

# Glass Matters

UPDATE 19 – MARCH 2009

## UPDATE on LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK



*Hon Nick Smith  
Minister for the Environment*

Business leaders, community groups and local government met with Hon Dr Nick Smith Minister for the Environment at a public meeting in Auckland on the 26<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the development of a new packaging product stewardship scheme to succeed the current Packaging Accord which will end in June this year.

The Minister told over 150 participants that he supported a collaborative approach to product stewardship with solutions based on smart economic and environmental policy and sound science. He outlined the Government's preference for industry to develop a voluntary scheme with ambitious but realistic targets. He also said that he favours market based price signals such as the waste levy to encourage change.

Tony Nowell (CNZM) Chair of the Packaging Accord's Governing Board reiterated this

message saying that there are two choices for New Zealand businesses:

"One is legislation; the other is a voluntary agreement. The Minister has made it clear he prefers us to sort ourselves out. If we are going to have a sensible relationship between everyone represented in this room –businesses, local government and communities– we need to work together to develop a voluntary product stewardship scheme to replace and improve the one we currently have.

"But we need to be practical. At a time of unprecedented economic instability, when industry and government are cutting budgets, we cannot afford to spend months and even years trying to reach an agreement as we did with the last Accord."

The meeting represented the first public consultation to discuss the criteria and targets for a new packaging product stewardship scheme.

## What does this mean for Glass?

Business as usual! The Ministry for the Environment will soon release its criteria for having voluntary product stewardship schemes accredited by the Minister.

The Glass Packaging Forum and its voluntary levy would appear to closely match the expectations of a product

stewardship scheme in terms of scope, measurable targets, inclusivity and funding.

It is expected that the Waste Advisory Board will release its list of potential priority products in March.

As a reminder: A product can be declared a priority product if:-

- The product will or may cause significant environmental harm when it becomes waste **or**
- there are significant benefits from reduction, reuse, recycling, recovery or treatment of the product; **and**
- The product can effectively be managed under a product stewardship scheme.

The Forum will continue to advocate strongly that it has an effective voluntary product stewardship scheme which is self funded and directed at improving recovery of glass in New Zealand.

### **Advocacy: Dialogue with central and local government**



***John Webber talks about glass with the Minister for the Environment***

The Glass Packaging Forum has provided the Minister for the Environment with a briefing document on its work and the issues for the glass sector.

“In 2004 glass had a specific goal under the Packaging Accord – to increase glass recycling and to remove glass stockpiles. The landscape looks very different today.

Three years ago there were insufficient uses for recovered glass, today we are unable to

recover sufficient good quality cullet for glass making in New Zealand.



As packaging manufacturers in general are moving overseas to cheaper production markets, glass production in New Zealand is set to increase by 66% with millions of dollars invested by O-I New Zealand in a third furnace.

The glass stockpiles today are not in South Island but are more likely to be piles of glass resulting from commingled collections which await processing or once processed await shipment offshore. Glass will increasingly be diverted to alternative and often low value uses.

The dynamics have changed – we can focus on recycling or we can look at the bigger picture. And we believe that product stewardship requires us to consider all of the economic, social and environmental factors and then agree trade-offs.

There is a direct relationship between the way in which recovered materials are utilized and New Zealand’s carbon footprint. Glass cullet requires significantly less energy to be melted and as an alternative to using raw material produces much fewer emissions so from an environmental perspective we should be making sure as much glass as possible is available for reuse in glass making. O-I NZ report that an average glass container made in New Zealand uses 65% glass cullet which is one of the highest rates in the world.

### ***Best Cost’ Product Stewardship***

Whilst we continue to hear calls for mandatory schemes such as Container Deposit legislation ultimately container

collection will be paid for via rates, taxes or increased costs at the supermarkets. This needs to be addressed **at least cost**. We hold up our voluntary levy programme

which has committed \$0.5 million dollars to fund research, operations and education in the past 12 months as an example of how voluntary programmes deliver results.

## Innovation : Project Update

### SUMMARY OF HOW GLASS IS BEING USED AROUND THE COUNTRY

We are currently putting together a DVD of the life cycle of glass and the role of the Glass Packaging Forum which will be used as a key part of our communications and advocacy this year.

***If you have suitable "video" clips from your own business, we are happy to incorporate these.***

REUSE	DETAILS OF REUSE
AGGREGATE	Funded comparative studies of the best method for processing glass. Purchase of mobile glass crusher which is crushing glass for councils on South Island.
ROADING	Supported Transit New Zealand amending its specification for MD4 material
BUILDING SLABS	Trials using both pre prepared crushed cullet and rolling over material laid within the building profiles. These meet building inspector's criteria and are part of a formal engineering report.
GOLF COURSES	Glass has been successfully used for both 'coring' and bunkers. The New Zealand Turf Institute have been monitoring progress and once their minimal trial period has been met (2 years) further promotion can begin.
MULCH	Wineries that have trialed glass have all reported significant gains in yield.
PATHWAYS	Glass is very effective for pathways if crushed to the right size. Trials on private driveways and parking lots have not presented any problems.
MULTI-TRIP BOTTLES	Support for the Smart Bottles operation in Dunedin whereby the washing operator provides a service without responsibilities in respect of bottle supply.
EROSION PROTECTION	Trials underway
LION BREWERIES	Lion Breweries has received the inaugural 2008 Concrete3 Sustainability Award by the Cement and Concrete Association of New Zealand. The award recognizes the extensive amount of recycled glass used in the brewery's construction which not only finds an alternative use for glass but also addresses the shortage of locally produced aggregates in Auckland.
GLASS-VAC SCOOTER	The Glass vac project is halfway through an initial clean up of the streets of Palmerston North.

### The Litter Issue

Successive Ministers for the Environment have highlighted the problem of packaging as a litter issue. At his address to the Packaging Product Stewardship Meeting Nick Smith said that packaging is a very visible part of the waste stream and he received a lot of correspondence about its role in our litter problem.

The Forum is funding a glass vac scooter trial in Palmerston North which is half way through its pilot cleaning up broken glass.



**SUCK IT UP with Scooter Vac**

## ONGOING EDUCATION PROGRAMME



Work is underway to develop a nationwide PICK IT UP programme fronted by Che Fu.

The brand, website and supporting collateral have been prepared and are linked initially to GLASS MATTERS.

A staged performance was piloted to 150+ students in New Plymouth at the end of 2008 and highlighted the new national rap, PICK IT UP, performed by Che Fu and featured the 2008 World Hip Hop Champs (krumpers), Sweet & Sour. This was followed by a game show for students which focussed on the re-use of glass (and other packaging materials) litter, waste and personal responsibility for the environment.

It is anticipated that PICK IT UP/Che Fu and crew will hit the road first quarter of 2009 and perform events over the course of the year in main cities. This will link our recycling message with addressing littering issues which are increasingly coming to the fore as a problem.

With the Government's decision not to finance its LOVE NZ recycling bins beyond this financial year, we believe it is incumbent on the private sector as part of its product stewardship commitment to drive this message.



AN EMPTY GLASS BOTTLE

Aotearoa (New Zealand) keep'n it clean'n green

## COMMUNICATION : STOP PRESS !!!



During the summer, the media has focused on the impact of the collapse of commodity prices on the recycling market here and globally. There have been calls on the Minister for the Environment to use funds from the waste levy to support recycling operators and prevent stockpiles. Most of the attention has been on plastics, paper and metals.

### Business North 1<sup>st</sup> February 2009: Voluntary Group delivers on Commitment

This two page article covers the role of the Forum and its achievements. *"Collectively the forum's members provide at least 80% of the glass packaging used in New Zealand. One of the major roles the forum has undertaken is finding acceptable ways to use the glass once it is received.*

*John Webber speaks positively of the achievements:*

*"People have applied for grants to look at things such as paving slabs with lighting in them and a "scooter vac" which can be used to gather broken glass.*

*"Everything we do is designed to protect the public's attitude towards glass packaging."*

### 14.2.09 Dominion Post: Crushed glass will be used to filter toxic leachate in a new landfill

Central Hawkes Bay council initiative is welcomed by the Glass Packaging Forum:

*"That's about 500 tonnes of glass that needn't go to waste." said John Webber. "We collect about 140,000 tonnes of glass but a lot doesn't meet the spec to be recycled into new bottles and jars. The more uses we find like this the better.."*

### 11.2.09 The Mirror (Queenstown and Central Otago) Glass mountains to go to roads

Alexandra's glass mountains are about to be crushed. The estimated 5000 tonnes<sup>1</sup> of glass which have been stockpiled for the past 6 years are about to be crushed and used as aggregate for roading. Waste Busters manager Karen Noble told the Mirror that a national organization called the Glass Packaging Forum would pay for the glass to be crushed as well as providing money for four concrete bunkers to be built on site..."

#### Dominion Post: Wellington: Council U Turn on recycling

"Wellington City Council has backed down on its plan to scrap plastic recycling bins after a public backlash over plans to introduce a user pays systems.

The council had planned to introduce recycling bags which would cost \$1 each to pay for the cost of recycling which costs the council 2.6 million per annum

#### Information: Packaging issues around the world



#### In UK

#### Commodity prices for recovered materials are holding steady

The UK has just released its prices for recovered packaging materials which show markets continue to show on-going stability with most recovered materials' prices holding steady – a situation that is also broadly reflected across Europe. Quality is still a key issue with good quality materials

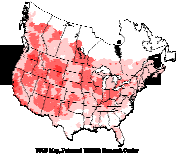
<sup>1</sup> Note this is believed to be around 3000 tonnes

more readily finding markets and higher prices.

The long term market outlook would suggest that prices are beginning to stabilise. However there are still concerns about volatility in certain markets due to the fragility of the Chinese market, prices for plastics and cardboard could come under pressure.

#### North America

#### Colorado offers rebate for clean glass recycling



With passage of the Recycling Resources Economic Opportunity Act, the state of Colorado in 2007 created grants for recycling initiatives, and a unique rebate program, part of which is aimed at keeping recycled materials high quality and directing them to local markets.

For glass, this has meant a push to get cleaner recycled glass containers and more of them to Rocky Mountain Bottle Company, the primary glass processor in the state. See <http://www.gpi.org/recycle-glass/colorado-offers-rebate-for-cle.html>

#### and in Australia



The Environment Protection and Heritage Council is expected to publish its assessment of potential options for national measures including container deposit legislation to address resource efficiency, environmental impacts and the reduction of litter.



This issue, along with archived issues of Glass Matters can be viewed on the Forum's website

<http://www.glassforum.org.nz/news.html#archive>

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