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International packaging study finds EPR best practices

By: SWR Staff
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A new study of 11 international extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs for packaging has identified a series of emerging global best practices for packaging EPR, shedding light on ways to both optimize and harmonize solutions for managing packaging waste.

The report is based on research led by the [Product Stewardship Institute](#) in association with the [PAC NEXT Policy Best Practices that Support Harmonization Committee](#).

Some of the attributes for a high-performing EPR program are:

- the program covers residential, public, as well as industrial, commercial and institutional (IC+) sources
- the program covers all material types (including printed paper)
- the cost per tonne is low
- collection and recycling rates are high
- the value and quality of materials are high
- the program is convenient for residents and others
- producers take full responsibility for post-consumer packaging management.

"The preliminary findings of our research underscore what we at PSI have always believed: that, within the context of product stewardship, the most successful materials management programs often incorporate a combination of legislative and voluntary strategies," said Scott Cassel, PSI CEO, in a statement. "The program summaries provided in this report offer a wealth of data for government agencies and industry groups around the world to evaluate, and we look forward to using this information as a springboard for critical stakeholder dialogues," added Cassel.

The report examines the nuanced operations of various EPR programs in Canada (Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, and British Columbia); Europe (Belgium, France, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom); and Australia. Based on an initial assessment of the data collected on these programs, PAC NEXT and PSI conclude that the following attributes, when present together, can constitute a high performing EPR program:

"What this report has allowed us to do is develop an understanding of how EPR programs for packaging around the world operate - what they share in common, what they do different, what works, what could use some improvement," said Jennifer Holliday, president of PSI's board of directors. "It is our hope that these findings enable industry and government to collaborate on ways to harmonize packaging waste solutions."

Also based on the data, PSI and PAC NEXT identified the following policies as complementary to EPR, playing an important role in increasing the performance of packaging collection and recycling systems:

- Pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) programs
- Mandatory recycling requirements
- Landfill bans for recyclable materials
- Container deposit programs.

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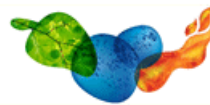
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