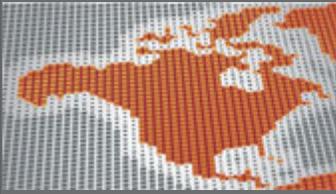


The North American Metal Packaging Alliance



nampa

February 15, 2011
Volume 4, Issue 1

About NAMPA

The North American Metal Packaging Alliance, Inc. (NAMPA) is committed to promoting sound science in risk-based decision-making pertinent to the light metal packaging industry, advocating on behalf of the light metal packaging industry on issues pertinent to packaging technologies, and providing customers with needed information regarding light metal packaging technologies and the regulatory frameworks in which these technologies are assessed.

John M. Rost, Ph.D.
Chairman

Want to join NAMPA?

If you would like to support our efforts and play an active role in NAMPA, please consider joining as a full member. Please contact NAMPA at 866-522-0950 or info@metal-pack.org for details.

NAMPA News

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

New Year, Same BPA Paradox

It is not surprising that the start of the New Year has brought with it more calls from activists and politicians for the elimination of bisphenol A (BPA). Yet, what may come as a shock to some is that 2011 also began with newly completed international scientific reviews of BPA that reveal just how misguided proposed bans really are.

In the final months of last year, scientific experts with the World Health Organization (WHO), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) conducted comprehensive reviews of the scientific research on BPA and reached stunning consensus. These groups, along with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), are in agreement that despite persistent public concerns over the safety of BPA, the clear weight of evidence, from an extensive range of studies and risk assessments, is that BPA does not pose a health risk at the current low levels of exposure through the consumption of food.

For those of us in the metal packaging industry, this paradox is nothing new. We are confident in the safety of BPA for use in food contact applications, yet we must accept that consumers' concerns are real, whether we agree with them or not. As a result, the metal packaging industry has been hard at work trying to identify and test new can coating options that do not contain BPA. Finding alternatives that meet the same high performance and safety standards currently met by BPA-based epoxy coatings is no small feat. Consider that the single most important characteristic of metal packaging is its ability to protect the food content through sterilization and prevention of microbial contamination. Food-borne illness is an undeniable food safety issue that must be the number one concern of package manufacturers, food producers, and consumers alike. As a result, before any new materials

can be put into commercial use, they must be thoroughly reviewed, tested, and approved to meet all performance and federal regulatory requirements.

The race is clearly on to identify BPA alternatives and our industry is at the forefront of that effort. But it is a process that will not happen overnight, regardless of legislatively dictated deadlines. Our industry is hard at work to achieve that goal, but our first responsibility is to make sure that any alternative coating technology is fully tested and meets all regulatory requirements for health and safety, a race in which there are no shortcuts.

NAMPA NEWS BRIEFS

Food Safety Bill Passes without BPA Amendment

The Food Safety Bill has been of particular importance to NAMPA members, due to the extensive negotiations over a proposed amendment offered last year by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) to ban BPA in certain applications. The amendment sparked six months of heated debate in the Senate, and was ultimately dropped from the Senate-passed version. In December, the final food safety bill was signed into law with nary a mention of BPA. So what exactly happened to the amendment? See item below.

BPA in the 112th Congress

Despite her disappointing setback in December, Senator Feinstein vowed to continue her efforts to get rid of BPA, and so the “food fight” continues. She has partnered with Representative Ed Markey (D-MA) to introduce “The Ban Poisonous Additives Act of 2011” (H.R. 432, S. 136) in the current session of Congress.

The legislation bans BPA’s usage in food and beverage containers that are composed, “in whole or in part,” of BPA or can release BPA into the food contents. The ban would be effective for reusable containers 180 days after enactment, with 180 days or more for other food containers. Waivers may be granted to facilities that demonstrate there is no technologically feasible alternative to replace BPA in a certain product or package, or if an alternative package cannot be used for the product. The waiver will not last for more than one year and requires that all packages be clearly labeled as containing BPA.

These are very similar to provisions included in previous legislation. The bill also requires FDA to review all food additives for potential low dose

affects on vulnerable populations. Those can be removed from packaging use if the Secretary determines there is “no longer a reasonable certainty that no harm will result to aggregate populations.”

The bill has a number of influential co-sponsors in the Senate, including Senators Charles Schumer (D-NY) and John Kerry (D-MA). It currently sits in the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee. The House bill has 15 co-sponsors, primarily from states that have taken action on BPA, including Illinois, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York. It remains in the Republican-controlled Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Status of State Action on BPA

Action on BPA at the state level is expected to pick up right where it left off last year, with at least three states implementing legislatively mandated bans on BPA throughout 2011. The states with bans going into effect this year include Connecticut (effective October 1) and Washington State (effective July 1), where the focus is on plastic “sippy” cups, reusable infant formula containers, and baby food containers for children up to age 3. In Massachusetts, BPA is banned in reusable food and beverage containers for children up to age 3, but in two stages, effective for manufacturers as of January 1, 2011, and retailers as of July 1, 2011.

Another 17 states are expected to introduce various legislative measures to restrict the use of BPA in infant formula cans, receipt paper, baby bottles, and/or sippy cups. These states projected to consider legislation against BPA in 2011 include Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, as well as the District of Columbia.

Understanding the Public’s Fear of Chemicals

The general public has an irrational phobia about chemicals. That is the conclusion of a new position paper released in January by the American Council on Science and Health. The white paper, aptly titled “Scared to Death: How Chemophobia Threatens Public Health,” is authored by Jon Entwine, a visiting fellow with the American Enterprise Institute and well known science journalist. In his paper, Entwine provides a detailed look at scientific realities and dispels unfounded fears regarding the safe use of chemicals. The resource book brings research to light that illustrates how little evidence-based support exists for chemophobia and serves as a resource for media, parents, consumers and policymakers to put risk into proper perspective and reduce public support for harmful, unnecessary regulations.

Entwine is a former Emmy-winning producer for NBC News and ABC News, who researches and writes about corporate responsibility and science and society. He is also an adviser to Global Governance Watch (GGW), a project that examines transparency and accountability issues at the United Nations (UN), in nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and in related international organizations.

CANNEDWATER4KIDS

A Wisconsin-based charity is taking up the crusade to bring clean, safe water to children around the world and it is using metal packaging as its delivery mechanism of choice. The organization -- CannedWater4Kids -- is a 501c3 non-profit that focuses on certified clean water initiatives throughout the world. To achieve its primary goal of providing children with clean, safe drinking water, CannedWater4Kids provides donations and other support for well-digging, water filtration, and clean water education. NAMPA and its member companies are active supporters of CannedWater4Kids.

Metal cans serve a dual purpose for the organization. First and foremost, they represent a safe, recyclable, and economical way to distribute water. Second, the metal cans offer a billboard of sorts allowing the charity to spread its messages at the same time it provides a much needed resource. For more information on how you can support the organization directly, visit www.cannedwater4kids.com.

NAMPA WEBSITE

This publication is for informational purposes only and does not contain legal advice. The information presented herein should not be used or relied upon with regard to any particular set of facts without first consulting a lawyer.

If someone forwarded NAMPA News to you and you wish to subscribe, [click here](#).

Click here to [unsubscribe](#).