



## GLASS MATTERS UPDATE NUMBER 6

### POLITICAL INTEREST IN THE GLASS FORUM

The Packaging Accord's Year Two Progress Report was launched at the Beehive on 14<sup>th</sup> October by Hon David Benson-Pope, Minister for the Environment. Tony Nowell, Chair of the Packaging Accord's Governing Board and Basil Morrison, Chair of Local Government New Zealand also addressed the audience which included MPs Hon Nanaia Mahuta, Steve Chadwick, Marion Hobbs, Doug Wollerton and Nandor Tanczos. The Glass Forum was represented by members of the Steering Group as well as other members.

The Minister's message was loud and clear:-

*"A Glass Packaging Forum has been established to fund research into alternative uses for recovered glass. That this is being self funded through a voluntary levy shows a high level of commitment and responsibility and should be widely applauded. ... (The Accord) is a five year programme and New Zealanders are looking to us to make progress. I encourage you to stretch your targets."*

All of the speakers spoke of the need for industry, local government and recycling operators to communicate with each other so that we can try to improve recovery rates. In this respect, the issue of co-mingled collections and their impact on recycling rates was raised with the clear message from Local Government NZ that this type of collection will continue because of the immediate cost benefits to councils.

### An update on the Co-Mingling

Whilst we may not like the impact which co-mingled collections are having on glass recycling numbers, there is still much work to be done to try to influence councils that have not yet changed their method of collection and to work with those that have (North Shore City and Waitakere) to help address the growing glass stockpiles which are mounting at their recycling operators premises.

Accordingly under the leadership of the Packaging Accord meetings was held with Mayor Dick Hubbard and Auckland City officials on November 1<sup>st</sup> with another meeting planned with Auckland City and Manukau officials on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Both of these councils are about to prepare a waste management tender which is based on co-mingled collections (incorporating glass, steel, aluminium, paper and plastics). This extends the mixed collections currently been conducted elsewhere in the Auckland region because it aims to include paper.

As a Glass Forum we will address this issue as part of the Packaging Accord because co-mingling is not a glass specific issue but affects all sectors in different ways.

## Waste Minimisation (Solids) Bill

The Bill was debated at an MP's breakfast hosted by the Packaging Accord with speakers Metiria Turei, Green Party, Nicki Wagner, National Party and Maryan Street, Labour Party all supporting the principles behind it. This convergence of opinion on the intent of the Bill if not the detail reflects the shift in cross-party politics on sustainability with National's recently released Bluegreen vision. On waste National says 'Incentives are better than regulation at reducing waste. Either a waste levy or a system of Tradable Resource Recovery Certificates could achieve this'<sup>1</sup>

The Bill has been delayed until at least February 2007 with the Government saying it is not in a particular hurry to progress it and that time will be needed to address some of the issues. Maryan Street repeated the Minister's salutary note on making progress:-

*"Government believes this kind of Accord is the best way forward but it needs to deliver results and as soon as it ceases to deliver results, Government may move to regulatory end of the continuum. We need to see the development of new markets for packaging waste, increased membership, improved recovery rates and we expect the 2008 targets will be met... I am impressed that the glass sector has put in place a voluntary levy and is looking for solutions."*

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<sup>1</sup> Bluegreen Vision for New Zealand  
[www.national.org.nz](http://www.national.org.nz)

## Packaging issues around the world

**In California:** Consultants to The California Department of Conservation have published its Single Stream Recycling Best Practices Manual which provides a detailed and timely report on the benefits and costs of introducing commingled collections. The report<sup>2</sup> places the responsibility on local government as the organization with the most ability to influence all parts of the system through designing collection and waste recovery systems which produce materials which can be recycled into new products. On the benefits side commingled collections increase recovery volumes, provide handling efficiency gains and reduce worker injury rates. On the minus side they have accelerated the amount of poorly sorted recovered materials, increased internal processing costs and reduced the market value of recovered products.

Demonstrating the amount of interest in the collection methodology...

**In Wales, UK:** the Centre for Health and Environment Research and Expertise has published its report into the health impacts of different types of collection.<sup>3</sup> This study failed to identify any significant risks within kerbside recycling operations using boxes and bags that could not be effectively managed and controlled. The risks identified included twists and strains which were most obvious with certain rear-loading vehicles where operatives found it necessary to adopt un-safe postures in order to load the vehicle. Side-loading or purpose built rear loading vehicles appeared to present significantly less risks.

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<http://www.conservatree.com/learn/SolidWaste/bestpractices.shtml>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.crn.org.uk/gifs/chere.pdf>

## Projects Update

**Cost benefit analysis** The interim report comparing production procedures for cullet used in aggregate finds that the production costs of the methodologies used by Fulton Hogan and Higgins in Nelson and Palmerston North respectively are broadly similar. The premium for processing aggregate with cullet over conventional mineral aggregate is around \$2 per tonne. The premium for a tonne of aggregate with 5% cullet could be as high as \$6 or 30% when low cost stone is available. We are currently considering how best to share this information with local councils and recycling operators.

## Communications

Our focus has been establishing contact with local councils particularly those where collection methods are or about to change including Queenstown, Timaru, Auckland City and Manukau, We are working closely with the Ministry for the Environment and the Packaging Council to ensure messages are co-ordinated.

We launched our new Glass Forum exhibition stand at Foodtech Packtech.

A media release relating to the Accord's Year Two report was circulated to all media that have covered the glass issue over the previous year. Tony Nowell, Chair of the Packaging Accord Governing Board was interviewed on ASB Breakfast on 15<sup>th</sup> Oct and explained why glass has presented a very significant challenge. See <http://tvnz.co.nz/view/page/410965/851997>

A comprehensive media evaluation has been carried out on behalf of the Packaging Accord by independent specialist Impact Evaluation covering all media coverage relating to the Accord in Year One. The commentary on glass finds that:

*'This was the third most frequently seen message with nine relevant items and some very strong individual scores. Coverage was*

*mainly in local newspapers. The main issue was the growing "glass mountain" as local councils found it uneconomic to transport glass away for recycling.'*

## In the news:

*New services in the making:*

*In Timaru*– The Council says that its new three bin system has reduced the amount of rubbish being put out for kerbside by nearly three quarters

*In Te Awamutu* –where glass recycling has returned and Waipu which will be putting out a tender for urban and rural recycling early next year.

*In Taranaki* – where they are spending more on waste control than ever before and have awarded the collection and disposal to Waste Management. The news article quotes South Taranaki DC as reminding producers of their product stewardship: "The responsibility cannot be put on councils alone, the waste producers need to do something."

*In Westport* – where site preparation is reported to be underway for a new recycling centre and that the Buller DC has approved funds for a kerbside collection scheme under its 10 year plan.

*And glass continues to stockpile in Queenstown* –on a hardfill site by the Shotover river, stored for possible use in roadmaking because the high cost of transporting glass to Auckland for recycling left no other options.