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City of Denton Adopts Producer Responsibility Resolution

Denton, Texas – At the June 15 meeting, the Denton City Council passed a “Product Stewardship” resolution. Denton is the third city in Texas to pass this type resolution, joining Plano and Lewisville, and approximately 100 local jurisdictions in California, New York, Massachusetts, and Minnesota. The resolution calls for state and federal producer responsibility legislation that shifts the costs of managing problematic products and packaging waste away from taxpayers and local governments to producers and the consumers of their products. The National League of Cities, National Association of Counties, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) have also adopted resolutions to address the growing, expensive problem of managing consumer product waste. Denton’s Mayor Mark Burroughs was a co-signer of the USCM resolution that passed this June at its national conference.

“It is far more efficient and makes good common sense to encourage waste minimization at the product and product packaging design stage, than to burden end-users with the problem,” said Mayor Burroughs. “This initiative makes manufacturers take more responsibility for what they make and thus avoid passing the high cost of disposal onto cities and ratepayers.”

“We have been working with The Product Policy Institute and the Texas Product Stewardship Council in their efforts to help local governments find solutions to the mounting burden of product and packaging waste that we are facing,” said Shirlene Sitton, Recycling Manager for the City of Denton. “Now, Denton is standing up to the growing waste problem and saying, ‘no more.’ We are asking product manufacturers to take primary responsibility for their toxic and non-recyclable products.”

Denton’s resolution supports state and federal producer responsibility legislation that levels the playing field for corporations that take “cradle-to-cradle” responsibility for their products and packaging. The resolutions are part of a movement that calls for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), also known as Product Stewardship. EPR is a policy approach common in Europe, Japan, Canada and other industrialized nations but relatively new to the United States. In the US, 23 states, including Texas, now have laws for discarded electronic products that require producers to finance or manage collection and provide responsible recycling.

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“We cannot continue to expect government and ratepayers to design, fund and manage disposal systems for every product sold,” added Sitton. “Requiring producers of problem products like paint, carpet, televisions, and pharmaceuticals to pay for their recovery utilizes free-market competitive forces to drive down recycling costs and creates jobs.”

To view the complete resolution, visit <http://www.txpsc.org/resolutions/localresolutions.php>. For more information, contact Shirlene Sitton, Recycling Manager, at (940) 349-8054 or Shirlene.Sitton@cityofdenton.com.