

A SORTED AFFAIR  
Product Stewardship  
by Jane Bogner  
Sunday, March 23, 2008

Since 1992, I have been writing about all the things that one can easily recycle. The recycling market for newspaper, cardboard, glass bottles and aluminum cans has long been in place. Plastics are finally seeing some viable markets as I reported recently that Vallejoans can now add #5 PP yogurt cups to their curbside bins.

To deal with other disposable items, some states asked manufacturers to include an Advanced Disposal Fee in the price of their product that would fund recycling and disposal programs. But states quickly found that this fee was, like the current carbon credits, a way of manufacturers making whatever they wanted and not being responsible for their impact on the planet.

Enough is enough, says the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC). Most of the companies that make this stuff aren't paying a nickel to recycle it. In fact, they designed products for disposal and we are picking up the tab!

Case in point: I visited my sister in Seattle last week and a friend was so excited about a three-serving container of wine. It was a California wine in a tetra pack. All the design, energy, and materials that it took to make this product were thrown into the trash within five minutes of its use.

CPSC's goal is to encourage manufacturers to include Product Stewardship or Extended Product Responsibility into the products that they sell.

The CPSC started with a concern that hazardous wastes such as mercury, batteries, fluorescent lamps, and electronic equipment, should not be in the landfill. These items are now banned from California landfills but local governments have to fund methods of recycling this material but at no cost to the company that manufactured the product in the first place. Interestingly, some American companies in Europe are participating in Extended Product Responsibility there but not here.

Laws are needed to provide manufacturers a level playing field with standards and accountability to achieve the desired results.

CPSC is a resource for local governments to begin building partnerships with manufacturers to bring about producer financed and managed systems for product discards. They offer sample ordinances, plans and policies as well as and support services.

The California Integrated Waste Management Board recently adopted a framework for an Extended Producer Responsibility System in California. Information about the CPSC can be found at [www.caproductstewardship.org](http://www.caproductstewardship.org) or by calling (916) 485-7753.

Hazardous Waste update

Pressure-treated wood is now a hazardous material. This wood is commonly stained green or reddish brown with a stamped surface. It can no longer go into the landfill and will be turned away from Household Hazardous Waste facilities. It is expected that the state will announce a disposal solution in the near future, but for now consumers need to keep any pressure-treated scrap.

Vallejo's Ewaste and Tire Recycling Event

Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 26 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Vallejoans can recycle their old TVs, computer monitors, fluorescent tubes, household batteries, and other electronics. They are also accepting up to 10 passenger tires per customer (multiple trips with tires are ok). The event takes place at Vallejo Garbage Service located at 2021 Broadway.

*VALCORE Recycling Board Secretary Jane Bogner's "A Sorted Affair" is published every other week in the Times-Herald. For recycling information call VALCORE Recycling at 645-8258 or visit [www.VALCORErecycling.org](http://www.VALCORErecycling.org).*

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