

## California Product Stewardship Council

### Dozens of local governments have pledged their support to the CPSC Mission:

To shift California'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.

[www.caproductstewardship.org](http://www.caproductstewardship.org) and the Product Stewardship Institute, a national organization

<http://www.productstewardship.us/>

**The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI)** is a national non-profit membership-based organization located in Boston, Massachusetts. PSI works with state and local government agencies to partner with manufacturers, retailers, environmental groups, federal agencies, and other key stakeholders to reduce the health and environmental impacts of consumer products. PSI takes a unique product stewardship approach to solving waste management problems by encouraging product design changes and mediating stakeholder dialogues.

### The Waste Stream is Changing

Most of the companies who design and sell the products you buy aren't paying to recycle them and actually design their products for disposal. State disposal bans do nothing to reduce the toxicity or total volume of waste. Local recycling strategies are not enough to reduce the tons of waste disposed in California annually. California local governments spend over \$100,000,000 a year collecting and properly managing household hazardous products alone. It's time to change that.

Hundreds of products make our lives easier until we don't need them anymore. Then, if they're not disposed of responsibly, the acids, mercury and other heavy metals they contain become a danger to our health and the environment.

A century ago, when local governments assumed responsibility for solid waste, it consisted mostly of coal ash left over from heating and cooking. The rest was mainly food, with a small amount of simple manufactured products like paper and glass. Today, manufactured products and associated packaging make up 75% of what we throw away.

### Local Governments Can't Afford to Comply with California Waste Bans

As more and more products are being deemed "hazardous" the state's response is to ban them from disposal. Products banned from disposal include arsenic-treated lumber, hypodermic needles, and universal waste. Universal wastes are products that are so universally used, like batteries and fluorescent lamps, that they have their own category. These universal wastes were banned from disposal in the normal household trash as of February 8, 2006. Treated lumber was banned in January 2007, and needles and other "sharps" will be banned in September 2008. Pharmaceuticals are expected to be added soon.

Unfortunately, the state-mandated bans must be enforced by local governments. And they don't have the money to do it. It's the classic unfunded mandate — a government directive without the resources to enforce it. The intentions were good, but the responsibility is misplaced onto local governments.