



The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is looking for "*partners*" in the hospitality (restaurants, hotels, resorts, park concessions, etc.) and paper recycling fields in a newly launched voluntary program. The program seeks to learn how much BPA is contained in the thermal papers used by participating partners and how BPA is present in recycled paper produced in Minnesota. The program also seeks to promote the use of paperless point of sales systems or at least the use of BPA-free thermal paper for receipts.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Pollution Prevention Program is providing funding for MPCA project.

Get more information at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/about-mpca/mpca-news/featured-stories/working-to-reduce-bpa-exposure-from-receipts.html>.

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## Statistics & Trends

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### Welsh Recycling Rate Up Three Percent From A Year Earlier

The Welsh recycling rate for the third quarter of 2012 rose to 54 percent, a three percent increase from the same quarter in 2011, according to a Welsh Government statement last week. Recycling rates for a number of local jurisdictions were higher than 54 percent.

According to the government announcement, the 54 percent rate indicates that "*Wales remains on track to meet its first statutory target.*" ( The 2012/2013 statutory target is 52 percent, and the 2024/2025 target is 70 percent.) The government cited citizen compliance with source separation policies as a reason for the rising rate.

The Welsh Government announcement is posted at <http://wales.gov.uk/newsroom/environmentandcountryside/2013/120214recycling/?lang=en>.

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### New Australian Standard For E-Waste Processing Released

On Monday, the non-profit organization Standards Australia announced the availability of a standard for e-waste collection, storage and recycling for use in Australia and New Zealand. The new standard - AS/NZS 5377:2013 - has been under development since March 2011.

The standard is said to maximize re-use of unwanted electronics, reduce their landfill disposal, minimize environmental harm from e-waste as well as protect workers handling e-waste, according to a Standards Australia announcement.

Senator Don Farrell, Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water said the new standard will "*complement the Australian Government's National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme under which recycling services for televisions and computers are being rolled out to communities across Australia.*"

The standard is available for purchase only through SAI Global at <http://infostore.saiglobal.com/store/Details.aspx?productID=1612190>.

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## German Environmental Ministry Helps Launch Municipal Recycled Paper Competition

Last week, Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) launched the sixth annual "Paper Atlas" competition to encourage the use of recycled paper in major municipalities - those with 100,000 or more residents.

Last year, 83 percent of major municipalities participated in the competition. Göttingen received the award for being the "*recycled paper friendliest city in Germany*." "Best of the best" awards were given to Bonn, Essen and Freiburg.

The green public procurement initiative evaluates major municipalities on their use of 100 percent recycled paper, which bears the Blue Angel ecolabel.

Get more information at <http://www.papieratlas.de/>.

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## European Union To Begin Tracking Progress On Biobased Economic Development

The European Commission wants the EU to transition from petroleum-based products to biobased products, i.e., products derived from living marine and land resources. Last week, the Commission announced the launch of an "*observatory*" to track development of the biobased EU economy for the next three years.

The observatory will be coordinated by the Commission's Joint Research Centre, a scientific resource. Among many other functions, the observatory will gather data on "*the conversion of waste streams into value-added products*."

The Commission's announcement also stated, "*The Commission is considering a new public-private partnership on bio-based industries to accelerate the development of the sector*."

The European Commission's announcement about the observatory can be reviewed at [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-113\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-113_en.htm).

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## Massachusetts Government Agencies Provide \$400,000 For Waste-To-Biogas Pilot

On Friday, the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs announced that \$400,000 in funding from three state government agencies will be provided to build a waste-to-biogas production facility at the Crapo Hill landfill in Dartmouth. The new facility is being built alongside an existing gas-to-energy facility that is used to generate electricity.

Food waste and organics make up 25 percent of the state's solid waste stream, and the proposed pilot facility would use aerobic digestion to process food waste, fats, oils and grease and sewage sludge. The facility would process 12 tons of waste materials daily, converting it into 650,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity annually.

The Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs said the facility is part of a plan to reduce the disposal of organic waste in the state by 450,000 tons per year by 2020.

The Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs announcement is posted at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/pr-2013/dartmouth-anaerobic-digestion.html>.

## Business Initiatives

### Guide On Eco-Design Of Pharmaceutical Packaging Made Available In France

Last week, the French packaging recycling compliance scheme Adelphe and Les Entreprises du Medicament (the French Pharmaceutical Companies Association) released a free jointly-developed 16-page guide on developing environmentally friendly packaging for pharmaceutical products. According to the guide, France uses about 70,000 tons of drug packaging each year.

The guide provides checklists of eco-design considerations in four areas - extraction of raw material, manufacturing, transport and end-of-life. For example, among the nine considerations within manufacturing are the following: 1) Has the weight of packaging been compared against what competitors offer with the same level of performance? 2) In general, has there been an effort made to make the size of packaging consistent? 3) Is it possible to reduce the amount of additives used in the packaging's finish? 4) Can glues and inks used be made more environmentally friendly?

A significant portion of the guide is dedicated to life cycle analysis.

An English language version of the guide is available. Download it at [http://www.adelphe.fr/sites/default/files/adelphe\\_leem\\_guide\\_ecoconception\\_medicaments\\_2013\\_gb.pdf](http://www.adelphe.fr/sites/default/files/adelphe_leem_guide_ecoconception_medicaments_2013_gb.pdf)

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### Germany Recycling Industries Association Voices Concern About Weak Recycled PET Market

Herbert Snell, Vice President of Bundesverband Sekundarrohstoffe und Entsorgung e.V (the German association of recycling industries) warned regulators last week against removing the import tariff on Chinese virgin PET, which Snell said would have a damaging effect on EU PET recyclers. (The tariff is scheduled to expire in November 2015.)

Snell said many European PET recyclers were operating their plants at only 75 percent capacity because of waste PET bottle exports and used PET bottle collection rates that are "*staggering*" around the 50 percent mark. (However, some industry analysts say too many PET bottles are also being used for energy recovery within the EU.)

The BVSE announcement is posted at [http://www.bvse.de/33/6198/Oekologische\\_Chancen\\_des\\_PET\\_Recyclings\\_werden\\_zu\\_wenig\\_genutzt](http://www.bvse.de/33/6198/Oekologische_Chancen_des_PET_Recyclings_werden_zu_wenig_genutzt).

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## UK VAT Exemption On Recycled Plastics Proposed By Multinational Company

Last week, MBA Polymers, a multinational plastics recycler that generated about \$50 million in revenue in 2011, called for a VAT exemption in the United Kingdom for recycled plastics. According to the firm, the exemption would *"help stimulate consumer demand and encourage investment in the UK's plastics recycling industry."*

According to a communique from the firm, *"we need something to incentivise the market with legislation designed to encourage post-consumer recycled plastics content in new products, such as exemption or a reduced rate of VAT. These changes can accelerate recycling in the UK and provide a win-win-win for society, the environment and recycled plastics businesses in the UK."*

The communique also called for *"auditing of 'downstream' overseas plastic waste processors, similar to domestic processors"* and a reduction of waste plastics recovered as energy." It said regulators need to start thinking of used plastics as a resource, not as waste.

The MBA Polymers announcement is posted at <http://www.mbapolymers.com/home/images/PDF/calls-vat-exemption-recycled-plastics.pdf>.

### The Green Perspective

## FoEE Report Indicates EU Is Wasting Recyclable Aluminum, Lithium And Textiles

Last week, Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE) released a 30-page report that claims, *"Europe is failing to manage its resources sustainably, unnecessarily sending valuable materials to incineration and landfill,"* despite the European Commission's policy guidance called The Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe.

The FoEE report, which is titled *"Less Is More,"* examines what happens to aluminum, lithium and textiles that enter the waste stream. According to the report, *"The vast majority of lithium consumed in Europe is incinerated or ends up in landfill due to very low collection rates and flawed waste legislation."* It also claims only about 5 percent of lithium contained in end-of-life lithium-ion batteries is recycled, largely because regulations are not keeping pace with newer battery technologies.

The recycling rate of aluminum is much better than that of lithium, but the report claims *"around 15 million tonnes of bauxite are still imported into the EU every year,"* because some aluminum is not recycled to the level it should be. For example, only 50 percent of aluminum packaging is recycled, and the report says, *"UK businesses could save around 5.1 billion euros per year in the metal manufacturing sector if resource efficiency measures were properly applied."*

Download the FoE report at <https://www.foeeurope.org/less-more-140213>

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## ChemSec Expands Its Substitute It Now Hazardous Chemicals List

Last Thursday, the International Chemical Secretariat (ChemSec) released version 2.1 of its Substitute It Now list of Substances of Very High Concern (SVHCs). The ChemSec SIN list is

much larger than the Candidate List of SVHCs maintained by the European Chemicals Agency as part of the REACH regulation.

SIN Version 2.1 contains 249 newly added substances, bringing the total to 626 substances.

"REACH is working in terms of delivering information about European chemicals' production and use," said ChemSec Director Ann-Sofie Andersson. "Based on this we have identified more substances, many of them carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic to reproduction, that should be included on the REACH Candidate List."

Access the updated list at <http://w3.chemsec.org/>.

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## Er Det Farlig Warns Consumers About Phthalates In Plastic Beach Toys

Last week, Er Det Farlig (Is It Safe?), a web site maintained by the Norwegian Climate and Pollution Agency (KLIF), warned consumers about buying plastic beach toys that could contain restricted phthalates. KLIF says the problem with phthalate-laced plastic beach toys is greater when purchasing toys in Mediterranean countries - a region where Norwegian vacation. KLIF cited a 2010 study that found phthalates in roughly one-third of toys purchased from beach area retailers in southern Europe.

As a health precaution, KLIF recommended consumers purchase only plastic toys displaying the CE marking, avoid purchasing any plastic toys that "*smell strongly of chemicals or perfumes*," and not purchase plastic toys from beachside vendors.

The Er Det Farlig announcement can be found at <http://www.erdetfarlig.no/Artikler/Nyhetsartikler/ver-obs-pa-leikene-i-utlandet/>.

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