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Oregon DEQ Approves Plan for Oregon Paint “Take Back” Program

Pilot program, first in nation, begins July 1 and requires paint manufacturers to manage leftover paint from consumer and contractor painting jobs

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has approved a plan that sets in motion the first paint product stewardship “take-back” program in the nation. The PaintCare program, which officially begins July 1 and is funded by paint manufacturers, allows consumers to return unused paint to participating retailers and other sites for proper disposal. The pilot program is expected to collect as much as 600,000 gallons of leftover paint annually in Oregon, and is expected to be rolled out nationally.

The program stems from the Oregon Paint Product Stewardship law, passed by the 2009 Oregon Legislature. The law directed manufacturers of paints sold in Oregon to set up and run “a convenient, statewide system” for the collection of post-consumer latex and oil-based paint. The new program is the result of a national agreement facilitated by the non-profit Product Stewardship Institute, Inc. (PSI), which convened paint manufacturers, retailers, contractors, recyclers and government officials to jointly develop an environmentally sound and economically efficient solution to the leftover paint problem.

DEQ Director Dick Pedersen heralded the program as “another indication that Oregon is a leader in implementing the concept of product stewardship as a means of better managing the products manufactured and used.”

The American Coatings Association, a trade organization for paint manufacturers, created the non-profit organization PaintCare to administer the program. Consumers will pay for the program by paying a surcharge on paint and stain containers. PaintCare, in turn, will provide a series of depots

statewide where people can drop off unused paint. PaintCare pays an administrative fee to DEQ (\$10,000 for submittal of the program plan and \$10,000 annually thereafter) on behalf of manufacturers for plan approval and program enforcement/oversight.

“The paint industry has committed to properly managing leftover paint in Oregon, and we are ready to step up and assume that responsibility,” said Alison Keane, Counsel for the American Coating Association. “We appreciate being able to work with DEQ and PSI to bring significant environmental and financial benefits to communities around Oregon.”

“Getting this law passed took a tremendous amount of cooperation from industry, government, and other stakeholders, and it is exciting to see all the hard work finally pay off,” said Scott Cassel, Executive Director of the Product Stewardship Institute. “Oregon DEQ had clear goals in mind and persistently worked with the paint industry to develop a viable plan.”

The complete, approved Oregon Paint Stewardship Pilot Program Plan is available on DEQ’s paint product stewardship webpage at: <http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/prodstewardship/paint.htm>. The page also lists participating retailers and brands in the PaintCare program. While statewide paint collection services will be available July 1, additional collection locations will be phased in over the next six months. Manufacturers of covered products may not sell their product in Oregon unless they are participating in the PaintCare program.

The PaintCare program follows the concept of Oregon E-Cycles, a program launched in January 2009, in which manufacturers of electronics sold in Oregon pay for and administer programs to help consumers properly dispose of their unwanted televisions, computers and monitors for free at more than 200 locations across the state. DEQ is charged with providing overall program oversight and enforcement.

The Oregon Legislature-approved 2009 Paint Product Stewardship Law ties into the wider producer responsibility movement, in which manufacturers are accountable for reducing the life cycle impacts of a product, including paying for end-of-life management costs, rather than having government set up and fund collection programs for waste products. The U.S. movement, in which PSI has had a prominent role, has resulted in over 50 state laws in 31 states, including electronics (22), auto switches (13), thermostats (8), batteries (7), and fluorescent lamps (2).

For more information on product stewardship in Oregon, go to DEQ’s website at:

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/prodstewardship/index.htm>

For more information about the paint industry’s PaintCare program, including drop-off locations for the Oregon program, go to the PaintCare website at: www.paintcare.org.

For more information about the national Paint Product Stewardship Initiative, go to PSI’s website at: www.productstewardship.us/PaintNationalDialogue.

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