkter/>.

Statistics & Trends

South Australia Government Allocates \$3 Million For Food Waste Recycling

The Government of South Australia said late last month that it will allocate \$3 million over the next two years to help local governments recycle food waste. The funding, which will be distributed through Zero Waste South Australia, would expand curbside food waste collections and composting facilities.

"History has shown that by introducing an effective food waste system, councils can achieve a diversion rate of up to 70% and achieve the South Australia's Strategic Plan target of reducing waste to landfill in the local government sector," said Ian Hunter, South Australia Minister of Sustainability, Environment and Conservation.

The government announcement is posted at <http://www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au/upload/resource-centre/media-releases/media-releases-2013/food%20waste%20funding.pdf>.

Pennsylvania DEP Awards Another \$290,000 In Small Business Pollution Prevention Grants

In Pennsylvania, another 36 small businesses will receive 50 percent matching grants this fiscal year to prevent pollution or become more energy-efficient, according to an announcement Friday from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. This is the third and final round of Small Business Advantage Grants this fiscal year, which total about \$1 million in funding for all three rounds.

The Small Business Advantage Grant program was launched in 2004 and has provided about \$7.5 million in funding since then.

The DEP announcement is posted at http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/news_releases/14288.

GreenBlue Launches Sustainable Packaging Design Assessments Service

Late last month, GreenBlue, the US-based nonprofit organization responsible for the Sustainable Packaging Coalition (SPC), announced it had launched a standardized packaging design

assessment service for companies that are not SPC members. Assessments will be made using SPC's Comparative Packaging Assessment software known as COMPASS♦.

"While companies can purchase COMPASS licenses for use by their internal design teams, this new Advisory Services option offers a convenient alternative to companies that do not have large packaging portfolios or do not have internal life cycle assessment capabilities but want to take a holistic approach in their design decision making," said Katherine O'Dea, Senior Director of Advisory Services and Innovation at BlueGreen.

For more information contact O'Dea at 434.817.1424 or katherine.odea@greenblue.org.

Business Initiatives

Brazilian Supermarket Chain Collected More Than 16,000 Tons Of Recyclables In 2012

The Brazilian Supermarket Association said last week that Grupo Pao de Acucar, a leading national supermarket chain, collected more than 16,000 tons of recyclable materials last year - an increase of about 20 percent from 2011.

The chain offers a number of types of "recycling stations" in its stores and parking lots. Collected materials range from packaging to used cooking oil to electronics. For example, in 2012 the chain collected about 1.4 million food and drink containers, and since 2010 it has collected about 6.5 tons of empty aerosol cans.

Another program that was launched in 2012 with the support of Nokia collects end-of-life cell phones, accessories and batteries in-store. In 2012, the Hello Recycle program collected 2.1 tons of cell phones and other materials - a 300 percent increase over 2011

Get more information on Grupo Pao de Acucar's recycling programs at <http://www.abrasnet.com.br/clipping.php?area=30&clipping=34530>.

Brazilian Waste Management Association Publishes New Best Practices Manual

Last week, the Brazilian Association of Public Sanitation and Special Waste (ABRELPE) released a best practices manual that municipal managers can use to help develop new waste management and recycling plans that are "realistic and achievable." Such plans are required by the National Policy of Solid Waste that was approved in 2010.

"There is a need for a multidimensional approach that addresses all aspects of waste management, considering the technical, social, economic and political aspects," said ABRELPE CEO Carlos Silva Filho. *"And there is nothing more effective than learning from people who have already accomplished this and can teach us the best way forward."*

The manual was produced with the support of the Sao Paulo Secretary of Environment.

Download the new best practices manual (available in English and Portuguese) at http://www.abrelpe.org.br/manual_apresentacao.cfm.

Nestle And Sainsbury's To Test Ways To Green Food Products

According to an announcement today from Zero Waste Scotland, Nestle, UK grocery store chain Sainsbury's and the Co-operative Group, the UK's leading consumer cooperative, will participate in pilot efforts to "improve the environmental performance of some of their products" and to "improve the resilience of supply chains."

While a bit short on specifics, the announcement said the three organizations would "look at waste prevention and resource efficiency measures" for a number of specified food products. The announcement follows release of data by the Product Sustainability Forum - a collaborative group of more than 80 UK grocery-related business, NGOs and government agencies - that examined the environmental performance of grocery products, making the pilot efforts the next step in an evolving process.

For more information go to <http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/content/big-players-join-forces-improve-environmental-impacts-their-products>.

German Retail Federation Says Proposed Plastic Bag Tax Would Be Costly And Unnecessary

In 2011, the German Green Party called for implementing a 22-cent tax on single-use plastic bags to reduce plastic bag consumption, and the proposal is still simmering in German political circles. On Saturday, the German Retail Federation (Handelsverband Deutschland or HDE) issued a statement condemning the proposal, saying the proposed tax would cost consumers 1.2 million euros annually.

HDE also said that single-use plastic bags are already covered by German Packaging Ordinance and are both recycled and/or typically reused multiple times.

"Plastic bags are not really a disposable product," said HDE CEO Kai Falk. "Consumers in this country use their bags on average four to five times before they are disposed."

The HDE statement is posted at <http://www.einzelhandel.de/index.php/presse/aktuellemeldungen/item/122402-verbraucher-zahlen-milliarden-f%C3%BCr-t%C3%BCstensteuer-der-gr%C3%BCnen.html>.

American Chemistry Council Sues California Agency Over Proposed BPA Action

Last month, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) issued a public notice that it intended to add bisphenol A (BPA) to the list of toxic chemicals it maintains

under the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (known as the Proposition 65), and it launched a 45-day public comment period.

On March 1, the American Chemistry Council (ACC) announced it has filed a lawsuit in Sacramento County Superior Court to prevent BPA from being added to the Proposition 65 list.

"The state is ignoring its own panel of scientific experts, which completely undermines the scientific review process that citizens and businesses have relied upon for many years," said Steven G. Hentges, Ph.D., an ACC spokesperson. "Respected California scientists, appointed by the Governor, thoroughly reviewed the very report cited now by OEHHA, and unanimously concluded that it did not justify listing BPA. Because the regulatory and scientific process has been derailed, we are taking legal action."

The ACC announcement is posted at <http://www.americanchemistry.com/Media/PressReleasesTranscripts/ACC-news-releases/American-Chemistry-Council-Seeks-to-Prevent-OEHHA-from-Listing-BPA-Under-California-Proposition-65.html>.

The Green Perspective

German Environmental Group Calls For Product Stewardship Scheme For Pharmaceuticals

Late last month, the German environmental organization Deutsche Umwelthilfe e.V. (DUH) called for establishing a "nationwide drug-collection system in pharmacies." DUH also noted that Germany has not implemented an EU Directive that calls for takeback of unwanted and expired pharmaceuticals.

According to DUH National Director Jurgen Resch, pharmaceutical manufacturers should be financially responsible for the proposed take back scheme and for providing information to consumers through pharmacies about environmentally safe drug disposal.

At the same time DUH published a 12-page background paper on the subject.

For more information go to [http://www.duh.de/pressemitteilung.html?&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=3038](http://www.duh.de/pressemitteilung.html?&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=3038).