

17 August 2011  
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The Research Director  
Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Director,

**Re: Submission to Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011**

**Polypipe**

On farms around Australia hundreds of kilometres of low density polyethylene irrigation pipe (poly pipe) are replaced each year, resulting in the accumulation of piles of discarded poly-pipe. In the past the used pipe has been burnt or buried on farms or taken to local council waste facility.

I have spoken to farmers in Queensland recently who offered to return used poly pipe to the manufacturer for recycling, but the manufacturer refused to take the material. The poly pipe is able to be recycled. Netafim – a manufacturer of poly pipe in South Australia offers a poly pipe retrieval service and takes the poly pipe to a plastics recycling plant.

I hope a regulation can be made under section 84 of the Bill to make low density polyethylene irrigation pipe (poly-pipe) subject to a regulated product stewardship scheme.

**WEEE**

Another issue which concerns me is the disposal of waste electrical and electronic equipment (abbreviated as WEEE). Currently eight percent of municipal waste is electronics waste. Electronic waste contains many hazardous substances including arsenic, lead, cadmium, nickel and persistent organic pollutants such as the halogenated flame retardants in the plastic used to make the cases. All these chemicals cause pollution when buried by leaching pollutants into the soil.

The European Union's WEEE Directive has since 2004, required manufacturers and importers in the European Union states to take back their products from consumers and ensure they are disposed of in an environmentally sound way.

I hope that waste electronic and electrical equipment can also be subject to a stewardship scheme which requires manufacturers and importers to take back their products from consumers and also from city council waste disposal facilities.

**Broken glass from drink containers**

The last issue is broken glass on roadways, footpaths and bike paths from beer bottles. I am more aware of this issue because I ride a bicycle to work most days. On my cycle

commute I see many broken bottles and I try to steer clear of the broken glass to avoid tyre punctures. Nevertheless I and other cyclists I speak to are experiencing increasing numbers of flat tyres from the growing amount of broken glass on the road.

I wrote to the environment minister, Kate Jones, regarding this issue. I asked if the Minister would consider implementing a drink container recycling scheme for Queensland similar to the scheme operating in South Australia. I had recently visited South Australia and spoke to cyclists and non-cyclists there who informed me that there was very little glass and litter thanks to the drink container recycling scheme.

In her reply, Minister Kate Jones referred me to this Bill. The Minister also mentioned the dangerous littering provisions which she considered would assist to address the issue. I fear the Minister is mistaken regarding the dangerous littering provisions. I do not believe the dangerous litter provisions in this Bill will serve reduce the disposal of beer bottles onto the road. The state Government and many local councils have had increased penalties for dangerous litter in their local laws since 2008. These local laws have done nothing to reduce the beer bottle glass on the roads and footpaths. I cannot see how including dangerous litter provisions in the Bill will be effective in reducing glass on roadways, footpaths and bike paths.

In this regard I wish a regulation could also be made under section 84 of the Bill for a stewardship scheme for drink container recycling.

Yours sincerely

  
Mitchell Bright