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Dioxin fears prompt paper change

Recycling legislation may set standard

By Douglas Fuchs
 Emerald Contributor

The University Printing Department in Allen Hall searched for three months before finding a company that could supply 90,000 sheets of 100 percent unbleached recycled paper.

The company, located in Baltimore, Maryland, imports the paper from Germany because no manufacturer exists in the United States, said Wayne Merritt, superintendent of the printing department.

While printers search the world for companies that supply high-quality unbleached recycled paper, most U.S. corporations are slow to recognize the demand and remanufacture of used paper fiber into unbleached recycled products, such as newsprint and paper for copying machines.

While many U.S. corporations produce either bleached recycled or unbleached first-use paper, no U.S. company produces unbleached recycled

per, said Quincy Sugarman, organizer for the Oregon State Public Interest Group in Portland.

Sugarman said the use of chlorine in the bleaching process for both recycled and first-use paper leaves behind many dangerous chemical byproducts, such as Dioxin, which causes cancer in laboratory animals.

Some European companies use hydrogen peroxide instead of chlorine in their bleaching process, leaving behind no harmful byproducts, Sugarman said.

U.S. corporations complain about the high cost of switching from chlorine to hydrogen peroxide, which costs more, Sugarman said.

"But industry does not pay for the long-term costs of Dioxin contamination," she said.

Pam Burnett, plant manager of the secondary recycling division of Weyerhaeuser Paper in Eugene, said recycling bleached paper into un-

bleached paper products will not remove the chemicals used in the bleaching process.

The "ground wood," fiber left in the paper from the wood chips used to manufacture first-use paper, retains "some percent" of the chemicals from the first bleaching process, Burnett said. It's impossible to manufacture "pure" unbleached paper, she said.

When testing unbleached recycled paper with hydrochloric acid, the paper usually bleeds red, which only happens when the paper contains chemicals used to bleach the paper, Burnett said.

However, Sugarman pointed out that if the product is unbleached, the recycling process will not leave behind dangerous byproducts.

"Unbleached recycled paper can make a world of difference," she said.

To date, Weyerhaeuser has no plans to manufacture unbleached recycled paper, Burnett said.

"We're keeping in touch

with the market place," she said.

OSPIRG, three Oregon legislators and some local government agencies contend that only government action will force corporations to manufacture high-quality recycled products using old paper, plastic and glass.

OSPIRG's Portland branch introduced a proposed ballot initiative earlier this year that would mandate tough recycling standards on product packaging.

The Oregon Recycling Act, already supported by Sen. Dick Springer, D-Portland, Rep. Carl Hosticka, D-Eugene, and Rep. Ron Cease, D-Portland, would impose state-wide recycling standards on prepackaged products, requiring goods on store shelves be packaged in recyclable materials.

Also, three different federal bills working their way through Congress would mandate the use of recycled fiber in domestic and imported newsprint, according to the April edition of *Resource Recycling Magazine*.

Turn to PAPER, Page 5

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Copy shops offering unbleached paper

By Carrie Dennett
 Emerald Contributor

Customer requests and environmental concerns have prompted two campus area copy shops to begin offering 100 percent recycled unbleached paper.

Bleached paper products have become a concern due to the use of dioxins in their production.

Domestically produced paper is taken from quality white paper that has previously been bleached, meaning that the recycled product actually contains some bleach.

Kinko's Copies, at 860 East 13th, made the decision to provide this type of paper about one month ago, said assistant manager Chris Murray.

"It was the type of situation where it was

a great idea, but there's only one mill currently in the United States that produces this paper, and in order to get it, you have to work through some organizations," he said.

Kinko's was able to get the paper, which is a cream color rather than white, through Earth Care Inc., a distributor in Wisconsin.

This paper has been a problem, however, because of limited supply and shipping costs. Kinko's and the University Printing Department, located in Allen Hall, are jointly purchasing new paper from a mill in Germany.

The two papers are both 100 percent recycled unbleached, but while the domestic paper still contains some bleach, the imported paper is produced from recycled newspapers and magazines, which were not

bleached the first time around.

Murray said the imported paper, which resembles newsprint, has been slower to catch on, but customers are buying it.

At the Campus Copy Center, which is a satellite operation of University Printing, professor requests for this paper have been low, but is expected to increase, said employee Katie Kronholm.

The increased cost of recycled paper has caused complaints from some customers. Murray said that Kinko's is only charging more for the paper because it costs more to supply.

Kinko's is currently serving as a test site for first-run, new unbleached paper. The light brown paper does not come from recycled products, but it is completely dioxin free.

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