



Kiwis split over charging for recycling packaging

New Zealanders are almost evenly split over paying 10c an item extra at shops to recycle packaging.

New waste minimisation law allows for compulsory recycling schemes. Implementing one for containers is estimated to cost at least 10 cents per item, according to packaging industry research.

A new nationwide ShapeNZ survey of nearly 2,397 people shows the country is split 36% for to 34% against any new per-item tax. Some 23% are neutral and 8% are not sure.

Asked how they believe packaging recovery and recycling should be paid for, 58% say through local council rates and by the Government from general taxation.

New Zealanders would also prefer the current five-year-old voluntary industry-Government approach to manage recycling packaging waste to continue. Through an industry agreement set up to deal with glass mountains 76 companies which use glass containers are voluntarily paying levies to help improve glass recycling.

Conducted for the Glass Packaging Forum and the New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development, the ShapeNZ survey shows 46% want the voluntary industry efforts to reduce packaging waste, in place for the past five years, to continue. They want

a priority given to dealing with other wastes, rather than the Government requiring all businesses involved with packaging and glass to be involved in a compulsory product stewardship scheme.

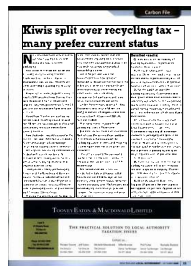
While 38% want the Government to compel product stewardship, 46% either want the voluntary scheme to continue (31%) or priority given to managing other wastes while voluntary management of packaging and glass recycling continues (15%).

Under the voluntary approach New Zealanders now recycle 64% (147,201 tonnes) of all glass containers compared with 48% (88,560 tonnes) in 2004. The overall recycling rate for all packaging types is 59%.

Business Council Chief Executive Peter Neilson says the survey shows people think the voluntary approach to packaging waste recovery and recycling is working and see the work priorities elsewhere.

"People are saying the packaging waste system isn't broken — so don't impose a new tax on us to fix it," Mr Neilson says.

The national online survey was conducted in July and August 2009. Results are weighted by age, gender, ethnicity, employment status, personal income and party vote 2008 to provide a nationally representative population sample.



Kiwis split over recycling tax – many prefer current status

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Detailed results:

Q: How do you think recovery of packaging and recycling should be funded in New Zealand?

A: Through rates paid to local councils: 29 per cent; additional charge to consumers on products they buy: 33 per cent; by Government from general taxation: 29 per cent; Other: 9 per cent.

Q: For the past five years the packaging industry, Government and local government have worked under a voluntary agreement to reduce packing waste and encourage recycling. Thinking about managing packaging waste and recycling in the future, which would you most prefer?

A: Continued voluntary approach involving industry, Government and Local Government: 31 per cent; Government requiring all businesses involved in packaging and glass to be involved in a product stewardship scheme: 38 per cent; priority given to managing other wastes while voluntary management of packaging and glass recycling continues: 15 per cent; Not sure: 16 per cent.

Q: If a compulsory scheme to require packaging waste reduction increased the cost of goods at shops by 10 cents per item, would you support or oppose a compulsory scheme?

A: Strongly support: 8 per cent; Support: 28 per cent; Neither support nor oppose: 23 per cent; Oppose: 24 per cent; Strongly oppose: 10 per cent; Not sure: 7 per cent.