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Pollution Prevention Governor's Pollution Prevention Award Recipient Ball Metal Container Group

Shipping material represents a large amount of waste for every manufacturer. By working with its customers and suppliers Ball Metal has successfully and aggressively conquered this problem.

The Governor's Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Pollution Prevention have been presented since 1986. Ball Metal Container Group was one of five recipients to receive the Award in 1993. Governor George V. Voinovich presented the seventh annual awards on December 9, 1993. These awards recognize outstanding commitment to improve Ohio's environment through pollution prevention. Evaluation criteria for the awards included: the overall effort to reduce waste at the source, recycle or recover materials, or conserve energy; soundness of approach; cost-effectiveness; ability of the program to serve as a model for others; and effectiveness in promoting prevention as the preferred long-term approach.

What is Pollution Prevention?

Pollution prevention is the use of source reduction

techniques to reduce risk to public health, safety, welfare and the environment and, as a second preference, the use of environmentally sound recycling to achieve these same goals. Pollution prevention avoids cross media transfers (of wastes and/or pollutants) and is multi-media in scope, addressing all waste and environmental releases to the air, water and land.

Ball Metal Container Group

Ball Metal was recognized for its aggressive pollution

prevention activities which include an innovative green packaging initiative.

Ball Metal Container Group of Findlay, Ohio, a subdivision of Ball Corporation, was established in 1973. The parent company, Ball Corporation, was founded in the 1880's as a major glass manufacturer. Ball Metal produces 12 ounce aluminum beverage cans,

drawn and ironed containers and easy-opening ecology ends. Ball employs approximately 500 people and operates 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Pollution Prevention Activities

Ball Metal has demonstrated its environmental

commitment in the many pollution prevention, waste minimization and recycling activities it has performed over the years.

Ball has established an exemplary program to reduce packaging and shipping solid waste. Ball's green packaging initiative, which it began in 1990, is one of its greatest solid waste reduction successes. This initiative has been accomplished at Ball's insistence, through extensive communications with its suppliers and customers. All suppliers ship materials in recyclable packaging, which Ball recycles or reuses. Three suppliers use

totally returnable packaging. Not content to simply return their

packaging, Ball continues communications with these suppliers to ensure that this material is reused and recycled, and not simply sent to the landfill. Ball also ships all of its own product in returnable packaging. It keeps careful tallies of the amount of packaging material returned for reuse, and is quick to call a customer who is delinquent in returning packaging material.

Ball's technological innovations at metal reduction, spin-necking, coining, spin-flanging and electronic inspection have eliminated tens of millions of pounds of aluminum waste, resulting in a savings of millions of dollars. Ball also recycles over 26,000,000 pounds of aluminum a year resulting in even more savings.

In November of 1991, Ball created TQM Recycling teams to track recycling efforts and to educate employees about these efforts. Since their creation the TQM teams have recycled over 3,000,000 pounds of waste designated for landfilling.

Without sacrificing product quality, Ball has virtually eliminated the use of solvent based materials. Ball has successfully switched to water based products for its cleaning and process needs. In October of 1990, Ball voluntarily stopped using 1,1,1-trichloroethane. Ball used this solvent to clean parts and printing blankets. A substitute of alcohol and a water based Simple Green®

solution is now used for their cleaning needs.

Other hazardous waste streams that have been eliminated or reduced include methyl ethyl ketone (MEK), isopropanol alcohol and waste oil.

For example, Ball now uses a water based cleaning solution instead of a MEK solution. Ball has recycled and reused over 1,200 pounds of isopropanol alcohol, and has eliminated the disposal of over 8,900 gallons of waste oil since June of 1992 by filtering and reusing the oil.

Ball's waste minimization activities also include the elimination of natural gas incinerators. By reconfiguring and modifying their air handling systems, Ball has eliminated the need for natural gas incinerators. This process modification saves over \$200,000 annually in the purchase of natural gas.

Ball Metal's commitment to the environment is also exemplified in its community involvement and leadership. Since 1982 Ball has been an active spokesperson for the Findlay-Hancock County Litter Prevention and Recycling Project. The company has assisted in each Clean-Up Ohio day in the spring and fall, and has donated a baler valued at \$19,000 to the Litter Prevention and Recycling Center. Ball has supplied banding choppers to six of its customers, and gives them the option of either

recycling the banding themselves or returning it. Ball has also opened its facility doors for tours by the general public and the Hancock County Chamber of Commerce Visitor's Bureau. The facility has already been toured by over 1,000 people this year.

From within their own facility Ball has collected soft drink cans and has donated the money to the charitable program "Kans for Kids". To date Ball has contributed over \$1,700 to the program.

Looking Ahead

Ball Metal is currently researching various options for more environmentally-safe lubricants and inks for its manufacturing operations.

Furthermore, Ball Metal continues to request that their suppliers provide the most environmentally-sound inks and lubricants available.

For More Information

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This is the eighteenth in a series of fact sheets that Ohio EPA has prepared on pollution prevention. For more information, call the Office of Pollution Prevention at (614) 644-3469.

The Office of Pollution Prevention was created to encourage the multimedia pollution prevention activities within the state of Ohio, including source reduction and environmentally sound recycling practices. The office analyzes, develops, and publicizes information and data related to pollution prevention. Additionally the office increases awareness of pollution prevention opportunities through education, outreach, and technical assistance programs directed toward business, government, and the public.