

# REUSABLE PACKAGING TODAY

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Chemical Packaging  
Committee  
February 9-11, 2011  
Sarasota, FL

IPANA Annual  
Conference  
March 13-15, 2011  
San Antonio, TX

Petroleum Packaging  
Council  
March 20-22, 2011  
Tampa, Florida

RIPA Technical  
Conference  
Dates *TBA*  
Location *TBA*

Chemical Packaging  
Committee  
May 2-4, 2011  
Dallas, TX

## **DISTRACTED DRIVING—TEXTING BANNED; HAND-HELD CELL PHONES NEXT**

Throughout 2010, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) focused a great deal of attention on the issue of “distracted driving.” The Agency estimates that distracted driving causes more than 5,400 deaths each year, and at least 440,000 injuries. Most of these incidents are caused by individuals driving automobiles, but a significant number of deaths and injuries are caused each year by trucks.

In response, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) adopted regulations banning commercial drivers operating in interstate commerce from texting while using a cell phone. The rule also makes companies that allow or require drivers to text while driving liable for related accidents. Thirty states have adopted similar laws or regulations.

.....See “Driving” page 3

## **UPDATE: MAKING PROGRESS ON ULTRASONIC LEAKPROOFNESS TESTING APPROVAL**

For four years, RIPA has been working with the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to obtain an Approval for ultrasonic leakproofness testing systems. This technology, which is widely used in a variety of industrial settings, is considered a significant advancement in the industrial packaging industry and, if approved, can replace traditional water submersion testers.

DOT activity on this issue slowed about 18 months ago when PHMSA was directed by Congress to revise the Special Permits and Approvals process. In the past, the agency was authorized to give Approvals to trade associations on behalf of their members. This practice is no longer permitted, and every company that wants to install an ultrasonic leakproofness tester must apply to the agency individually.

.....See “Leaks” page 4

## **WATER QUALITY ISSUE COULD AFFECT RECONDITIONING OF CONTAINERS WITH CERTAIN SURFACTANT RESIDUES**

Reconditioners handling drums or IBCs that previously held certain surfactants (i.e., detergents) may want to check with their local water authorities to see whether standards are being adopted for levels of the chemical “nonylphenol” (NP).

NP is both a starting material and a breakdown product of the widely used surfactant nonylphenol ethoxylate (NPE). Some trade names for the surfactant include: Ultranex NP95 and Surfonic N95. NP is toxic to aquatic life and can interfere with the microorganisms that are vital to municipal wastewater treatment. NPE surfactants have been banned in the European Union. NPE products have been replaced in Europe by more expensive alcohol ethoxylates, which are less problematic for the environment.

.....See “Water” page 3

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**com-mu-ni-ty** \kə-ˈmyü-nət-ē\ *n.* A body of persons with common and esp. professional interests scattered through a larger society.



*Paul Rankin*  
Paul Rankin

As 2010 draws to a close, I find that my thoughts are not focused upon the various legislative and regulatory issues that RIPA worked on throughout the past year – although they were many and varied – rather, I am focused on the idea of community; both personal and professional.

Sociologists have never been able to agree on a single definition of the term. However, a “community” generally refers to a group of interacting people living in a common location, bound in some way by a common set of values and/or beliefs.

Today, of course, with the advent of the internet, the concept of location has begun to fade away. The internet allows people with common interests of any sort to interact without regard to location. However, one basic tenet of community remains in place, and that is communication.

Regular and effective communication is central to the formation and maintenance of communities. This is as true for communities of business men and women as it is for political communities, such as cities and states. RIPA members, for example, depend on a steady flow of information to keep up with business, legislative, regulatory and legal issues, and well as more personal matters, such as weddings and the passing of former industry members.

This information, which regularly flows out instantly over the internet primarily in the form of newsletters and e-mail from members and staff, helps maintain and enhance the common identity of the reusable industrial packaging industry. New ideas – some good and some not so good – are aired, and through the give and take of internet communication, thought leaders gradually emerge. Additionally, networks of companies within the association that share unique but common values are free to form and dissolve at will. These virtual networks can be local, national and even international in nature.

Associations like RIPA offer reusable industrial packaging companies a singular and important form of community. Within the boundaries of RIPA, the competition of the marketplace can be temporarily set aside in favor of association among and between professional peers. Issues of common concern are the focus of organized discussions, and commonality is the goal.

Members of this wonderful association – now entering its 70<sup>th</sup> year – should remember that their organizational roots still draw sustenance from the memory of the individuals that came together in December 1941 at the Brooke Cadillac plant in Detroit to discuss the creation of an industry trade association. At that meeting, the reusable industrial packaging community was born, and the product of their effort still thrives today.

Next year, each of my President's messages will highlight an important milestone in the history of your association. By bringing to light some of RIPA's rich past, we will all gain a deeper understanding of the industry, the association, and perhaps, ourselves.

Happy New Year one and all.



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Editor..... C.L. Pettit

Soon after the FMCSA regulation was adopted, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) published a parallel notice of proposed rulemaking (HM-256). The proposed rule also prohibits texting on electronic devices by drivers who are operating a motor vehicle containing placarded loads of hazardous materials. However, the PHMSA rule extends to drivers operating trucks carrying hazmat in intra-state commerce. This proposal is expected to be finalized shortly.

On December 17, FMCSA proposed a rule to ban commercial drivers from "reaching for, holding, or dialing a mobile telephone in order to conduct a voice communication while driving." When final, the rule will eliminate the use of hand-held cell phones for talking while driving trucks in interstate commerce. Drivers will be allowed to use voice activated (e.g. "Bluetooth") cell phones while driving. However, many companies have adopted policies that ban even "hands-free" cell phone use.

All RIPA members that employ truck drivers are or soon will be impacted directly by these rules. We recommend member companies develop and maintain a written "distracted driver" policy, and that all drivers be made aware of the policy.

Through the "Interested Party" group, RIPA has obtained a "distracted driver" policy template that members may use to create their own company policy. A copy of this policy has been provided electronically to all members, but a copy also can be accessed on RIPA's web site at [www.reusablepackaging.org](http://www.reusablepackaging.org).

Although current federal rules require companies to have a policy that prohibits texting while driving a commercial motor vehicle, it is clear that within a few months new federal rules will ban the use of hand-held cell phones for any driver of a commercial vehicle engaged in interstate commerce. Therefore, RIPA suggests that member companies adopt a distracted driver policy that bans the use of hand-held cell phones, computers and gaming devices.

In Denver, CO, the local water commission recently advised many businesses that they should move away from using NPE products. Authorities said that beginning January 1, 2011, the water quality standard for NP would be 6.6 parts per billion (a standard adopted from recommendations of the federal EPA). The local water commission warned businesses that they eventually could be assigned limits on their NP and/or NPE surfactant levels in discharges to the sewer system. Also, they warned that discharges of NP and NPE products could be prohibited entirely if attainment of the NP standard in water bodies is not being met.

RIPA has been advised that reconditioners of plastic drums, in particular, may process containers with residues of NPE surfactant. Reportedly, the surfactant is not used in cleaning drums, but nevertheless appears through residues in emptied drums.

Any RIPA members who have had to address the issue of NP and NPE surfactants in raw drums are encouraged to contact the RIPA office. More on this issue will be reported as developments occur.



## 13<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PLANNED FOR OSAKA, JAPAN



Osaka at night

The theme of the 13<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Reusable Industrial Packaging is “Reconditioning: Taking Lessons from the Past for a Better Tomorrow.” The much anticipated event will be held 7 – 10 September 2011 at the gorgeous Rihga Royal Hotel in one of the most beautiful cities in Japan – Osaka.

Osaka, known as the “Water City,” is located at the mouth of the Yodo River. The third largest city in Japan, Osaka is a leading commercial center for the island nation. Osaka is well known for its wonderful museums, gourmet food and wide range of social and cultural offerings.

The Rihga hotel is one of the best in the region, and is located adjacent to the meeting hall.

Conference Chairman Minoru Inaba and Program Committee Chair Kiyokazu Nakamura promise an outstanding meeting, filled not only with superb presentations, but also plenty of social and sightseeing opportunities.

RIPA International Committee Chair Bill Shocklee has been to many international conferences. “Every RIPA member should plan to attend at least one international conference,” he said. “I can assure members that they will not only gain valuable information about the industry and their businesses, but they will be treated magnificently by our wonderful hosts in JDRA. This will be an event and an experience you will never forget,” noted Shocklee.

Copies of the 1<sup>st</sup> Circular have been sent to RIPA members. Make your reservations soon – you don’t want to miss this conference.



Suite at Rihga Royal Hotel

*continued from page 1 “Leaks”*

In addition, PHMSA now requires every applicant to undergo an inspection and fitness determination prior to the issuance of an Approval. Essentially, this means that DOT will conduct a complete hazmat compliance inspection at a facility, witness the operation of the leak-tester, and then prepare a “fitness” report. Only after the fitness report is finalized and approved will operation of a leak-tester be officially authorized.

Recently, DOT developed a new draft Approval for ultrasonic leakproofness testers. It sets forth technical, operational and recordkeeping requirements for operators. In addition, DOT has visited a member of the association to observe a tester in operation.

RIPA President Paul Rankin said, “We are very pleased that DOT is moving forward with the Approval process. The ultrasonic leakproofness testing system is an excellent technology that enhances transportation safety.”



### **FMCSA ISSUES PROPOSED HOURS-OF-SERVICE RULE**

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) today issued a regulatory proposal that would revise hours-of-service (HOS) requirements for commercial truck drivers.

“A fatigued driver has no place behind the wheel of a large commercial truck,” said Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. FMCSA is under a court order to publish a final hours-of-service rule by July 26, 2011.

This new HOS proposal would retain the “34-hour restart” provision allowing drivers to restart the clock on their weekly 60 or 70 hours by taking at least 34 consecutive hours off-duty. However, the restart period would have to include two consecutive off-duty periods from midnight to 6:00 a.m. Drivers would be allowed to use this restart only once during a seven-day period.

Additionally, the proposal would require commercial truck drivers to complete all driving within a 14-hour workday, and to complete all on-duty work-related activities within 13 hours to allow for at least a one hour break. It also leaves open for comment whether drivers should be limited to 10 or 11 hours of daily driving time, although FMCSA currently favors a 10-hour limit.

A copy of the rulemaking proposal is available on FMCSA's Web site at <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/HOS>.



## **OSHA PROPOSES NEW GUIDELINES ON EMPLOYEE HEARING PROTECTION**

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) proposed October 19, 2010 an interpretation of previous policy that could force reconditioners and other industrial concerns to take administrative actions and adopt new engineering controls to reduce employees' exposure to noise in the workplace.

Under the proposal, employers would be required to use administrative or engineering controls ***rather*** than personnel protective equipment (PPE) to reduce noise levels that are above acceptable levels when such controls are "feasible". PPE, such as ear plugs, would be more akin to a second tier of noise reduction.

OSHA intends to consider as "feasible" any administrative or engineering action to reduce noise that ***"will not threaten the employer's ability to remain in business."*** Thus, citations conceivably could be issued to require some personnel re-deployment or plant re-configuring that would reduce noise or bring noise exposures to within the required levels.

Significantly, OSHA is not proposing to change acceptable noise levels quantitatively (measured in decibels), but rather to change the basis for deciding what is feasible, and to effectively place such controls ahead of ear plugs and other PPE.

Presented here is a table with the required levels based on duration of exposure:

Table G-16—Permissible Noise Exposures

Duration per day, hours	Sound level: decibels dB
8	90
6	92
4	95
3	97
2	100
1 1/2	102
1	105
1/2	110
1/4 or less	115

By comparison, the noise level in a large restaurant or near an average lawnmower can easily exceed 80 decibels.

Additionally, current OSHA regulations also stipulate that exposure to "impulsive or impact noise" should not exceed 140 dB peak sound pressure level.

OSHA originally asked for all comments to be submitted by December 20, 2010. Subsequently, however, the agency extended the comment period to March 21, 2011.

RIPA is organizing a workgroup to look at these issues, collect or generate noise data as necessary, and formulate comments for the reconditioning industry.

"Obviously, reconditioning creates an exposure to some noise," said RIPA Technical Director C.L. Pettit, "however RIPA members have always taken steps to protect employees." He adds, "We will look at the proposal and at some sound data, and then offer some constructive advice on what should be considered 'feasible'."

Other organizations such as National Manufacturers Association and the Small Business Administration are working on the issue as it could seriously threaten manufacturing plants nationwide.

More on this issue will be reported as developments occur.



## Steel Drum News, Trends And Issues December 2010



### A Holiday Question – Are you As Good as your Dog?

Of all the items ever published in this Newsletter, I am repeatedly asked about "Are you as Good as your Dog?" I hope you will find in it, a special message for this Holiday season. – Howard Skolnik

"If you can start the day without caffeine, if you can get going without pep pills, if you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles, if you can eat the same food everyday and be grateful for it, if you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time, if you can overlook it when something goes wrong through no fault of yours and those you love take it out on you, if you can take criticism and blame without resentment, if you can ignore a friends limited education and never correct him, if you can resist treating a rich friend better than a poor friend, if you can face the world without lies and deceit, if you can conquer tension without medical help, if you can relax without liquor, if you can sleep without the aid of drugs, if you can honestly say that deep in your heart you have no prejudice against creed, color, religion or politics, then my friends, you are almost as good as your dog!"

**Wishing all of our NEWSLETTER readers the Happiest of Holidays!**

### HazMat News

#### 3rd Annual WORLD QUALITY DAY Celebrated at SKOLNIK

On Thursday November 11, 2010, we celebrated our 3rd Annual World Quality Day at SKOLNIK. The purpose of World Quality Day is to promote awareness of quality and to encourage individual and organizational growth and prosperity. Our Quality Assurance Department hosted a visual presentation in our training room highlighting instances of some of our recent mistakes, many of our great accomplishments, and examples of the overall quality of the products we manufacture as well as the services we provide. Moises Basilio, our Testing and QA Technician was presented with a certificate for passing the exam for Certified Quality Inspector from the American Society of Quality (ASQ). The day had everyone in great spirits. In addition to the training, we had several presentations, took a company photo, hosted a luncheon and gave all employees sweatshirts commemorating World Quality Day 2010. Each year our celebration gets bigger and more meaningful as we celebrate our company achievements in quality. You can see the entire Skolnik team at [http://www.skolnik.com/1988\\_ef\\_21.shtml](http://www.skolnik.com/1988_ef_21.shtml). For more information about World Quality Day you can also log onto the CQI website at [www.cqi.org](http://www.cqi.org). — Stephanie Bravo

#### Bio-Diesel Fueled in SKOLNIK Drums

In another action to participate in sustainability efforts, students from the Whitney Young Magnet High School, in Chicago, identified the SKOLNIK 30 and 55 gallon carbon steel drums as a critical component of their project competition. Known as the Whitney Young Biodiesel Team, the project goal was to take gallons and gallons of used cooking oil from various local restaurants, process this oil and then donate the biodiesel to farm co-ops or local bus companies. The Team also plans to build a second system and donate it to a school, 4-H club, or Future Farmers of America (FFA) club. The process of turning used cooking oil to biodiesel is a distillation process which begins with the collection of used cooking oil in an open head steel drum provided by SKOLNIK. It is preheated and "bubbled" in the preheating drum until it reaches about 104 degrees F, then the heated oil is pumped to a modified electric water heater that serves as the reactor vessel. Once clarified and filtered, the biodiesel is then charged in a manner that renders it usable as an alternate fuel supply. The Team was able to confirm the results of their efforts by testing the brew in a Go-Cart. As the photographs attest, the project was declared a success. On behalf of SKOLNIK, we wish to congratulate Jeane Emily DuBrose, Travis Hank, Anna Hernandez, Sabrina Kwan, Melissa Lin, Jake Morely, and teacher, Brian Sievers on a successful project that is another step towards global sustainability. [See Pictures of the project here](#) — Howard Skolnik & Dean Ricker

### Wine Making News

#### Unified Wine & Grape Symposium 2011

With the season winding down, it's time to start looking ahead to the 2011 harvest. On January 26th and 27th, SKOLNIK will be exhibiting our tremendously popular stainless steel wine drums in Sacramento, California, at the Unified Wine & Grape Symposium. We have exhibited at this show for many years and each year, the enthusiasm grows about using stainless steel for wine processing. Around the world, [stainless steel wine drums](#) continue to revolutionize the industry, providing winemakers with a new realm of options and versatility. This year we plan to bring one of our new variations – a seamless drum that is designed to be crevice free and bacteria free. [The Seamless Stainless drums](#) are available in a 55 gallon size and in addition to preventing bacteria build-up, the crevice free, seamless bottom will provide a significantly easier cleaning process. Please stop by and see us at Booth # 441. If you are planning to attend, please be our guest! We have a number of free entry vouchers that we would be happy to send to you and/or your colleagues. If interested, contact us immediately at 773-884-1513, or email [jason@skolnik.com](mailto:jason@skolnik.com) — Jason Snow

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