

## Oregon Passes Paint Producer Responsibility Law

*Posted: July 28, 2009*

SALEM, OR – Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski has signed into law the nation's first program requiring paint manufacturers to safely manage leftover latex and oil-based paint from consumer and contractor painting jobs. The law is expected to result in the proper management of an estimated 800,000 gallons of leftover paint each year and to provide Oregon governments with service valued at over \$6 million. Governments that currently collect leftover paint will realize a direct financial savings.

The new program is the result of a national agreement facilitated by the nonprofit 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.

An estimated 10 percent of the more than 750 million gallons of architectural paint sold each year in the United States is unused. Underfunded city and county paint collection programs result in insufficient reuse, recycling and proper disposal of leftover paint. Leftover paint is the largest component of local household hazardous waste collection programs and is difficult to manage. The new system will include the cost of safely managing that leftover paint in the purchase price of new paint and will set up an industry-led program to reduce paint waste, increase reuse and recycling, and safely dispose of remaining unusable paint.

"This law would not have been possible without the steadfast leadership of the paint industry and the perseverance of other stakeholders," said Scott Cassel, PSI's Executive Director. "Every decision was made through a painstaking consensus, and it will pay off in the form of millions of dollars of savings each year for Oregon local governments, increased environmental benefits and additional environmental jobs."

Oregon's Metro regional government is expected to play a vital role in collecting and recycling the leftover paint. MetroPaint, operated by Metro since 1992, each year turns leftover latex paint into about 120,000 gallons of high-quality recycled latex paint, which it sells to consumers and painting contractors for between \$6 and \$10 per gallon. Beginning this month, Miller Paint stores in the greater Portland area will be selling eight colors of MetroPaint in one- and five-gallon containers.

This new law ties into the wider producer-responsibility movement, in which Oregon is a national leader. Producer responsibility means manufacturers internalize the end-of-life management costs of their products rather than have government set up and fund collection programs for waste products. The U.S. movement has resulted in 19 state electronics laws, seven state thermostat laws, one fluorescent lamp law, and several laws on batteries and auto switches.

For a fact sheet on the Oregon paint bill and more information on the national paint dialogue, visit [www.productstewardship.us/PaintNationalDialogue](http://www.productstewardship.us/PaintNationalDialogue).

---