

Summary of Household Battery Workshop

What: Household battery workshop
 Why: An initial workshop to identify end of life options for batteries
 Where: Fickling Centre, Three Kings
 When: Friday 26th October 2013, 9:30-12:30

Who attended?

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Name</u>
Energizer New Zealand Ltd.	Andre De Beer
EcoMatters Environment Trust	Barbara Folkard
Sustainable North Trust	Betsy Kettle
Gibcol	Brett Collins
	Bruce Parkes
Waiheke Resource Trust	Charlotte Parks
Transistion Towns	Deryn Cooper
Transition Town Point Chevalier group.	Guido Jehle
Panasonic	Jaco Erasmus
NZ Food & Grocery Council	Katherine Rich
	Marianna van Ginkel
BMW Group New Zealand	Neil Ready
Motor Industry Association (MIA)	Perry Kerr (CEO)
Sony	Peter Buckton
Panasonic	Philip Jayne
ACZWA	Sonia Turner
<u>Blackwoods Protector</u>	Steven Stowers
Community Wanaka Wastebusters	Sue Coutts
CRN	Warren Snow
Pt Chev Transistion Towns	Yolanda Van Den Bemd
WasteMinz	Paul Evans
	Ellen Schindler

Apologies: Laura Fayerman, Damian McDonald, Jacqui Forbes

Introduction and expectations

Auckland Council initiated the workshop in response to feedback from the public during the consultation for the Auckland Council Waste Management & Minimisation Plan. Respondents showed an 89% support for product stewardship of materials such as batteries, e-waste and tyres. Auckland Council is interested in facilitating discussions between industry (manufacturers, distributors and retailers) and the community around end of life options.

Waste Minimisation Act 2008: Priority Product Stewardship status – explanation and diagram for what would need to be undertaken for priority product stewardship status.
(Attached in Appendix 1)

Summary of discussions:

Discussion 1: Discussion around issues raised by community and industry

Issues identified:

- Willingness to pay
- How systems are set up will dictate success
- Landfill price a determining factor
- Battery quality vs waste – better quality batteries last longer and result in less waste
- Consumerism is an issue – do people need to have so many products that require batteries?
- Need for education of consumers – better batteries, rechargeable, reduce use, reduce waste
- Scale is an issue
- Free loaders / free riders – non-participating companies who would benefit from any solution without contributing.
- National solutions required, not localised
- Voluntary schemes need good industry support
- Costs should be spread across industry – manufacturing/retail/distribution
- Once collected, where does it go? Disposal options and costs
- Mixed types of batteries can pose risks (fire etc)
- Which batteries really need collecting?
- Lowest cost schemes vs best recovery schemes – why are we collecting?
- Regulatory environment and adequate funding are both needed
- Retailers are not set up for collections in-store

Some solutions were also discussed:

- Levy kerbside recycling
- Some companies are already looking for solutions
- Community groups need an incentive to provide drop off points vs industry needing drivers for participation
- Store batteries e.g. in monofills until recycling becomes cost effective
- Joint schemes with Australia
- Include NZ in international schemes
- Consumers paying for recycling
- Disposal fee built into purchase cost
- Transparent import levy/tax at the border to pay for disposal
- Encourage use of rechargeable batteries not single use batteries
- Product design changes to make batteries less problematic for disposal.

Discussion 2: What solutions could be achieved from this meeting?

Collection methods:

- Not considered a problem. Ability to provide collection points e.g. at schools, community groups etc
- Need to ensure health & safety i.e. some batteries can combust
- Sony provides 4 drop off points nationwide, potential to promote service within budget constraints
- Volumes available for collection and sorting into disposal type are problematic

Funding:

- If community or recycling centre collections – require revenue stream to pay for disposal costs
- Levy at the border preferred option.

Reduce:

- How do we drive reduction?
- Promotion of rechargeable batteries
- Better labelling so consumers can make good purchasing decisions i.e. longer life, purchasing from responsible brands
- Better product design – some companies are researching better design with end of life in mind. An example is the reduction in problematic materials in alkaline batteries.

Disposal:

- Currently high temperature incineration is used, with some dismantling and recycling occurring
- Alkaline batteries usually disposed to landfill due to lack of alternatives
- Better research needed into disposal options available e.g. what recycling technology is available worldwide?

Priority Product Status:

- MfE not looking into household batteries at the moment
- In general, the process for priority product stewardship status would require some sort of voluntary effort which, if minimal success was achieved, could lead to priority product status and a mandatory/co-regulatory approach.

Discussion 3: Where to from here?

A two fold approach was discussed:

1) An immediate but temporary solution is for amenable industry representatives to assist local community groups and recycling centres with battery recycling e.g. by accepting batteries for recycling once collected.

Sony offered to accept batteries at their four sites within budget limitations, and possibly to charge for batteries collected past this point. Sony (Peter Buckton) also indicated that Sony may be willing to be an experiment into whether that kind of system would work and whether customers would pay for battery recycling.

Action:

Sony will have internal discussions around what they may be able to offer and get back to the group with details.

2) A Battery Working Group to form to look at the long term goal of developing product stewardship for batteries. This group would identify research gaps (e.g. disposal methodology) and international schemes, and develop a plan for progressing a nationwide product stewardship scheme, with a levy or tax at the border favoured.

Action:

Sandra Murray (Auckland Council) will send a request to participants to identify those interested in being on the working group, and arrange a meeting in February 2013.

As part of this working group, Sandra will make arrangements for the sharing of existing research and information between participants.

Meeting ended: 12:30pm

Appendix 1:

Priority Product Stewardship status diagram (as handed out at workshop)

Product Stewardship – Part 2 of the Waste Minimisation Act

