When a customer buys a gallon of architectural paint, the paint manufacturer is hoping that all of that paint will be used. Unfortunately, that often is not the case, and disposing of that leftover paint cost and resource drain for local governments. That will not be an issue any longer in Oregon, and soon will not be in California, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Oregon successfully implemented the American Coatings Association’s (ACA) PaintCare® program in July 2010. California is gearing up for its start in October of this year, and Connecticut and Rhode Island will be following in 2013 and 2014, respectively.

In 2005, the paint industry committed to a plan for gathering additional information on ways to minimize the amount of leftover paint through consumer education, on best practices for running a collection and recycling program, and on ways to do so cost-effectively. By late 2007, the coatings industry, through the ACA (then the National Paint and Coatings Association (NPCA)) was ready to move forward with a program and signed a PSPI Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in anticipation of the establishment of a nationally coordinated system for managing post-consumer paint.

A final MOU was signed in 2008 in which the association committed to implementing a pilot program in Minnesota. Unfortunately, the state's governor did not approve the program, so the PaintCare® pilot moved to Oregon. It was implemented there in July 2010 as the first-ever paint stewardship program in the United States, and has, by all accounts, been a resounding success.

In the first 12 months, PaintCare®, a new non-profit association incorporated to focus on the needs of this program that fail outside of ACA's purview, established 100 permanent collection sites and collected approximately 470,000 gallons of paint, with virtually all of it going to recycling or beneficial reuse, and 47 tons of plastic and 65 tons of metal cans that were recycled. In addition, 54 million was raised, and, of that, $3,301,977 was spent on collection, transportation, processing and recycling of leftover paint, education and outreach, and administrative costs (just 1.7%). Furthermore, states and municipal governments saved money. The Portland Metro government alone, for example, saved over $1 million.

A critical component to this program is the fact that it is managed by industry. The Oregon law specifically enables the industry to implement PaintCare, provides for a level playing field among manufacturers and retailers, and establishes a sustainable financing system.

The program is funded through a paint stewardship assessment called the PaintCare Recovery Fee—a fee added to the purchase price of architectural paint. Paid to PaintCare by paint manufacturers, this fee is then added to the wholesale and retail purchase price of architectural paint. The cost ($0.35 on small containers, $0.75 on gallons, and $1.60 on five-gallon containers) is charged to the consumer at the time of sale. Retailers may choose to show the PaintCare Recovery Fee as a separate line in the item receipt. PaintCare encourages this approach to ensure transparency, and many stores in the Oregon program choose to do so to educate the consumer about the PaintCare program and to explain their price increase.

The fees fund the design and implementation of the program, including the development of stewardship plans in coordination with state agencies; establishing an appropriate collection infrastructure; engaging retailers, local governments, and consumers to build support and utilize the program; developing marketing materials targeted to specific audiences; and running the programs once they are implemented. ACA, in turn, continues to fund the legislative efforts behind the program, including legislative drafting, identifying bill sponsors, garnishing the support of legislators and other stakeholders in the different states, and hiring in-state lobbyists to shepherd bills through the various state systems.

"PaintCare is one of the highest priority programs of the ACA," states J. Andrew Doyle, president and CEO of the association. "One of the aspects of our mission statement is to provide programs that support environmental and product stewardship. PaintCare is a tangible sustainability program that demonstrates the true commitment of the paint industry to practice extended producer responsibility (EPR)."

The perception outside of the industry has been very positive, as well. One clear example of the strong impression the program is making can be found in the experience of PaintCare’s executive director, Marjaneh Zarrehpavaran. She was so impressed with the accomplishments in Oregon and the sincerity of the paint industry to introduce an effective program that would make a difference, that she left her position with a municipal government in California, where she was advocating for recycling, to join PaintCare. "I saw firsthand how serious the need is for a paint recycling program. I believe that the industry, through PaintCare, can successfully address those needs, and do so in an efficient and cost-effective manner that avoids burdensome and patchwork regulations within and between states."

Zarrehpavaran is busy preparing for implementation of PaintCare in California in October. While the scale of the program will be much bigger than in Oregon (9-10 times the size), it is expected to be just as successful. The existing 100+ county/municipal waste collection sites will be incorporated into the program as drop-off locations along with an additional 500 or so retail stores. Activities are currently focused on communicating with all of the participants in the program—the local governments, retailers, consumers (including trade painters, contractors, and the general public), and those few small or regional manufacturers that are not ACA members and may not yet be aware of PaintCare.

Such effective communication in advance of the PaintCare implementation in Oregon was a critical factor in the success of the program, according to Steve Dearborn, president and CEO of Miller Paint, an Oregon paint manufacturer, retailer (with 12-14 drop-off locations), and seller of a brand of recycled paint produced by Metro Paint in Portland. “PaintCare was implemented very smoothly, and in fact, more smoothly than many expected. The extensive outreach efforts that ACA and PaintCare took to educate contractors, manufacturers, retailers, and consumers had a huge impact and was a key factor in that success,” observes Dearborn. “It was vital that contractors learned of the program well before its inception, because they place bids for projects six to nine months in advance, and needed to be aware of the new fee per gallon in order to be able to pass it on to their customers. It was equally important that all manufacturers and retailers were on board to ensure that everyone was charging the same fee. Consumers, of course, needed to be made aware that the fee is not a tax, but indeed a charge for covering the cost of paint recycling, which is being managed by a nonprofit organization.”

In his view of the program, as a result, it is that it has been a very positive experience for Miller Paint, the industry overall, and consumers. As a retailer in particular, serving as a collection point has been very beneficial, because many people come into those stores that might not otherwise have done so. Customers also appreciate the value of the service provided. Sales of the company’s recycled paint are also increasing, which may very well be due to the fact the many more people are now aware of the availability of such products.

While interest in recycled paint is growing, the market will only support a certain level of recycled product sales. Therefore, there is a need to identify new applications for unused, left over paint other than paint-to-paint recycling. “Fortunately, there is a lot of exciting research and development work being undertaken to find new end uses for the paint collected through the PaintCare program,” Zarrehpavaran remarks. For example, one recyclers in California—Amazon Environmental—has found that any returned paint that is not suitable for recycling (sludge) can be processed to make an additive for the production of cement, according to Robert Wendell, the
When a customer buys a gallon of architectural paint, the paint manufacturer is hoping that all of that paint will be used. Unfortunately, that often is not the case, and disposing of that leftover paint and its packaging represents a significant cost and resource drain for the paint industry. That will not be an issue any longer in Oregon, and soon will not be in California, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Oregon successfully implemented the American Coatings Association’s (ACA) PaintCare® program in July 2010. California is gearing up for its start in October of this year, and Connecticut and Rhode Island will be following in 2013 and 2014, respectively.

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In the first 12 months, PaintCare®, a new non-profit association incorporated to focus on the needs of this program that fail outside of ACA’s purview, established 100 permanent collection sites and collected approximately 470,000 gallons of paint—virtually all of it going to recycling or beneficial reuse, and 47 tons of plastic pallets and 65 tons of metal cans that were recycled. In addition, 54 million was raised, and, of that, $3,301,977 was spent on collection, transportation, processing and recycling of leftover paint, education and outreach, and administrative costs (just 1.7%). Furthermore, state and municipal governments saved money. The Portland Metro government alone, for example, saved over $1 million.

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Our goal is to spread the program across the country and get similar initiatives implemented in every state, so the manufacturers and retailers can work within one uniform, national system.

—Alison Keane, ACA Vice President of Government Affairs

The Forum is a biennial event that is an "assembly for the discussion of questions of interest to all stakeholders in the industry, presently and over the horizon." More than 50 participants from 15 countries attended the third Forum, representing a broad swath of the marine coatings industry including marine paint formulators, active ingredient suppliers, class society and a significant shipowner association. At this year's Forum, IPPC will celebrate its fifth year as an NGO at the International Maritime Organization and will have presentations and lively discussions on all aspects of the marine coatings industry including:

- Antifouling Systems Convention - Implementation and Enforcement
- Chemical Management Regulations and the Pressures on Marine Coatings
- International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships Ballast Water and Sediments
- Global Biofouling Regulations
- NACE Marine Coatings Activities
- Product Stewardship in the Marine Coatings Industry
- Making Ships and Shipping More Sustainable and Energy Efficient
- The Future of Shipbuilding and the Marine Coatings Market

To register, please visit:
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