

PSI hosts 2015 US Product Stewardship Forum

December event addressed drug take-back programs, packaging, circular economy and climate change.

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In honor of its 15th anniversary, the **Product Stewardship Institute**(PSI) hosted the 2015 U.S. Product Stewardship Forum Dec. 8-9 in Boston. Environmental experts from the United States, Germany, Belgium and Canada discussed zero-waste, extended producer responsibility (EPR), product stewardship and the circular economy.

Among the speakers at the U.S. Product Stewardship Forum were:

- Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, who announced the upcoming introduction of the Pharmaceutical Stewardship Act, a federal bill that would require pharmaceutical companies to manage and finance the safe collection and disposal of their products.
- Stewardship organizations representing packaging brand owners outlined the success of their EPR programs and how these models can be easily applied to the U.S. market.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 1 Administrator Curt Spalding discussed the connection between climate change and the need to reuse and recycle consumer products.

Additional conference panels and keynote speakers focused on product-specific issues, including:

- pharmaceutical take-back programs as a means to address the U.S. prescription drug abuse epidemic;
- emerging solutions to address the growing cost of safely managing electronic scrap;
- the importance of recycling batteries, electronics, and other products containing rare earth metals, and how this propels us toward a circular economy that reduces the costs and impacts of future mining; and
- why the U.S. is at a competitive disadvantage to other countries that require brand owners to properly manage the packaging they produce.

PSI also recognized leaders who it says have achieved significant success in moving product stewardship programs and policies forward, including:

- Alison Keane, American Coatings Association; Marjaneh Zarreparvar, PaintCare; Mark Buckley, Staples; and John Waffenschmidt, Covanta, who each received 2015 Outstanding Industry Leadership Awards.
- Jennifer Holliday, Chittenden County Solid Waste District, Vermont, who received the 2015 "Hometown Hero" Award for Outstanding Local Government Leadership.
- Tom Metzner and Sherrill Baldwin, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental

Protection; and Fenton Rood, Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, who received 2015 Outstanding State Government Leadership Awards.

- Scott Klag, Metro Regional Government, Oregon, who received the 2015 Loyal Steward Award.
- Dave Galvin, King County, Washington, who received the 2015 "Gandalf" Award for Exceptional Guidance and Advising.

The Boston-based Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a national, membership-based nonprofit that seeks to reduce the health, safety and environmental impacts of consumer products across their life cycles with a focus on sustainable end-of-life management.