



Green Achiever April 2010 Newsletter.

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Dear Deb,

The skies are open again for flights so people are returning from business or holiday. So what's happening back in the UK? Well there are continued consultations on key areas for many of our members -

- 1) about making 'green' claims of your products; and
- 2) on improving the whole packaging regime.

Yet again, there is the monthly round up of prosecutions just to remind everyone of why we try to keep you up to date with what's happening. And of course we are running our Green Achiever Workshops on 1st July for our members who want to take action on how to reduce their energy use.

Mandy Stoker

Green Achiever Workshop, 1st July 2010



We alert you to another date for our Environmental workshops - Thursday 1st July, 2010, at Holborn Studios, London
<http://www.greenachiever.co.uk/workshops/workshop-010710.pdf> We are holding two on one day - the morning session is an introduction to Greening your Business, the legislation and ways and means of dealing with the issues; the afternoon is about Saving Cash and Reducing Energy where we will have experts on-hand to help businesses discuss

the real options for improving their energy efficiency. If you are interested in both or either session please contact Kelly Jones at kj@e4environment.co.uk or telephone on 01743 343403.

Do you make 'Green' claims about your products or services?

DEFRA has commenced a consultation and are seeking feedback on their updated Guidance on Green Claims. Defra's current Green Claims - Practical Guidance was issued in 2003 to assist business in making good environmental claims. Since that time, marketing about the environment has changed in response to increasing public awareness about sustainability and climate change. Although the broad principles are still useful, the content of the current guidance is behind its time. Therefore, Defra is updating this Guidance to ensure that industry has current and relevant information on making clear and accurate environmental claims in marketing and advertising.

By updating the guidance, Defra is looking to:

- Support businesses to develop robust environmental claims - by providing updated and more constructive guidance; and

- Protect consumers and businesses from unfair marketing (or competition) by reducing the amount of claims that may be misleading.

Improving the quality of environmental claims on the marketplace is important to enable consumers to make informed more sustainable choices - and drive the availability of more environmentally sustainable products. False, misleading or confusing claims have the potential to undermine consumer confidence in green marketing or lead to unfair competition between businesses. So there are real benefits in establishing a good standard of practice across the market.

The aim of the proposed Guidance on Green Claims is to ensure that in marketing and advertising goods and services, industry has up-to-date and relevant information to enable it to make clear and accurate environmental claims. The proposed Guidance outlines the main principles to consider when making an environmental claim and provides examples of good and poor practice to illustrate those principles. It should be noted that the proposed guidance is an update of existing guidance. It represents good practice to be followed on a voluntary basis and is not regulated or enforced by the Government. Rather, it is intended to help organisations work successfully within existing regimes for responsible marketing and advertising.

The closing date for this consultation is 15th June 2010. Follow this link to see the full consultation document and guidance notes. <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/green-claims/index.htm>

Consultation on Increasing the Amount of Packaging which is Recovered and Recycled

The UK's packaging strategy set a clear direction for packaging policy for the next 10 years. The key aim identified in the Strategy was to minimise the environmental impact of packaging over its whole life cycle, without compromising its ability to protect the product. This can be achieved through optimising packaging, and through maximising the recycling of packaging waste. Defra has commenced a consultation which focuses on options for increasing the amount of packaging which is recovered and recycled. The consultation is split into three key areas:-

- Chapter 1 sets out proposals relating to increases in the UK's producer responsibility packaging recycling targets.
- Chapter 2 concerns proposals to make the funding which flows into the system from producers more transparent and visible to both the producers providing the funding and the local authorities who ultimately benefit from this funding.
- Chapter 3 concerns a number of minor technical changes which have the aim of improving the administration of the Regulations.

The proposals in this consultation are expected to be of greatest interest to:

- Packaging 'producers', as defined in the Packaging Regulations
- Packaging compliance schemes
- Reprocessors and exporters of waste packaging
- Waste management companies and local authorities involved in the collection of packaging
- Any research institutions, groups or individuals with a particular interest in packaging waste.

The closing date for this consultation is 27th May 2010. Follow this link to see the full consultation document and guidance notes. <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/packaging-regs/index.htm>

PROSECUTIONS

United Utilities fined for damaging sewage spill

United Utilities were fined £14,000 for a serious water pollution incident in July 2009 which caused the death of over 6,000 fish at Three Pools Waterway, Southport. The company pleaded guilty to a prosecution brought by the Environment Agency and was also ordered to pay the Agency's costs of £7,863.54.

The incident occurred as a result of failure of the foul water pumps at the Crowland Street pumping station. The pollution caused the oxygen levels in the watercourse to fall and ammonia contained in the sewage is toxic to fish. A three mile stretch of the river was affected. The fish included roach, bream, tench, pike and perch of all sizes and ages. It is estimated that it will take seven to ten years for the river to recover.

A spokesperson from the Environment Agency said, "This was a major incident which had a devastating impact of the fish population. United Utilities own and operate the sewer network throughout the region and are responsible for resolving any problems with this system. This incident caused significant damage to the environment, which could have been avoided or considerably reduced if the company had correctly reset a pump when it responded to an alarm."

The seriousness of the incident has meant that it is also subject to the Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) Regulations 2009. The regulations came into effect on 1 March 2009 and look to remediate any serious environmental damage.

Composting site fined for breaching enforcement notice

A Preston based company has been fined £20,000 at Leyland Magistrates court for failing to comply with an enforcement notice issued by the Environment Agency. The company was also ordered to pay costs of £2,843. TEG Group Plc pleaded guilty to the offence, which required the amount of waste on the site to be reduced to the volumes laid down in their environmental permit.

The company ran the site to accept, store and treat waste for composting. The Environment Agency had granted the site a licence to operate, which outlined conditions to ensure their activities did not pose a risk of harm to the environment or human health. The conditions included limits on the amount of waste which could be stored on site at any one time before treatment (200 tonnes), and the amount of waste being treated (128 tonnes).

During inspections by the Environment Agency in 2007, officers found more than three times the permitted levels of waste being treated on site, breaching their permit conditions. Further visits to the site in 2009 showed that the company were continuing to treat and store amounts of waste which exceeded the permitted limits. The Environment Agency had also received complaints from members of the public regarding odours in the vicinity of the site. The site had not complied with the enforcement notice, and this resulted in legal action being taken against the company.

Neil Finch from the Environment Agency said, "The Environment Agency regulates waste activities in order to protect the environment. Companies which operate under an environmental permit must ensure that they comply with all the conditions. We worked with TEG Group Plc to try to find an agreed solution to their breaches, but had to take legal action when the site continued to operate outside of their permitted conditions."

Blackpool Pleasure Beach waste fine

Blackpool Pleasure Beach (Holdings) Ltd has been fined £6,000 for a total of six offences of failing to recover and recycle packaging waste. The company was also ordered to pay costs of £2,631 and compensation of £9,130 for offences which were taken into consideration dating back to 1997.

The company pleaded guilty to six charges brought against them by the Environment Agency at Blackpool Magistrates. They failed to register with the Environment Agency as a producer of packaging waste and meet requirements to recover and recycle packaging waste with respect to each of the two years between 2006 and 2007. Businesses who do not fulfil their obligations under packaging regulations are risking fines of up to £15,000 per year.

Blackpool Pleasure Beach produce packaging waste in a variety of forms, from wrappers used on soaps in their hotel, to drink bottles and food containers. The Environment Agency is urging all businesses to check if the packaging regulations apply to their activities and if so to take steps to

avoid any breaches.

Claire Balmer from the Environment Agency said: "The regulations are in place to encourage a reduction in the amount of packaging used by business and to decrease the amount of waste that is sent to landfill. Although these regulations have been in force since 1997 many businesses still ignore or remain unaware of their responsibilities. We hope this case will highlight the need for other businesses to consider whether they are obligated under the Packaging Regulations."

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