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Oregon Passes First Paint Producer Responsibility Law in the Nation *New Legislation Should Save Oregon's Local Governments Millions*

July 24, 2009 – On July 23, 2009, Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski 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 an historic 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.”

“The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality was the ideal partner to develop a paint management system that not only works for the paint industry, but also meets the public's need for safety, efficiency, and cost effectiveness,” said Alison Keane, Counsel for the National Paint and Coatings Association (NPCA). “PSI's unique process of engaging both government and industry stakeholders and incorporating all interests into the solution helped us develop a state model that can be replicated across the country instead of having a patchwork of laws.”

“The new law will make paint recycling more convenient throughout the state, particularly in areas where local governments do not offer paint recycling opportunities,” said Abby Boudouris, Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator for Oregon DEQ. “Getting ahead of the producer responsibility trend rather than fighting the inevitable, the paint manufacturers were active partners in figuring out a meaningful solution.”



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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 1- and 5-gallon containers. "This innovative public-private partnership reflects our region's commitment to conserving natural resources by preventing waste, reusing valuable materials, and recycling," said David Bragdon, Metro Council President. "Access to multiple retail outlets will increase the sales and visibility of MetroPaint and help recover the costs of the recycling operation."

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 (including one in Oregon), seven state thermostat laws, one fluorescent lamp law, and several laws on batteries and auto switches. Each of these laws is aligned with PSI's overall [mission](#) and the organization's [Principles of Product Stewardship](#). Oregon DEQ and Metro regional government are active members of PSI.

For a fact sheet on the Oregon paint bill and more information on the national paint dialogue, see: www.productstewardship.us/PaintNationalDialogue

About PSI: The Product Stewardship Institute, Inc. (PSI) is a national non-profit environmental institute with membership from 45 states, over 100 local governments, and more than 50 businesses, environmental groups, and organizations that establishes cooperative agreements to reduce health and environmental impacts from consumer products. For more information, please visit www.productstewardship.us.

About NPCA: The National Paint and Coatings Association (NPCA/FSCT) is a voluntary, nonprofit trade association working to advance the needs of the paint and coatings industry and the professionals who work in it. The organization represents paint and coatings manufacturers, raw materials suppliers, distributors, and technical professionals. NPCA/FSCT serves as an advocate and ally for members on legislative, regulatory, and judicial issues, and provides forums for the advancement and promotion of the industry through educational and professional development services.

About OR DEQ: The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality serves the 3.7 million residents of Oregon and is responsible for protecting and enhancing Oregon's water and air quality, for cleaning up spills and releases of hazardous materials, for managing the proper disposal of hazardous and solid wastes, and for enforcing Oregon's environmental laws.

About Metro: Metro, the regional government that serves 1.4 million people who live in the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area, provides planning and other services that protect the nature and livability of our region. For more information, visit www.oregonmetro.gov.