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CALIFORNIA'S NEW STEWARDSHIP LAW WILL MAKE PAINT RECYCLING EASY

On September 28th, 2010, Governor Schwarzenegger signed the Architectural Paint Recycling bill AB 1343 into law, thereby creating a recycling system for managing leftover paint that is fully funded, designed and managed by the producers. California becomes only the second state in the nation to enact producer responsibility legislation for paint. Oregon's product stewardship law was passed in 2009 and they started collecting paint from the public in July, 2010.

This is good news for California for three primary reasons:

1. Paint is the largest product type handled through household hazardous waste (HHW) programs and it is costing California's taxpayers and garbage ratepayers more than \$27 million each year.
2. The new system will shift the responsibility for managing leftover paint to paint producers who will design and fund collection, or "take-back" programs so government can get out of that business.
3. It will be more convenient for the public to recycle leftover paint.

California's program gives paint producers until April of 2012 to develop and submit their stewardship plans to the state agency that will oversee the program: the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). The collection programs must be in place by July 1, 2012. The paint industry supported AB1343, recognizing that they would prefer to design and operate the system rather than have government design a system and send them the bill. Given the experience the paint industry has from implementing Oregon's program, combined with California's own pilot paint stewardship project managed by the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC), producers should have no problem rolling out a successful statewide program by the due date.

CPSC is the primary contractor managing the pilot project, the Be Paint Wi\$e Partnership, which was formed by San Joaquin and Tehama counties and the City and County of San Francisco to "test the waters" and refine the paint product stewardship approach for California. The pilot project was funded by a \$400,000 grant from CalRecycle. Paint retailers in three participating counties are playing an important role in the project by providing education materials to consumers that teach them how to buy the right amount of paint and recycle the rest, as well as acting as collection sites for leftover paint generated from households. To date, nineteen paint retailers in the three Counties have collected more than 3,600 gallons of latex paint and have saved taxpayers and ratepayers more than \$30,000. Increasing the number of collection sites has not only made it easier for consumers to recycle their paint, it's also benefitted the participating retailers. Art

Uhls, manager of the Stockton Color Center stated, "This program is a benefit to our customers, and it's a benefit to us, too, because it's helping us get new customers into our store."

Product stewardship also creates green jobs in California. Jerry Noel, president of **Visions Paint Recycling** looks forward to an increase in product sales as a result of the new law. "Right now, recycled paint sales represent less than one percent of the more than 800 million gallons of paint sold in the U.S. each year. But with the new law, there will be a lot more paint that needs to be recycled and we're in a perfect position to provide that service. We're looking at expanding into retail distribution, upgrading our operations and hiring more people at our plant." Visions Paint Recycling, located in Sacramento, is one of only two California companies to have received the prestigious **Green Seal** certification for their recycled content latex paint. The other is **Amazon Environmental** in Riverside.

So you might be asking – what can I do to help in this effort? First and foremost, buy recycled paint. Not all "recycled" paint is created equal. Be sure to look for Green Seal certified recycled paint, which meets the stringent performance standards of the Master Paints Institute, and which are exactly the same as those for virgin paint. Ask retailers to carry **Green Seal certified recycled content** paint – as a consumer, you have tremendous influence over the inventory retailers offer. Painting contractors are likely to benefit from the new law, so stay informed as the dialog between the paint industry and stakeholders evolves. You can also participate in upcoming webinars to be offered by CPSC and the Be Paint Wi\$e Partnership where you'll have a chance to hear first hand from **PaintCare**, the stewardship organization that currently manages paint stewardship programs throughout Canada and in Oregon and will design and manage California's system as well. Upcoming webinars will be posted on CPSC's webinar page at <http://www.calpsc.org/webinars/index.html> and are open to the public. Lastly, manage leftover paint properly. In California, paint cannot be landfilled so find a recycling center near you. Visit www.earth911.com to locate a nearby paint recycling center using the simple zip code search feature.

Passing the paint stewardship law was only the first step towards building a better paint management system for California. Stay informed, stay involved and help us better manage paint and create jobs in California. ■

For more information about the California Product Stewardship Council, go to www.calpsc.org

For more information on the Be Paint Wi\$e Project, visit <http://www.calpsc.org/projects/SanJoaquin.html>

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CALIFORNIA COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT

To assist contractors in becoming successful professionals in the paint industry by promoting high craftsmanship standards, sound business practices and the free exchange of ideas.

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