



GLASS MATTERS UPDATE NUMBER 17 – October 2008

UPDATE

The Waste Minimisation Act has now passed into legislation. In short this now means that all waste to landfill will cost an additional \$10 per tonne over existing landfill charges and that certain products and/or their packaging can be selected as "priority" products which require accredited product stewardship schemes.

The Minister for the Environment called for nominations for membership of the Waste Advisory Board which is being established as part of this legislation. The Glass Packaging Forum nominated David Carter. The Minister has indicated that successful candidates for the new Board will be announced very shortly. Anecdotally we are aware that there were many nominations for up to 8 positions.

GLASS RECYCLING HITS NEW HIGH

The Glass Packaging Forum reports that glass recovery is up to 62%¹ from 53% in the previous year. This represents a spectacular increase of an additional 28955 tonnes of glass recovered and exceeds a full year ahead of schedule the 55% recycling rate which industry agreed as part of its five year voluntary commitment under the Packaging Accord.

New Zealand's glass recovery rate puts it ahead of Europe which is striving for a 60%

¹ The 62% rate includes circa 4500 tonnes of glass from previous years which have now been processed.

recycling target by the end of 2008 and Australia which aims for 60% by 2010.

John Webber General Manager of the Glass Packaging Forum told the media that the huge increase reflects a major hike in the utilization of surplus waste glass as aggregates for a variety of uses:-

"This has in part been stimulated by the Forum's introduction of a mobile glass crusher which has often acted as a catalyst for major contracting companies which are providing similar localized glass crushing services and processing significant tonnages. The Forum acknowledges the contribution by these enterprises. Export markets have also almost doubled in the past year as the price for cullet increases."

"We are also starting to see the benefits of an education programme fronted by iconic rap artist Che Fu which will form a key part of our ongoing schools initiative."

AGM 2008: THE PACKAGING ACCORD AND BEYOND

Tony Nowell, Chair of the Governing Board of the Packaging Accord addressed our AGM ON 17th September.

We asked him to talk about whether industry had done enough for Government to agree to another voluntary Packaging Accord or whether glass is likely to be named as a priority product.

The full address is available on www.glassforum.org.nz



**Tony Nowell, Chair,
Packaging Accord**

“Is it enough and what next?”

We need to face up to facts. There **is** public concern about over packaging and packaging waste as was indicated in surveys by the Business Council for Sustainable Development recently. Their ShapeNZ nationwide poll shows 74% public support for a waste levy. It also found that New Zealanders see agrichemicals, batteries, oil, tyres and computers as the biggest waste problems and want ways to clean up their act. The next priority wastes are “dead” vehicles, TVs, paint, **packaging**, mobile phones, disposable nappies and then other electrical products.

They are also very concerned about everyday products and packaging made from petroleum based plastics. As joint signatories to the Packaging Accord, each sector committed to advocate, innovate and educate. I congratulate you on a job well done and look forward to working with you to close out this Accord and negotiate the next set of commitments.

This will not be easy. It is likely that the Ministry for the Environment and Local Government will play a different role in any future agreement and will no longer sit on the Governing Board. I am sure they will still be involved but I believe they will be supportive rather than an integral part of the team. This puts the onus on us as industry to collaborate across sectors and the value chain. Packaging manufacturers, brand owners, retailers and recycling operators must work together to deliver against new and much more rigorous targets.

Just as stretch targets are set for us in our own companies, the Waste Minimisation Act will expect us to set and agree tougher recycling targets. So what might this entail?

Firstly government will be looking towards the highest recovery rates in the world and challenge us to do as well.

Secondly expect greater challenges on packaging which is not recyclable in New Zealand – either to create recycling markets or to change the packaging.

Thirdly brand owners should think about taking responsibility for arranging recycling their packaging if they sponsor events and:-

Finally there is increasing scrutiny on recycling statistics. Third party independent verification of the mass balance data is likely to be a part of any future Accord.

It will be challenging and requires us now to raise our game to another level but we either do this ourselves or we let others drive the agenda –and I know which option I prefer.”

ONGOING EDUCATION PROGRAMME



Kids show “What Now” featured Che Fu and the boys from Fitzroy School on location in New Plymouth on Sunday 27th August.

Project Update

Using glass in foundations

Report received from Waste Busters Canterbury to confirm the successful trial of using rolled glass in foundations.

Tony Dawson Business Manager for Waste Busters Trust says:-

"Having identified the potential of using rolled glass in this application and having tested the product in two slabs which have been subjected to heavy loading, constant vibration and subjected to constant impact the results are pleasing.

There has been no suggestion of any stress, cracking or breakdown of integrity despite no reinforcing in the slab which given the use they have been subjected to would indicate any potential weakness. The testing undertaken has confirmed our initial belief in the process and Ashburton District Council has approved the use of the product.

We are grateful for the support of the Glass Packaging Forum and the support and cooperation of Fulton Hogan."

Based on the findings of the study the use of rolled glass in foundations is viable from an integrity perspective and also economically.



Picture of the vibrating roller used in this trial

Funding allocated to Trial of Clean Up Scooter – Zero Waste Academy

Funding has been allocated to a community enterprise project which will trial a SCOOTERVAC in Palmerston North to address one of the common causes of concern to the public around glass – litter.

Indeed we were reminded of this by the Minister for the Environment who mentioned it as a key concern of his as a cyclist.

The funding application says that

The issue of broken glass is a national litter problem, whose everyday human consequences are the serious health issue of cuts and the general inconvenience and cost of punctures. These issues are inherent to the physical nature and chemical composition of glass - if broken and discarded in a public place. The down stream consequence of broken glass reflects negatively on glass as a form of packaging and potentially, by extension, upon the producers of this form of packaging.



The SCOOTER VAC will be attached to the back of a motorbike and will be used to suck up glass remains from the side of the road.

Speaking Opportunities

In August John Webber addressed the Zero Waste Conference.

The scope was broad with the ACCORD and CDL only discussed during the final session in which Russell Norman, (Greens) Tim Barnett (Labour) Nicky Wagner (National) and Doug Woolerton (NZ First) answered predetermined questions in a discussion facilitated by Kim Hill.

There was criticism that ACCORD signatories have been changing from packaging that is recyclable to types that are not in apparent contravention of ACCORD objectives. In general participants expect the Waste Act to replace the Accord.

Updates from around the country

As part of our advocacy role with local government, we have been meeting with the Waste Minimisation teams at councils around the country. This provides us with real insight into the issues facing local communities in recovering glass. It also allows us the reciprocal opportunity to tell councils about what industry is doing and how we are spending the levy monies.

Last year we allocated \$0.5 million to projects.

Common themes arise from these meetings:-

- Commingled collections are on the increase – as the larger recycling operators change their collection methodologies. *See story on UK guidance to councils below.*
- Councils expect industry to pay for the recovery of their products – user pays.
- Concern about what happens to the recycled materials once they have been collected. This concern relates to ethical rather than economic or environmental considerations and has arisen in particular after the “Sunday” programme on TV1 with its claims about

conditions in China which is the ultimate destination for much recycled packaging with specific reference to plastics. *See story on UK plastics recycling below.*

Palmerston North is to trial a bin collection excluding glass which will be collected separately through Bottle Banks.

Dunedin

We met with the Waste Management team at Dunedin Council to discuss glass recycling locally and to visit Smart Bottles which operates a local recovery and glass bottle washing facility for the Green Man Brewery and others. Smart Bottles is an earlier recipient of Forum funding.

Public Place Recycling

The Ministry for the Environment has introduced its Public Place Recycling initiative. More than 200 bins have been installed all with the distinctive LoveNZ brand.



Out and about in Taupo

Waiheke Island takes on Auckland City Council

A report recommending the introduction of wheelie bins on Waiheke is “seriously flawed and patently incorrect” according to Clean Stream Executive Director John Stansfield. The report says residents put out more than 120 litres of garbages per week but Stansfield says the average is 46 litres. Waiheke. Mr Stansfield reports that trials with the glass crusher provided by the Forum are underway to retain glass on the island.

Packaging issues around the world



For and Against Container Deposit Legislation

In New Zealand

Paul Curtis Executive Director of the Packaging Council said at a debate on CDL at the NZ Juice and Beverage Association Conference that industry and community operators need to focus on what they have in common.

"So often progress in New Zealand is being held back because we prefer to focus on where we differ not where we agree. In the "green" corner we have community groups convinced business pays lip service to its environmental obligations and in the "red" corner is business convinced that advocates for container deposit legislation are living in the past.

What is particularly interesting is that we're not actually in dispute over the costs of container deposit legislation. We just disagree on where those costs fall.

Rather than raising everything to the level of a Mexican stand off, why don't we agree to disagree on container deposit systems and find some common ground that we can agree on and work together.

60% of packaged beverages are drunk at home, 30% are drunk in bars, clubs, restaurants, higher education institutions, etc and about 10% are drunk in the open. The Packaging Council is investigating how industry can improve the availability of public place recycling in New Zealand to capture that 10%. And aluminium cans are worth about \$1700 per tonne. We can collaborate with schools and community recyclers to run can drives and at that value, why do you need a deposit?"

See www.packaging.org.nz

In UK

Which collection process is best for glass?

NZ could learn from new guidance to help local authorities in the UK boost the quality, financial and environmental benefits of their glass recycling collection services.

The 20-page Good Practice Guidance provides essential information on the potential benefits to local authority waste managers of making the most of collecting and recycling waste container glass (cullet). It also emphasises how a sustainable service for collecting glass of the best possible quality for end markets can provide advantages in terms of saving money, energy and valuable resources.

Some 1.5 million tonnes of waste container glass (cullet) is collected in the UK each year. An increasing proportion of this is mixed-colour which often cannot be sorted sufficiently for recycling back into glass bottles.

High quality cullet for use in higher end markets, such as container manufacture, is in short supply, and glass reprocessors will pay more for colour-separated glass.

Sending recycled materials to China is good for the environment.

WRAP has found that selling the UK's used plastic bottles and paper for recycling in China actually saves carbon emissions. Shipping these materials more than 10,000 miles produces less CO₂ than sending them to landfill at home and using brand new materials.

MEDIA COVERAGE

We have continued to receive good media coverage about the education programme and also the Glass Crusher over the past year.

In the Packaging Council's independent media evaluation positive messages around glass recycling reached 1.98 million people during the past year compared with negative messages reaching 78,000 people. Glass continues to achieve more media coverage than other materials types.

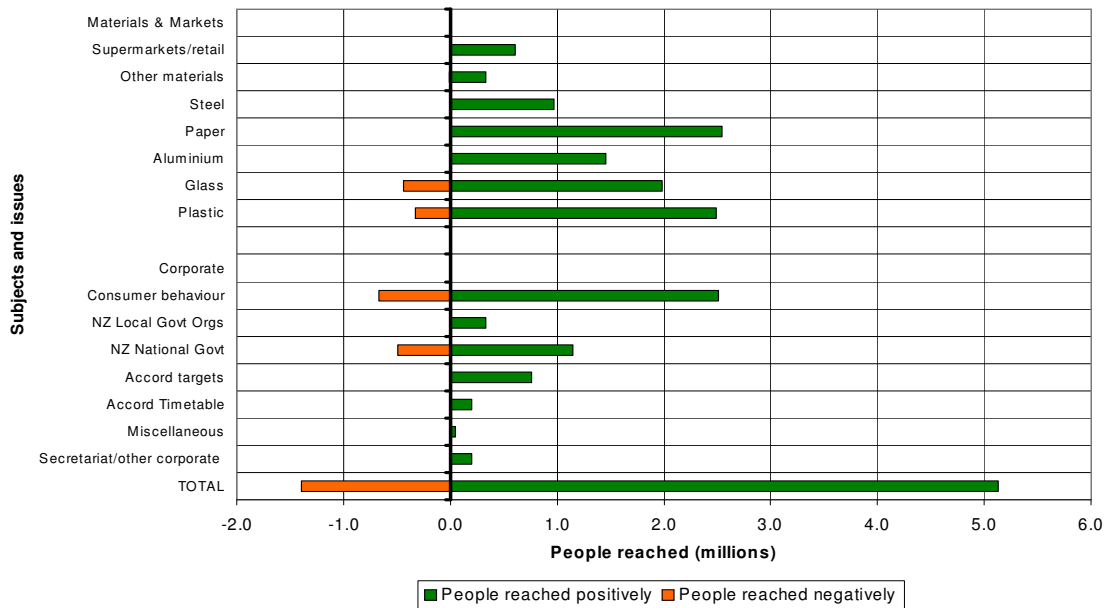


Chart courtesy of Packaging Accord