



Health and Environment Policy, December 2008

Waste-to-energy plans get EU's nod of approval

EU Environment Ministers officially approved the new waste framework directive, which includes incineration as a recovery operation and will therefore be also taken into account in the five-step hierarchy. (See GEIR news for more information)

On 20 October, EU Environment Ministers approved a new framework waste directive which includes provisions to burn waste for energy use as part of a five-step hierarchy prioritising prevention. Specifically, the new directive now considers "energy-efficient waste incineration" to be a recovery operation; a provision which EU Ministers said will reduce consumption of fossil fuels and other natural resources.

The final agreed five-step hierarchy includes:

- Waste prevention
- re-use
- recycling
- recovery (including incineration)
- safe disposal.

EU delays update of product eco-label criteria

The existing environmental criteria for awarding the flower eco-label to lubricants have been extended to two more years.

The EU has delayed the introduction of new environmental criteria for awarding its flower eco-label to five product groups. As a result, existing criteria for lubricants have been extended by up to two years. The existing criteria were due to expire within the coming months. The extensions were confirmed in a European commission decision published in the EU's official journal on 18 November.

The decision can be seen at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:318:0012:0013:EN:PDF>