



Involving people in creating a sustainable future through local efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle

Oregon Plastic Bag Ban Dies Supporters pledge to bring it back in 2011

By Katy Daily

The special session of the Oregon Legislature wrapped up Thursday, February 25, and unfortunately the legislature failed to pass Senate Bill 1009 (www.leg.state.or.us/bills_laws/concepts/sen/SB1009.pdf), which would have prohibited the use of plastic check-out bags in Oregon. Recycling Advocates supported the bill and testified on its behalf.

Introduced by Senators Mark Hass (D) and Jason Atkinson (R), originally to bring attention to the problems created by plastic bags and to start the conversation about what to do to address these problems, SB 1009 struck a chord with Oregonians; it quickly became a media sensation and was one of the most talked about environmental bills this session. In addition to being a feature on OPB's Think Out Loud (www.opb.org/thinkoutloud/shows/paper-or-plastic), the story was covered on all local network news channels, received a story on the front page of the Oregonian (www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2010/02/should_oregon_ban_plastic_bags.html), as well as an Op-Ed (www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2010/02/banning_plastic_bags_putting_a.html) by ban supporters, was covered on radio stations in Seattle, and was even mentioned in the Miami Herald (www.miamiherald.com/news/nation/AP/story/1454509.html). It then received more press as Senate President Courtney, in an unusual press release, indicated on the second day of the session that he was open to the ban (www.oregonlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2010/02/oregon_senate_president_says_h.html).

Recycling Advocates has been working on the issue of reducing Oregon's use of single use bags, especially check-out bags, primarily through local efforts in Portland and other cities in Oregon. We advocate for a reduction in both paper and plastic single use bags and favor approaches that are designed to meet waste reduction benchmarks and secondarily recycling benchmarks and address all retail outlets that use single use bags. We also recognize the particular problems caused by plastic bags on ecosystems and for our recycling processes.

Although SB 1009 would have fallen short on many of these points, it did represent a significant first step by implementing a statewide ban and would go a long way in reducing Oregon's annual use of 39 million plastic bags which require 150,000 barrels of oil to produce, unnecessarily fill our landfills where they don't biodegrade, cause damaging problems to recycling operations, and contribute significant litter along roadways, waterways and beaches where they wreak havoc with wildlife. In addition to RA, SB 1009 received widespread support from environmental and recycling groups throughout Oregon. The Northwest Grocers Association even testified in limited support of the bill.

Recycling Advocates and other supporters of SB 1009 look forward to working with Senators Hass and Atkinson to bring similar legislation to the 2011 Oregon Legislature.

Recycling Mercury-containing Lamps in Washington State

Bill would reduce mercury pollution by establishing recycling opportunities through product stewardship

Senate Bill [SSB 5543](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=5543&year=2009) (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=5543&year=2009>) is a product stewardship bill which requires producers of mercury-containing lamps to finance and implement a recycling program for Washington residents. This bill would create a product stewardship program for mercury-containing lights including compact fluorescent lights (CFL) and fluorescent tube lights. Funded by producers of such lighting products, the recycling program would include allowances for residential curbside pickup, mail-back programs (with containers to prevent accidental mercury release) and other collection methods within Washington State. The bill (which has been amended multiple times) passed the Washington Senate 37-9 on Feb. 15. After being referred to the House Committee on Environmental Health (where it was also passed) the bill is in a position to become law this session. The bill is supported by Northwest Product Stewardship Council, Washington Citizens for Resource Conservation, Washington State Recycling Association, and others. The [SSB 5543 Fact Sheet](#) is available on the NWPSC Web site for more information on the bill (www.productstewardship.net/PDFs/policiesMercurySSB5543FactSheet.pdf).

- Rob Guttridge

OLCC Bottle Redemptions Center update

The Oregon Liquor Control Commission approved the staff recommendations to amend OAR 845-02-0020, OAR 845-02-0025 and OAR 845-02-0030 in order to clarify redemption center application requirements and approval criteria. The amendments are effective March 1, 2010.

The action of the OLCC Commission was on a vote of 5-0. The action was supported by Oregon DEQ in a note presented to the chair. Chair Philip Lang did make some personal comments at the conclusion of the vote, expressing optimism that these changes could potentially provide the OLCC and others with a clear picture of the values retained by grocers and distributors of the unredeemed deposits.

Recycling Advocates' Board of Directors remains committed to getting changes in the Bottle Bill to expand the deposit to all liquid drink containers, excepting milk products. This step to create convenient redemption centers is just one of many steps in getting all the drink containers returned for deposit and into the recycling stream. The RA Board continues to be involved with all aspects of the changes to the bottle bill. If any member wants to be involved in this long process, please let us know.

- Rick Paul



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Unwanted & Expired Medications Collection Event

The City of Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement's Crime Prevention Program will partner with the Portland Police Bureau's North Precinct at Fred Meyer, 7404 N Interstate Ave, on Saturday March 13, 2010, from the hours of 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM to take back your unused over-the-counter and prescription medications. The Mobile Precinct will be located at the East end of the parking lot and staffed by crime prevention and police officers for the anonymous turn-in of unused prescription drugs. The purpose of the one day event is to destroy unused and potentially dangerous prescription drugs in a manner that raises awareness about the abuse of prescription drugs among teens, while protecting our waterways. For more information call Angela Wagon, Crime Prevention Coordinator, 503-823-4094.



Congratulations to Master Recyclers graduating class #43

Recycling Advocacy Calendar for March 2010

◆ Green Drinks – Various locations in Oregon

Every month people who work in the environmental field meet up at informal sessions known as Green Drinks. In Oregon, Green Drinks get-togethers are held in the following cities: Ashland, Bend, Eugene, Hood River, Lincoln City, Medford, Newport, Portland, The Dalles. Find the links for dates and locations in your city at

www.greendrinks.org/index.php?country=USA&state=OR.sustain.uoregon.edu

◆ Recycling Advocates board meeting

Monday, March 29th, 7:00 p.m.

For location and information call 503-777-0909



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