

MEDIA RELEASE

6th July 2004

NEW REPORT CHALLENGES PACKAGING ACCORD

A new report by Envision New Zealand, **“Getting Serious About Packaging Waste”**, criticises the Packaging Accord which is due for signing in August between the Government and the New Zealand Packaging Council. The Accord is the latest attempt by Government to address the problem of packaging waste but according to Envision Manager, Warren Snow, “will simply be a re-run of the last failed accord signed in 1996”.

Instead **it** says, Government should bring in Container Deposit Legislation (CDL) often referred to as a “Bottle Bill” where all beverage containers have a 5 or 10 cent deposit which is refunded when returned to the point of sale or to a recycling centre.

“There has been no study of the effectiveness of the first Packaging Accord signed in 1996, but according to the Government’s New Zealand Waste Strategy (2002): **“the total quantity of packaging waste has increased”**. It is hard then to understand why the Government, in spite of this failure, would reward the Packaging industry with a second voluntary accord. If signed, the new Accord could result in another five or even ten more years of rising packaging waste.”

“Although the new Accord is based on the principles of EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility), there is nothing in it to compel producers to reduce packaging waste. Voluntary agreements have been shown around the world to be ineffective and highly susceptible to manipulation by the industries they are supposed to regulate”.

“Producers and Consumers should be responsible for the packaging waste they produce and use. Container Deposit Legislation, (often referred to as a bottle bill) will help us achieve this and will get beverage containers out of landfills and off our streets. “Beverage Container Deposits worked before in New Zealand and can work again”.

Bottle Bills have been enacted in British Columbia, South Australia and many other parts of the world – where beverage container recovery rates of 80-90% are usual. They have created over 600 new jobs in South Australia with a population of 1.5million, and would create at least 1,000 new jobs in New Zealand. Container deposits would practically eliminate roadside litter and wherever implemented are hugely popular with the public. New Zealand should look to these examples, rather than another industry-led voluntary agreement.

“New Zealand should not settle for a repackaged “business as usual” voluntary accord, when Container Deposit Legislation is far more effective at reducing packaging waste and puts the responsibility for packaging where it belongs - back on producers and consumers”.

The full report is available at:

<http://www.envision-nz.com/upasset/Getting%20Serious%20About%20Packaging%20Waste.pdf>

**For more details Contact: Warren Snow or Julie Dickinson, Envision New Zealand
Phone: 489 2129 (or Warren Snow on 021 611 923 or Julie Dickinson on 021 688 942)
www.envision-nz.com**

SEMINARS AT AUCKLAND AND WELLINGTON

To support the campaign for real action on Packaging Waste, Envision New Zealand is bringing **Mr Peter Woods**, the former President of the Australian Local Government Association, to New Zealand to participate in two seminars. Peter will explain the problems with the Australian Packaging Covenant and why we should adopt Container Deposit Legislation in New Zealand. Also speaking will be **Mr. Bob Verhey**, Strategy Manager– Environment, from the Local Government Association of NSW and Shires Association of NSW. Bob is an expert on waste policy.

Auckland

Date: Monday 19th July

Time: 9.30am to 12 pm

Venue: Mary Thomas Centre, Gibbons Road, Takapuna (behind Takapuna Library)

Wellington

Date: Wednesday the 21st July,

Time: 10.a.m to 12 noon

Venue: Beehive Theatre (Parliament Buildings)

Note: The Wellington Seminar is hosted by the Green Party and RSVPs are required To gain admission contact Laura Beck on Laura.Beck@parliament.govt.nz or 04-470-6891

Quote from Peter Woods, former President of the Australian Local Government Association:

'To quote an old adage "you can fool all of the people some of the time, but not all of the people all of the time". And international and interstate experience is clearly telling us that the community are starting to see through the smokescreens of "Covenants" and "voluntary approaches" based on industry goodwill and are forcing governments to act in their interests, not the interests of big corporations. As an example, Hawaii and Israel recently introduced CDL and South Australia is currently amending its legislation to cover the increasingly varied avalanche of (often un-recyclable) packaging types being foisted on the community'.

He further criticised the Australian National Packaging Covenant as 'seriously flawed and will not achieve positive outcomes for Local Government, our communities, waste minimisation or the environment. By effectively removing and "watering down" the responsibility on industries who produce packaging waste, it will in fact, enshrine everything that is wrong about waste management. I am completely confident that history will bear this out'.

Quote from Bob Verhay, Strategy Manager– Environment, Local Government Association of NSW

"Someone needs to take a stand on this issue and refute all the misleading information and rhetoric that's effectively hoodwinked the community for too long. Like you we would dearly love our state and national governments to take a stand on this too. The reason they won't is probably ultimately linked to the close relationships between industry and government that have characterised the last few decades and the intensive lobbying and political power of these (often multinational) corporations who are clearly pursuing an agenda of maximising returns to shareholders with scant concern for environmental protection or social equity. I wasn't aware of the history of your packaging accord until I read your paper. It's uncannily similar to ours in Australia."

National Bottle Bill Day

The Green Party are calling Wednesday 21st **National Bottle Bill Day** and will be staging a “**Buy Back**” **Bottle Stall** outside Parliament Building prior to the Seminar on the 21st of July. They are also encouraging communities around New Zealand to stage their own buy-back events to highlight the economic and environmental efficiency of CDL (container deposits legislation). If you want more information about this please contact Lu White at: wastefree@greens.org.nz or on 04 801 5297 or: www.greens.org.nz/campaigns/waste/

Summary of "Getting Serious about Packaging Waste".

A new online Magazine called “**The Bay Window**” focusing on environmental and sustainability issues has put up a two page summary of “**Getting Serious about Packaging Waste**”. You can read the article at <http://www.thebay.co.nz/window/issue0/threw/index.html> it's a good summary of the report for those short on time.

Envision New Zealand
P.O. Box 33 239, Takapuna
Auckland, New Zealand

Ph: +64 9 489 2129
Fax +64 9 489 3232
Cell: +64 21 611 923
www.envision-nz.com