

Packaging Makeovers Pick Up Pace, Priority

By Heather Clancy | May 3, 2011, 4:07 AM PDT

Noticed two items of interest in the past week when it comes to the development of enhanced sustainability practices for consumer goods packaging.

First, Procter & Gamble has scored two developments: Its new Fusion ProGlide Power Razor has a packaging design that reduces the use of plastic by up to 70 percent, when compared with your typical razor. The consumer products giant apparently worked with Burgopak and Be Green Packaging to come up with the design, which improve pallet density by up to 16 percent. In addition, P&G has started using the PlantBottle material originally developed by The Coca-Cola Co. as the bottling material of choice for new members of its Pantene hair care product line. The Covergirl and Max Factor brands are on deck.



The second thing to watch is the activity of a shareholder advocacy group called **As You Sow**, which is behind resolutions filed with Procter & Gamble and General Mills, encouraging them to pick up the pace when it comes to collecting and recycling product packaging. The group has already worked on Coca-Cola, PepsiCo and Nestle Waters North America. The new resolutions call for P&G and General Mills to report on how “taking responsibility for post-consumer product packaging can reduce carbon emissions as well as air and water pollution.” The proposals were filed in collaboration with several different institutional investment funds. They are positioning this issue not necessarily as a green issue but as an issue of potential lost revenue.

Said **As You Sow** Senior Director for Corporate Responsibility Conrad MacKerron:

“We’re burning and landfilling 40 million tons of recyclable packaging materials estimated to be worth \$15 [billion] to \$23 billion every year. We can no longer afford to discard packaging containing valuable resources. As shareholders, we see this as throwing away revenue, and we need to stop it immediately.”

Definitely worth watching.