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WOODLAND SUPPORTS WASTE AND TOXICS REDUCTION TO PROTECT TAXPAYERS AND RATEPAYERS

Woodland Adopts Resolution Supporting Product Stewardship

Woodland, California (December 16th, 2010) – On Tuesday, the City Council announced the adoption of a resolution supporting Product Stewardship, otherwise known as “Extended Producer Responsibility” (EPR). Product Stewardship is a policy approach which shifts the cost for product waste management from the taxpayers and garbage ratepayers to the producers of products, who incorporate the cost into the purchase price of the product.

Yolo County’s cost for operating the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) program where residents can safely dispose of items that have been banned from landfills such as paint, pesticides, batteries, sharps and fluorescent lights is approximately \$500,000 each year – of which Woodland represents approximately twenty-six percent, or \$130,000 annually. The County estimates that it is only collecting approximately five percent of the total HHW generated each year and that the cost to collect one-hundred percent would exceed \$10 million annually. In that scenario, the City of Woodland’s share of cost would exceed \$2 million each year.

Product Stewardship uses the free market to incentivize producers to share in the responsibility for managing their products and packaging waste by designing more durable, less toxic products that are easier to repair and recycle. When producers develop, fund and manage “take-back” programs, they can achieve economies of scale that reduce recycling costs and ensure that products are managed from “cradle to cradle” versus “cradle to grave” with no additional cost charged to recycle the product at end-of-life.

Although the State of California has banned certain products such as household batteries, fluorescent lamps and paint from landfill disposal, there is no sustainably funded collection system for these products. Ultimately, the cost of managing these waste products is borne by taxpayers and ratepayers. “If we only concern ourselves with the disposal of a product, we miss significant opportunities to reduce the overall cost to manage these products by designing them more efficiently in the first place,” said Roberta Childers, City of Woodland Environmental Resource Analyst. “All stakeholders in the product chain need to share in the responsibility, whether it’s the producer creating a greener design, local government providing public education, retailers assisting with collection, or the consumer returning the product for recycling or safe disposal.”

The California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC) is assisting Yolo County with the implementation of a \$197,000 grant from the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to educate stakeholders in Yolo County about product stewardship. Woodland joins 110 other California cities and counties that support product stewardship, including the cities of West Sacramento, Davis, Winters, San Jose, Roseville and Fresno and the counties of Yolo, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Francisco, and Butte. For a full list of supporting jurisdictions, go to www.CalPSC.org.

“We’re dedicated to reversing the trend of California producing more waste. Hazardous waste costs alone exceed over \$100 million a year to California taxpayers and ratepayers,” says Heidi Sanborn, Executive Director of the California Product Stewardship Council. “With the support of local governments such as

Woodland, we move one step closer to reducing public costs of waste management by involving the private sector.”

For more information, or to schedule an interview, call Heidi Sanborn, CPSC Executive Director at (916) 480-9010.

About the California Product Stewardship Council:

The California Product Stewardship Council is a not-for-profit, non government agency dedicated to shifting California’s product waste management system from one focused on government funded and ratepayer financed waste diversion to one that relies on producer responsibility. CPSC is working toward this goal to reduce public costs and drive improvements in product design.

CPSC strives to: (1) Build capacity and knowledge among local governments, and build relationships with stakeholders, to bring about producer financed and managed systems for product discards, including, but not restricted to, products covered by the Universal Waste Ban; (2) Provide a forum for the exchange of information regarding existing and proposed Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs; (3) Develop and recommend practical local and statewide EPR policy and educational tools such as model ordinances and legislation, newsletters, articles, policy briefings, etc.; (4) Provide effective leadership on EPR initiatives in California and develop a prioritized list, with timelines, of future EPR programs; and, (5) Educate elected and appointed officials and other decision makers on the benefits to local government of EPR. For more information, go to www.calpsc.org
