

# Greening of Consumer Products

an Allen Matkins  
market intelligence  
publication

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## **Congress reaches agreement on parts of Consumer Product Safety Bill**

*Consumer Affairs - June 26*

U.S. senators and representatives agreed 21 uncontroversial items on the Consumer Product Safety Commission Reform Act, which would increase the beleaguered safety agency's funding, staff and authority. Both the House and the Senate passed their versions of the bill earlier in the year and since March 6, the two sides have been in conference trying to find agreeable compromises between the House version and the Senate version. Despite the differences, the two sides were able to agree on 21 items out of a total of [about 30](#). The list of the most notable items includes:

- Required tracking labels for children's products
- A return to a five-member commission and reinstatement of interim quorum.
- More transparency in the agency. This includes more submissions of documents to Congress while requiring the agency to submit annual reports.
- More effective recalls by way of requiring manufacturers to send recall notices to customers and advertise the recall on the Internet and in catalogs and enhancing the agency's authority to order recalls.

## **\$20 billion Organic industry in litigation over what is truly organic**

*National Law Journal - June 24*

The organic marketplace is sprouting litigation over fake organic and natural products, some of them harmful, that are being sold to unwitting consumers. At issue in all the suits, lawyers and consumer advocates say, is the integrity of the organic industry, which, they claim, is being compromised by opportunists seeking to grab some of the rapidly growing industry's \$20 billion in revenue.

## **Import Working Group to release progress summary on product safety efforts**

*Street Insider - June 30*

Members of the interagency Working Group on Import Safety will release a research paper that chronicles a wide variety of initiatives underway to enhance the safety of imported goods. HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt, EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson and Consumer Product Safety Commission Acting Chairman Nancy Nord will conduct a media briefing to discuss the report on Tuesday, July 1, at 12 p.m. President Bush established an Interagency Working Group on Import Safety in July 2007 and appointed Secretary Leavitt as chairman. The President charged the working group with conducting a comprehensive, government-wide review to identify actions and appropriate steps to promote the safety of imported products.

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**[Eileen M. Nottoli](#)**  
Editor

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## **Canada issues guidelines for environmental label claims**

*Nexreg compliance - June 26*

The new Canadian environmental guidelines have been released, which aim to address "egregious cases of deceptive environmental claims." A press release from the competition bureau states that the guide, for Industry and Advertisers, addresses a number of commonly used green claims and provides examples of best practices on how such claims can be used by businesses to comply with the false or misleading provisions of the laws enforced by the Competition Bureau. Among other practices, the Guide states that:

- The use of vague claims implying general environmental improvement are insufficient and should be avoided.
- Environmental claims should be clear, specific, accurate and not misleading.
- Environmental claims should be verified and substantiated, prior to being made.

## **BPA debate rages on between FDA and the Environmental Working Group**

*Tennessee Journalist - June 26*

The controversial chemical Bisphenol-A debate continues to rage between the Food and Drug Administration, who has adamantly said BPA is safe, and activist groups, such as the Environmental Working Group (EWG) which reveals its own contradictory BPA research. "The FDA has been pretty dismissive of [BPA]" according to Sonya Lunder, a senior analyst of EWG's research department. Lunder said "I caution parents not take the responsibility of not knowing these things. As parents, all we can do is demand better products and rely on good science and a public health safety net."

## **New study to look at consumer attitudes on sustainability**

*Cosmetics design-europe.com - June 25*

[The Hartman Group](#) is conducting a study on attitudes towards sustainability to determine which messages and actions resonate with the consumer. The market research firm claims that companies face challenges in understanding what factors consumers base their sustainability purchases on. Sustainability Outlook 2008 will also look into how consumer attitudes towards sustainability vary in relation to different product categories. The report is expected to be published at the end of 2008.