



StateReporter

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Vol. II, No. 18
September 19, 1986

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Recycling/Resource Recovery

Plastic Beach Debris Boosts NJ Bills

Plastics debris in the ocean, together with shoreline pollution, will be the focus of a public hearing September 24 before the New Jersey Senate Special Committee on Coastal and Ocean Pollution, chaired by Senator Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-11). The hearing will be held at the Port Reading Fire House in Woodbridge at 10 a.m.

SPI will offer testimony based on comments made by SPI President C.E. O'Connell at a similar hearing before the U.S. House Merchant Marine Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Navigation August 12 in Washington, D.C. O'Connell stated that the plastics industry supports the responsible use of the industry's materials and the proper disposal of those materials. SPI is committed to reducing the likelihood of plastics finding their way into the marine environment, increasing the level of plastics recycling, and educating decision-makers and the public about the options for properly disposing of all municipal waste.

The Special Committee was established in response to beach closings, some of which occurred in Pallone's oceanfront district, over the past two summers. The alleged cause of the closings -- garbage spills -- originally was intended to be the subject of the hearing. However, Pallone's introduction of SB 2450, which would ban the sale of nonbiodegradable infant, personal care, or feminine hygiene products, has prompted the shift in focus to plastics pollution.

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State Reporter is published by The Society of the Plastics Industry's State Government Affairs Department. For more information about any item contained in this newsletter, contact SPI's State Government Affairs staff at (202) 822-6700.

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Assemblyman Anthony Villane (R-11), author of AB 170 calling for a ban on the sale of plastic tampon applicators, held a September 8 hearing before the Assembly Environmental Committee. The hearing will be continued at 10 a.m. on Monday, September 29, in the State House Annex.

Meanwhile, two Ocean County, New Jersey, legislators have introduced companion resolutions in support of pending federal legislation banning the sale of nondegradable plastic ring connectors for beverage six-packs. Senator Leonard Connors, Jr. (R-9) and Assemblyman Jeffrey Moran (R-9) introduced the resolutions earlier this summer. The federal legislation, sponsored by U.S. Senator John Chafee (R-RI), imposes a nationwide ban on the sale of nondegradable plastic rings and directs the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a study to identify the sources of plastic floatables in the ocean and their potential threat to marine life.

Miscellaneous

Plastic Pipe Faces Sacramento Foes . . .

SPI today submitted written comments which call any action by the Sacramento City Council to ban plastic pipe and conduit premature and without scientific or rational basis. SPI further points out that plastic pipe has been proven safe while lead from copper pipe systems may pose a serious health hazard. Fire chiefs have taken the position, which SPI supports, that the proposal could actually endanger life safety by forbidding installation of plastic fire sprinkler systems.

The proposed amendment to the City Building Code prohibiting the use of plastic pipe in water distribution systems and electrical conduit is before the advisory Toxic Substances Commission which will hold a public hearing October 20. The Commission will make its recommendations to the City Council November 3.

SPI will continue to work with the fire chiefs, realtors, homebuilders, the Chamber of Commerce, and other affected parties to combat the proposal.

. . . And Chicago Friends

The Chicago City Council's Committee on Buildings has scheduled two public hearings on the mayor-supported ordinance allowing the use of plastic pipe in building construction. Proponents of the proposal will be heard Monday, September 22, in Chicago City Hall beginning at 10 a.m. SPI and the Vinyl Institute are coordinating testimony with member companies and outside experts. Opponents, expected to include plumbers and firefighters, will be heard Monday, September 29, at the same time and location.

In the meantime, SPI has sent comments to all members of the City Council to encourage their support of the plastic pipe proposal.

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Combustibility

Final NY Toxicity Proposal Ready For Vote

The Toxicity Subcommittee finalized its toxicity testing/data filing recommendations to the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code Council September 15 by unanimously approving classification testing, disclaimer language, and an amendment to delete the "no more toxic than wood" provisions currently in the code.

The classification testing language will allow a producer or group of producers to propose to the Secretary of State that certain similar products be treated as a class. If approved by the Secretary of State, a test report on one of the products will satisfy the requirement for all products in the class. In answer to questions asked by Toxicity Subcommittee members about who would determine whether or not a product belongs to a class, State Fire Administrator Frank McGarry replied that his office has the expertise to make such a determination.

The State of New York disclaimer language has been finalized:

This test is a measure of acute toxicity of the thermal decomposition by-products of the tested material using a specified procedure under controlled laboratory conditions. The test results alone do not constitute a characterization of the hazard, safety or risk of materials, products or assemblies under actual fire conditions. The results of this test, if used in any assessment of hazard or risk, should be considered in conjunction with all of the factors which are pertinent to an evaluation of the fire hazard of a particular end use.

The next meeting of the full Code Council will be October 23 in Albany (time and location to be announced). The group is expected to vote affirmatively on the toxicity testing amendment to the code, including the above disclaimer and classification language, after more than two years of deliberation amidst political turmoil.

Remaining State Legislature Target Adjournment Dates

<u>State</u>	<u>Date</u>
Massachusetts	January
Michigan	December
New Jersey	January
Ohio	December
Pennsylvania	November

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