

AROW Board of Directors- Legislative Position Paper

February 2, 2015

Wisconsin SB15/AB15-Relating to: the manufacture and acceptance for sale of products containing microbeads

Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that provides statewide proactive leadership on waste reduction and recycling through education, advocacy, collaboration, programs and services. AROW was established in 1994 by recycling professionals working from the public and private sector to implement Wisconsin's recycling law and to develop best management practices for the industry.

The AROW board of directors supports SB15/AB15, Relating to: the manufacture and acceptance for sale of products containing microbeads.

Microbeads are microscopic polyethylene (PE) spheres used in personal care items such as exfoliating skin care products, lotions, cosmetics and toothpastes. After use they are rinsed away and flushed through the wastewater system. Unfortunately, the PE beads pass through this system and enter surface waters where they may cause environmental harm. Because they are of a similar size as fish eggs, aquatic species, such as frogs, fish and birds ingest the microbeads and any chemicals absorbed into the microbeads.

The AROW board of directors supports this bill as ultimately the removal of microbeads from personal care products and prescription medications will reduce waste microbeads from entering surface waters and protect the environment. We further support an accelerated implementation timeline, as most major manufacturers have already begun to phase out the use of microbeads.

Please feel free to contact AROW with questions about the above information.

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