



# Letter of Agreement 2008

## MISSION STATEMENT

To shift Vermont's product waste management system from one focused on government funded and ratepayer financed waste diversion to one that relies on producer responsibility in order to reduce public costs and drive improvements in product design that promote environmental sustainability. The Vermont Product Stewardship Council works to integrate the principles of product stewardship into the policy and economic structures of Vermont.

## DEFINITION OF PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

Product Stewardship or Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a product-centered approach to environmental protection that calls on all those in the product life cycle – designers, manufacturers, retailers, users and waste managers to share responsibility and costs for reducing the adverse environmental impacts of products. The greatest responsibility lies with the producers who have the most ability to affect the lifecycle environmental impacts of the product through product design and marketing. Product stewardship holds producers liable for the costs of responsibly managing their products at end of life.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the VTPSC are to:

- Develop and recommend product stewardship policies and educational tools to organizations, institutions, governments, state legislatures and legislators.
- Provide effective leadership on product stewardship initiatives in the region.
- Coordinate or participate in product stewardship initiatives locally, regionally and nationally.
- Educate elected officials and other decision makers on the benefits of product stewardship
- Provide a forum for the exchange of information regarding existing and proposed EPR programs.

## ORGANIZATION

The VTPSC will operate as an unincorporated association and will be comprised of the **General Council** and **Steering Committee**.

**General Council Members:** Members of the VTPSC consist of cities, counties, towns, regional solid waste districts and alliances or other local government bodies that:

- a) Provide funding and/or staff time to VTPSC activities and projects and commit staff time to attend VTPSC meetings and
- b) Support the VTPSC mission and Framework Principles for Product Stewardship Policy (appendix A) and
- c) Sign this Letter of Agreement

**Steering Committee Members:** Members of the VTPSC Steering Committee make up the voting member body of the Council. The steering committee is limited to 13 representatives

from local government. Each agency provides one official representative to the Steering Committee and receives one vote for decision-making purposes. Steering committee members must:

- a) Provide funding and/or staff time to VTPSC activities and projects (as outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities of Steering Committee Members below) and commit staff time to attend VTPSC meetings and
- b) Support the VTPSC mission and Framework Principles for Product Stewardship Policy (appendix A) and
- c) Sign this Letter of Agreement.

Voting members will be accepted at the beginning of each year, or at other times as agreed upon by the Steering Committee. Nominations can be in the form of self-nominations or nomination of another council member. Steering committee members will be elected openly by the Steering Committee unless there are more nominees than vacancies in which case the chair will take a paper ballot vote.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Steering Committee Members:**

The Steering Committee provides leadership to the Council, develops and recommends product stewardship policy, facilitates coordination with other product stewardship activities and broadly publicizes the concept of product stewardship. Steering Committee members will prepare a scope of work and budget at the beginning of each year.

- **Meetings:** Attend and participate (in person or by phone) in VTPSC Steering Committee meetings, anticipated to occur no less frequently once every two months or as called by the chair. In cases where steering committee members cannot attend the meetings, they should notify the Council Chair. Steering Committee members must participate in at least half the meetings held the previous year to retain standing on the Steering Committee. VTPSC meeting agendas are sent out for Steering Committee review in advance. All Steering Committee members shall review meeting minutes that are sent out after each meeting.
- **Projects:** Propose, review, approve and participate in activities and projects conducted in the name of VTPSC. Develop an annual work plan which outlines goals and projects for the year.
- **Decision Making:** The Steering Committee makes decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, a decision will be made by majority vote. Each Steering Committee member will have one vote.
- **Chair:** A Steering Committee chair will be elected at the beginning of each year. The chair will represent VTPSC on general correspondence and communications. The Chair will coordinate the Steering Committee, assist Subcommittees, prepare agendas, convene meetings, record and disseminating meeting summaries, respond to inquiries, and initiate and shepherd VTPSC related projects.

**Partners:** Partners are stakeholders (government, individuals or organization) that wish to be kept apprised of VTPSC initiatives through periodic email alerts, periodically attend VTPSC meetings and may participate in project subcommittee work. Any individual or organization that endorses the VTPSC mission and signs the VTPSC Partner Pledge of Support, is invited to be a Partner.

**Project Subcommittees:** Project Subcommittees are comprised of representatives from government, businesses and nonprofit groups that focus their work on specific commodities or materials (such as mercury-containing products, electronic equipment or batteries) to encourage product stewardship within that particular sector, or that focus on cross-cutting issues or functions that advance the mission of the Council (such as education, purchasing policies, local initiatives, or framework legislation). Project Subcommittees will be coordinated by Steering Committee members. Subcommittees will meet independently of the Steering Committee and will provide updates on their activities and recommendations at regularly held Council meetings for review and action, if required.

## **FUNDING**

Projects and activities that are conducted on behalf of the council may be funded directly by agencies as appropriate. The Steering Committee may seek additional funding for project work, such as conferences, through grants and contributions.

## **LOGOS AND CREDITS**

All projects undertaken on behalf of the VTPSC shall use the VTPSC logo on project materials.

### **General Correspondence**

The VTPSC name and logo will be used on all general correspondence. "Official" VTPSC letterhead will be used. The Council Chair will sign letters.

### **Project Materials**

All materials developed in coordination with and on behalf of the VTPSC shall display the VTPSC logo and mission statement.

Agencies that fund a portion of specific projects and materials on behalf of the VTPSC will be credited using the following language (agency logos may also be displayed):

***This product was funded by agency and agency, members of the VTPSC.***

## **LETTER OF AGREEMENT**

This letter of agreement shall be revised at the beginning of each year by the Steering Committee. New members to the Steering Committee may be added at this time. New General Council Members may be added at any time. Letters of Agreement will be signed by the appropriate representative of each government entity participating as a General Council Member or Steering Committee Member.

## **Steering Committee Members Signature Page**

The undersigned supports the VTPSC mission and the Framework Principles for Product Stewardship Policy (appendix A).

1. Jennifer Holliday, Environmental Compliance Mngr. 10/06/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**  
Chittenden Solid Waste District  
**Organization**
2. Fred Moody, Executive Director 10/06/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**  
Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste District  
**Organization**
3. John Malter, Administrator 10/06/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**  
Mad River Resource Management Alliance  
**Organization**
4. James O'Gorman, District Manager 10/06/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**  
Rutland County Solid Waste District  
**Organization**
5. Teresa Kuczynski, District Manager 10/06/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**  
Addison County Solid Waste Management District  
**Organization**
6. Pamela Clapp, Administrator 10/06/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**  
Solid Waste Alliance Communities  
**Organization**
7. Marcus Berry, Outreach Coordinator 10/06/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**  
Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District  
**Organization**
8. Mary T. O'Brien, Recycling Coordinator 10/06/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**  
Southern Windsor/Windham Counties SWMD  
**Organization**

9. Donna Barlow Casey, General Manager 11/03/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**

Central Vermont Solid Waste District  
**Organization**

10. Mike Morrow, District Manager 11/02/08  
**Name, Title** **Date**

Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District  
**Organization**

11. Michael Ewell, Executive Director 11/04/09  
**Name, Title** **Date**

Northwest Vermont Solid Waste District  
**Organization**

12. **Name, Title** **Date**

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**Organization**

13. **Name, Title** **Date**

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**Organization**

**General Council Member Signature Page**

The undersigned supports the VTPSC mission and the Framework Principles for Product Stewardship Policy (appendix A).

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**Signature** **Date**

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**Name** **Title**

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**Organization**

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**Mailing Address**

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**Telephone** **Email**

I am signing up as an:  **Individual**  **Organization**

**Please mail or fax the signed Pledge of Support to**

**FAX:** 802-878-5787

**Mail:** Attention: Jen Holliday  
Chittenden Solid Waste District  
1021 Redmond Road  
Williston, VT 05495

**Email:** [jholliday@cswd.net](mailto:jholliday@cswd.net)

## APPENDIX A.

# Framework Principles for Product Stewardship Policy

The following principles are intended to guide development of product stewardship policies and legislation that governs multiple products. It is primarily aimed at state legislation but is also intended as a guide for local and federal policy.

## 1. Producer Responsibility

- 1.1 All producers selling a covered product into the State are responsible for designing managing, and financing a stewardship program that addresses the lifecycle impacts of their products including end-of-life management.
- 1.2 Producers have flexibility to meet these responsibilities by offering their own plan or participating in a plan with others.
- 1.3 In addressing end-of-life management, all stewardship programs must finance the collection, transportation, and responsible reuse, recycling or disposition of covered products. Stewardship programs must:
  - Cover the costs of new, historic and orphan covered products.
  - Provide convenient collection for consumers throughout the State.
- 1.4 Costs for product waste management are shifted from taxpayers and ratepayers to producers and users.
- 1.5 Programs are operated by producers with minimum government involvement.

## 2. Shared Responsibilities

- 2.1 Retailers only sell covered products from producers who are in compliance with stewardship requirements.
- 2.2 State and local governments work with producers and retailers on educating the public about the stewardship programs.
- 2.3 Consumers are responsible for using return systems set up by producers or their agents.

## 3. Governance

- 3.1 Government sets goals and performance standards following consultation with stakeholders. All programs within a product category are accountable to the same goals and performance standards.
- 3.2 Government allows producers the flexibility to determine the most cost-effective means of achieving the goals and performance standards.
- 3.3 Government is responsible for ensuring a level playing field by enforcing requirements that all producers in a product category participate in a stewardship program as a condition for selling their product in the jurisdiction.
- 3.4 Product categories required to have stewardship programs are selected using the process and priorities set out in framework legislation.
- 3.5 Government is responsible for ensuring transparency and accountability of stewardship programs. Producers are accountable to both government and consumers for disclosing environmental outcomes.

## 4. Financing

- 4.1 Producers finance their stewardship programs as a general cost of doing business, through cost internalization or by recovering costs through arrangements with their distributors and retailers. End of life fees are not allowed.

## 5. Environmental Protection

- 5.1 Framework legislation should address environmental product design, including source reduction, recyclability and reducing toxicity of covered products.
- 5.2 Framework legislation requires that stewardship programs ensure that all products covered by the stewardship program are managed in an environmentally sound manner.
- 5.3 Stewardship programs must be consistent with other State sustainability legislation, including those that address greenhouse gas reduction and the waste management hierarchy.
- 5.4 Stewardship programs include reporting on the final disposition, (i.e., reuse, recycling, disposal) of products handled by the stewardship program, including any products or materials exported for processing.

Adopted by Northwest Product Stewardship Council: May 19, 2008

[www.productstewardship.net](http://www.productstewardship.net)

Adopted by California Product Stewardship Council: June 4, 2008

[www.calpsc.org](http://www.calpsc.org)

Adopted by Vermont Product Stewardship Council: November 6, 2008

[www.vtpsc.org](http://www.vtpsc.org)



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