

A SORTED AFFAIR The Olympics get a Bronze medal for being Green
by Jane Bogner 2.21.10

Did you know that along with sport and culture, environment is one of the three pillars of the Olympic movement? With this in mind, the David Suzuki Foundation (www.davidsuzuki.org) developed recommendations for the Vancouver Olympic organizers to make the 2010 games carbon neutral.

Suzuki reported that Vancouver has raised the bar for climate action by including energy efficient venues, using clean energy sources, and promoting the use of public transit. The Games' climate-protection policies gave Vancouver a Bronze medal for their efforts.

Suzuki's website reported that climate solutions are doable and affordable.

"The Vancouver Olympics have performed very well with respect to venues and energy use, and have made advances in several categories over previous Olympics, as demonstrated in measuring and offsetting their climate impact."

However, the Vancouver Olympics were less successful in other respects. "The Games will not leave the region with a significant legacy in sustainable transportation and failed to create a high profile for climate solutions in its public communications."

Thoughtless Packaging

Just when you think packaging cannot get worse, my sister gave me a box from her new Blue Tooth device for her phone. We all know these ear pieces are about the size of a large disposable lighter. She gave me a metal and plastic box that looked like a shadow box and measured 3.5x8x2 inches. Motorola claimed that this metal (aluminum) and plastic (number 6 rigid clear polystyrene) can be recycled. Yes you can recycle the aluminum but not the plastic.

Motorola's web site touted their green practices which covered taking back phones

and other devices for recycling. However, their green packaging policies are lacking. Changing from virgin plastic to recycled plastic may be good but, not using it at all, would be the best solution.

Heinz ketchup

And then there is the new Heinz individual ketchup package. The new larger ketchup pack is shaped like a shallow cup. The top can be peeled back for dipping or the end can be torn off for squeezing.

What I find fascinating is the thought process for the new design.

AP Food Industry Writer Sarah Skidmore reported, "designers found that what worked at a table did not work where many people use ketchup packets: in the car. So two years ago, Heinz bought a used minivan for the design team members so they could give their ideas a real road test.

"The team studied what each passenger needed. The driver wanted something that could sit on the armrest. Passengers wanted the choice of squeezing or dunking. Moms wanted a packet that held enough ketchup for the meal and didn't squirt onto clothes so easily."

So move over text messaging drivers, here comes the ketchup.

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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.*

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