

# California: Home to Global Innovators in Waste Reduction

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As trash and litter continue to accumulate in our communities, the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC) annually honors the best and brightest companies for their creative approaches tackling post-consumer material management problems. CPSC's Arrow Award recipients illustrate how innovative business models in California are now offering products and services that support responsible and cost-effective waste management and a circular economy, while creating new green-designed products, and offering products and services offsetting the negative impact of society's increasing waste generation.

“The Arrow Award winners are leaders in their industries managing resources responsibly, protecting the earth, and creating jobs,” said Doug Kobold, Executive Director of CPSC, “which means these California companies have made great strides when it comes to environmental achievements that minimize impacts locally and globally.”

**Visions Quality Coatings is the winner of the 2021 Green Arrow Award for system and design innovations.** The Green Arrow Award is given to an organization demonstrating an innovative system approach that removes or reduces toxic or other problematic attributes present in other similar products. Visions has accomplished this feat by recycling paint into new products, such as new paint and even stepping stones using the non-recycled paint material. Their remanufacturing process for left over paint consumes only 1 gallon of water to make 1 gallon of paint compared to 13 gallons for virgin paint and is available at low-cost to residential and commercial customers. Further, Visions creates a decorative rock product that can also be used as an aggregate for precast concrete products that is made with feedstock material from paint wash water (part of the paint recycling process) and carpet backing. Visions participates in California's paint and carpet stewardship programs as a processor and incorporates materials into their recycled products.

**Conscious Container is the winner of the 2021 Bow & Arrow Award for coalition building and creative partnerships.** Bow & Arrow recipients demonstrate synergistic relationships between producers, distributors, retailers, public agencies, and other stakeholders. Conscious Container is advancing the reuse narrative through action by building a returnable/refillable glass bottle marketplace here in US, starting in California. This Benefit Corporation business enables global, regional and local beverage producers, and their customers, a powerful option to reduce their single-use packaging waste with Conscious Container selling, collecting, washing and reselling their returnable bottles for refilling. Working in collaboration with Anheuser-Busch, Conscious Container completed a successful

refillable beer bottle pilot this past Spring in the San Francisco north bay area. They received a CalRecycle GHG Reuse Grant this year to support the rollout of a refillable wine bottle program and are driving landmark California returnable beverage container legislation (AB-962) to enable returnable bottles to flow through the current Bottle Bill. As the market trends accelerate towards reusables, Conscious Container is advocating and engaging stakeholders across the entire value chain to bring this impactful circular economy waste reduction solution to all.

**Little Kamper was presented with the 2021 Infinity Arrow Award for service and take-back.** The Infinity Award is given to an organization to recognize efforts to initiate an outstanding Take Back program for one or more products as an additional convenience and service to their customers. All adventures should be zero waste adventures. Little Kamper is a retail propane exchange program for reusable 1 lb. propane cylinders. This innovative program creates an opportunity for California retailers to offer a sustainable alternative to single-use propane cylinders and ultimately diverts them from the landfill and saving local governments fairly significant money when the cylinders are actually properly recycled. Little Kamper's exchange program is a convenient process for retailers to exchange cylinders and send back to Little Kamper to be safely refilled. This program is saving our parks and local government money from processing less hazardous waste.

**REPSCO, Inc. is the recipient of the 2021 Golden Arrow Award for overall excellence in product stewardship.** The Golden Arrow Award is given to an organization that exemplifies all the characteristics of the Green, Bow & Arrow, and Infinity Awards. REPSCO manufactures 100% recycled custom-designed extruded plastic slipsheets that are a viable alternative for wood pallets. Wood pallets are typically made from virgin wood sources and many are either ground up as fuel for biomass plants or end up in landfills. REPSCO exemplifies product stewardship by assisting major global brands to change their shipping methods so as to use these reusable plastic sheet products in lieu of wood pallets, resulting in their clients saving money, reducing waste, and creating an immunity to increasing wood prices. REPSCO implemented a voluntary take-back program – called Green to Gold – for its slipsheets when the product is no longer usable. REPSCO collects and recycles them back into new slipsheets – resulting in a circular economy that results in significant improvement in REPSCO's, and their clients', environmental footprints. REPSCO clients include those in the food and beverage industry, along with the agricultural sector, just to name a few, and that client base is expanding rapidly.

In addition to our Arrow Awards, CPSC has recognized **Courtney Scott from Zero Waste Sonoma as our 2021 Associate of the Year.** Courtney represents Zero Waste Sonoma on several product stewardship projects and policies, such as a CalRecycle grant with the ReFuel Your Fun Campaign and collaborating with the carpet and mattress stewardship programs. She manages the Sonoma Household Hazardous Waste Facility, actively organizes community collection events, and educates residents and businesses on how to handle materials in the most environmentally responsible way possible.

CPSC also wants to express gratitude for **California Waste Haulers Council (CWHC) and recognize it as the 2021 Sponsor of the year**. CWHC is a group representing waste haulers, recyclers, and facility owners and operators that work to help their communities become more sustainable. They work with a variety of stakeholders in addressing the array of challenging policy issues confronting the waste industry.

The California Product Stewardship Council's Annual Arrow Awards ceremony took place during the California Resource Recovery Association's 45th annual conference and tradeshow, held virtually on August 16-19, 2021.

*For more information, please go to: [www.CalPSC.org](http://www.CalPSC.org).*