



RECYCLING ATTITUDE IMPROVEMENT

At its Annual General Meeting in Auckland, the Glass Packaging Forum (the Forum) released the latest research conducted by ShapeNZ in July about attitudes to recycling glass packaging and other materials.

The poll of over 2300 people was conducted in conjunction with the New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development, to follow up similar research conducted in July 2009, which has been used to inform the Forum's product stewardship strategy.

In May, the Forum's voluntary glass packaging product stewardship scheme received accreditation from the Minister for the Environment under the Waste Minimisation Act (2008) and is the only packaging material to have government recognition of its programme.

At a dinner to celebrate this achievement Nicky Wagner MP said: "I led the National Party's role in the Select Committee refinement of this legislation two years ago, and it is a great pleasure to see the voluntary accreditation provisions bearing fruit. At this stage the Minister is keen to give industry the chance to step up to the challenge, and develop effective, industry-led voluntary product stewardship schemes.

"The Glass Forum has the opportunity to validate this approach and demonstrate to the wider waste and packaging sector that voluntary product stewardship can achieve real success without the need for unnecessary regulation. Without any regulation, you have managed to get excellent coverage of your sector."

Wagner told guests that along with the Select Committee she had visited South Australia to see its Container Deposit Legislation in operation and saw similarities in the Forum's support for, and monitoring of, voluntary glass bottle reuse initiatives.

The poll shows that 90% of New Zealanders believe it is



industry's role to promote recycling and two thirds believe Government should also be doing more to promote recycling. However there is little demand for the Government to regulate. In addition, 74% are either neutral or oppose the introduction of a regulated system such as Container Deposit Legislation. The majority like kerb-side household collections but would like to see more public recycling bins.

John Webber, general manager of the Forum, said: "At 66%, New Zealand's glass recycling is ahead of the European average of 65% and Australia's recovery rate of 62% and reflects a 32% increase since the Forum was established under the Packaging Accord in 2005. However, as we have been reminded tonight by Government – that still means 34% is not being recycled.

"Around 70% of glass is consumed at home with the remaining 30% away from home at bars, restaurants or in public places.

As households become much better at recycling glass, we are now focusing our efforts on public places and are keen to build on the opportunities which will arise through New Zealand's hosting of the Rugby World Cup in 2011.

"One thing we share is a frustration that the glass sector alone is funding end-of-life recovery systems and increasingly expected to provide facilities for cans and plastic containers as well. For public place recycling to work other packaging sectors need to come to the party."