



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

June 2005

Involving people in creating a sustainable future through local efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle

A Prolonged PET Bottle Shortage

Recovery drops, demand rises

According to a recent article in Waste News, the shortage of material recovered from PET bottles continues. PET, short for polyethylene terephthalate, is a commonly recycled plastic used to bottle soda, juice, water and other household products. The demand for the material is outpacing supply and is driven by carpet makers, beverage companies, other manufacturers and overseas buyers.

PET commands a premium on the scrap materials market, about 25 cents per pound, according to the article. Still, recovery remains low.

The recovery rate for PET bottles has been dropping for several years. The article notes that the US recovered 39.7% of PET bottles in 1995. In 2003 the recovery rate was a mere 19.6%. According to Phil Cavin, the national procurement director for Mohawk Industries, there would be plenty of bottles to satisfy demand, but they are not being collected.

The Waste News article notes that U.S. recyclers produced 667 million pounds of clean flake from recovered post-consumer PET bottles in 2003. Processors exported 255 million pounds of that. US manufacturers used 552 million pounds of recovered PET in a variety of manufactured products.

The piece cites Pat Franklin of the Container Recycling Institute in Arlington, VA. According to Franklin, bottle bills that include deposits on PET bottles are effective in recovering PET bottles. She adds that non-bottle bill states have lower PET recovery rates.

Source: Plastics News, accessed at <http://plasticsnews.com/subscriber/printer.html?id=1114634068> on May 22, 2005.

Aseptic Container Recycling Update

Alcoa announces new plasma technology while ZERI works on fermentation process.

Alcoa announced last month that its Brazilian affiliate, Alcoa Alumínio, has joined Tetra Pak, Klabin and TSL Ambiental to inaugurate its complete aseptic carton packaging recycling facility located in Piracicaba, Brazil. Aseptic containers are those box-like containers that are often used for soup, soy or rice milk. The plant uses a plasma technology, which enables the total separation of aluminum and plastic components from the cartons. This process constitutes, according to the company, a significant enhancement to the current recycling process for carton packaging, which up until now, separated paper, but kept plastic and aluminum together. The plasma process provides another option for recycling, allowing for the return of all three components of the package to the productive chain as raw material.

Alcoa, which supplies thin-gauge aluminum foil to Tetra Pak for aseptic packaging, uses the recycled aluminum to manufacture new foils.

The new plasma facility has the capacity to process 8 thousand tons per year of plastic and aluminum, corresponding to recycling approximately 32 thousand tons of aseptic packaging. According to Alcoa, the emission of pollutants during the recovery of the materials is minimal, as the process takes place in the absence of oxygen, without combustion, yielding an energy efficiency rate close to 90%.

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Calling All Citizen Leaders in Recycling!

RA Board elections in July

Now is your opportunity as a member to take part in developing the leadership of Oregon's leading citizen advocacy group for recycling and waste prevention.

Please take a moment to consider individuals you know who have leadership qualities or potential and who may have an interest in serving RA members and all Oregonians as an RA board member. The Board election will take place at the annual member meeting on July 20 (location and time to be announced).

The current situation

The board seeks to add up to two board members to the current group of directors.

The current Board consists of Rob Guttridge (President), Wayne Rifer (Secretary), Rick Paul (Treasurer), Lori Stole (Vice-President), Rhett Lawrence and Betty Patton (at-large).

Rob and Wayne, whose terms are up, are both stepping down from their current positions but running for re-election as at-large board members. This leaves the positions of President and Secretary open.

Lori, Rick, Rhett, and Betty are finishing the first year of two-year terms.

Betty has agreed to step up and run for President of RA.

Rhett has offered to run for Secretary.

Nomination guidelines

Nomination forms are available online at www.recyclingadvocates.org (after June 10) or on request by calling RA at (503) 777-0909.

Nominees do not have to be members of RA, but they will need to agree to

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Alcoa, continued

“This project synthesizes the best that sustainability can offer, in the form of partnering, technological innovation, environmental enhancement and social development. Alcoa is proud to participate in the roll-out of this pioneering technology,” stated Franklin Feder, president of Alcoa Latin America. “Brazil already possesses an exemplary record of recycling aluminum and, consequently, the country now has the potential to become a global paradigm as well in the recovery and reuse of aseptic carton packages,” Feder said.

How Plasma Technology Works

The application of plasma technology for the recycling of aseptic carton packaging employs electrical energy to produce a jet of plasma at 15 thousand degrees Celsius to heat the plastic and aluminum mixture. With this process, plastic is transformed into paraffin and the aluminum is recovered in the form of high-purity ingot. Alcoa will then use the recycled aluminum to manufacture new foil. Paraffin is sold to the Brazilian petrochemical industry. The paper, extracted during the first phase of the recycling process is transformed into cardboard by Klabin. TSL Ambiental, responsible for the technology development of thermal plasma, is responsible for operating this new facility.

About the partnering companies

Klabin is the biggest paper manufacturer and exporter in Brazil. The company was founded 106 years ago, and has 18 plants (17 in Brazil and 1 in Argentina) and it is the leader in the production of

papers, cardboards for packaging, corrugated cardboard boxes, industrial bags and timber. Additional information is available at www.klabin.com.br.

Tetra Pak is an organization that operates in over 165 countries, producing integrated systems for processing, bottling, distribution and cardboard packaging for food such as milk and dairy products, juices, coconut water, teas, tomato by-products, creams, sauces and others. The company started in Brazil in 1957. It has 53 packaging plants around the world and 16 packaging machinery plants. In 2004, over 60 billion liters of products were bottled around the world in Tetra Pak packaging and 110 billion packaging units were delivered. For additional information go to www.tetrapak.com.br.

TSL Engenharia Ambiental is an engineering company that focuses on sustainable and development activities. The company, headquartered in Sao Paulo, has an international presence. For additional information, visit www.tslambiental.com.br.

ZERI: A better way?

Alcoa's process is obviously energy intensive. The company's press release generated some responses on the list serve of the Container Recycling Institute, including from Gary Liss. According to Liss, a solid waste consultant, scientists working with ZERI, Zero Emissions Research & Initiatives, have developed a biochemical process that can separate the materials in aseptic containers through fermentation. The process, catalyzed by enzymes, produces the separation and does not require the high temperature used in Alcoa's plasma technology. According to Liss, the process occurs in two steps at between 32 and 38 degrees Fahrenheit and around 80 degrees Fahrenheit. The separation process is in testing in Bogota, Colombia and Curitiba, Brazil.

Source: Alcoa press release from May 13, 2005 and Container Recycling Institute BBAN list serve discussion from May 23, 2005.

Getting to the Bottom of the Long Running Diaper Dispute

British study addresses the disposable vs. cloth diaper issue

Most parents of babies and toddlers use disposable diapers. Some opt for cloth diapers that they wash at home or which are laundered by a commercial diaper service. In some new parent circles and on the Internet a bitter moral battle rages on about which is better for children and the environment.

Britain's Environment Agency sponsored a study to compare the environmental impacts of both kinds of diapers. For some, the question of disposable or cloth is now settled. The study concluded that the diapers have roughly an equal impact on the environment. While disposable diapers are only used once and fill up landfill space, the study notes that cloth diapers expend energy to transport, wash, and dry. All types of diapers use up resources in their manufacture.

The survey of 2000 families suggests that both parents and manufacturers can do more to reduce the ecological impact of diapers. For example, those who use cloth diapers could wash them at a lower temperature and in bigger loads.

Is the question settled? Hardly. According to the Times of London, the Women's Environmental Network condemned the study, while representatives of the disposable diaper manufacturers expressed satisfaction.

For more on the story, go to www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-1618300,00.html. Britain's Environment Agency's press release is available at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/news/1072187?version=1%26lang=_e.

To sidestep the diaper issue all together, check out diaperless child rearing at www.grist.org/advice/ask/2004/02/12/umbra-diaperless/index.html?source=daily.

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PO Box 6736
Portland, OR 97228-6736
(503) 777-0909

info@recyclingadvocates.org
www.recyclingadvocates.org

Rob Guttridge, President

Lori Stole, Vice President

Wayne Rifer, Secretary

Rick Paul, Treasurer

Betty Patton, At Large

Rhett Lawrence, At Large

Jeffrey White, Newsletter Editor



RA Board, continued

become members in order to be considered for election.

Please speak with your potential nominees about your intentions to nominate them to the RA board.

When making a nomination, please note that the board seeks individuals with leadership skills, a passion for our issues, and the ability to serve.

Self-nominations are welcome.

The nomination committee will determine the slate for election based on nominations received.

Nomination deadline: June 25, 2005.

Send nominations to: PO Box 6736, Portland, OR 97228 or info@recyclingadvocates.org.

Thank you for taking time to participate in this year's nomination process.

RA Film Screening and Panel Presentation in the Works

Focus on local recycling and where materials go

Recycling Advocates is planning another film screening for this July that will feature the short documentary on recycling called *Point of Return*. The film was produced recently by the Northern California Recycling Association. The evening will also include a panel presentation from a variety of recycling stakeholders.

This event will provide basic information on how commingled recyclables are processed, where they go as commodities and delve into our members' questions about recycling in the Portland Metro area. Pencil in the date of July 20 and watch for more details in the July newsletter and other announcements.

Recycling Advocates is proud to be...



a member of Earth Share OF OREGON

Bring Earth Share into Your Workplace

...and help protect the environment

Oregonians care. They care about forests and fish, about clean water and air, about taking care of their communities. Every year, more working people in Oregon have chosen to show this commitment by donating to Earth Share of Oregon's 68 local and national member groups through workplace giving campaigns.

Here's how it happens: Earth Share works with employers to offer a payroll deduction program through which employees can either donate to Earth Share of Oregon (ESOR) as a whole or to designate a gift for one or more ESOR members.

In campaigns at 80+ businesses and public agencies, ESOR annually generates almost \$700,000 to support environmental nonprofits that work to protect human health, preserve wildlife habitat and reduce the causes and effects of global warming.

Recycling Advocates is a member of ESOR and it receives a steady source of income from Earth Share, as well as designated gifts from donors that support RA's mission. ESOR's campaign also offers a great opportunity for RA to reach out to new audiences and potential supporters.

Is there an Earth Share campaign where you work?

First, find out if your workplace allows employees to donate to Earth Share of Oregon. If you aren't sure, check the list of Earth Share's Workplace Partners at www.earthshare-oregon.org.

Next, if you don't have an Earth Share campaign, ask your company president or other top leaders if they would consider starting one. Ron Shoals, Earth Share of Oregon's business development manager, can help you approach your company's leaders and provide materials for them to review. If you are an owner or leader in your company, it makes adding an Earth Share campaign that much easier!

To learn more about bringing Earth Share to your workplace, call Ron at (503)223-9015 or e-mail him at ron@earthshare-oregon.org.

Junk Mail Update

Opt out online

Equifax, Experian, Innovis and TransUnion, the four major consumer credit reporting companies, now offer a new Web site that lets individuals opt out of receiving those unwanted credit card offers. If you have yet to permanently remove yourself from the credit card marketing database, go to www.optoutprescreen.com and complete the process. The service was formerly available only by calling toll-free (888) 567-8688.



RECYCLING ADVOCATES Membership Application

- \$25 Advocate \$50 Friend \$100 Sustainer \$10-24 Living Lightly
- I'm giving a gift membership to the recipient below.**
- Contact me about volunteering for RA* *Don't sign me up for Action Alerts*

Please enclose a check and mail to: PO Box 6736, Portland, OR 97228-6736

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Day _____ Evening _____

E-mail _____ Send my newsletter by e-mail

*Your name, if this is a gift membership: _____

Your membership contribution to RA is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Inform a Dad... Try giving an RA membership for Father's Day!

Upcoming Events and Workshops

ReBuilding Center Grand ReOpening

Date: June 4, 2005.
 Time 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 Location: 3625 North Mississippi (at North Fremont).
 The ReBuilding Center is now the biggest center for reusable building materials in the country. Come celebrate its seventh year with live music, a raffle, recycled art show, munchies, and a huge sale. See how over 28,500 sq. ft. were built with donated, used building materials. For more information, go to www.rebuildingcenter.org or call (503) 331-1877.

Association of Oregon Recyclers Conference

“Recycle — Brand Oregon” this month in Redmond

AOR’s Education and Recycling Conferences are being held back-to-back at Eagle Crest Resort in

Redmond, Oregon this year.
Education Conference on Thursday, June 23

The Education Conference includes several breakout sessions and special workshops for all participants. The session and workshop titles include:

- Compost Facility 101
- A New Brand of Business Recycling
- Commingling Outreach Strategies: Messages that Make it at the Curb
- Creative Communication for Specialized Recycling Programs
- Developing Your Own Creative Outreach Materials and Getting the Results You Want
- School Recycling Roundtable
- Green Schools Coordinator Training

The event ends with a “Recycle Chat & Chew Reception.”

Annual AOR Recycling Conference, Friday June 24 through June 25

The keynote speaker for the Recycling Conference will be David Sarasohn of *the Oregonian*. Bill Lunch of OPB and OSU will give a local and national legislative overview. The event features breakout sessions and an electronics recycling workshop. There will be the trade show, Junk Art Challenge and annual awards banquet as in past years. For more information, go to www.aorr.org or call (503) 233-3056.

Recycling Advocates Board Meeting

Date: June 27, 2005.
 Time: 7:30 p.m.
 For location and information.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Portland, OR 97228-6736
 PO Box 6736

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