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European brick and roof tile manufacturers association

TBE A.I.S.B.L.
Member of Cerame-Unie

Rue de la Montagne, 17
B-1000 Brussels
+ 32 2 80838 80

Editor: Christophe Sykes
sykes@cerameunie.eu

www.tiles-bricks.eu

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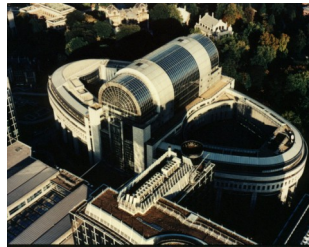
15 May 2009

European Parliament election: 4-7 June 2009

The upcoming June European Parliament (EP) elections will most probably lead to the replacement of approximately half of the 736 EP Members (MEPs). This will therefore entail a deep seated review of all our usual contacts during the first few weeks and months after the elections. Therefore, Industry will need to examine the profile of these new MEPs, the membership of each Committee and establish contact with the potentially new leaders of the political groups and all this with the growing support of our national representatives.

Promoting a specific area of interest will require providing information to the MEPs and their assistants; offering to provide briefings on issues of interest for the MEP; arranging contact and/or holding a general

reception so that contact can be made with MEPs that appear to have an interest in subjects where representations need to be applied and attending events and making informal contacts.



This process is not an easy task and should be operated in a manner that is not intrusive and in many ways undertaken in a coordinated way. Failure by some organisations has been because they aggressively make contact with MEPs, as if they have a right, without first examining MEPs profile and without

anything important to say.

Being the first contact can be an advantage but only if you know that what you are promising can be delivered. From past experience being seen and introduced by existing MEPs is productive and establishes a form of trust that is useful immediately. Last but not least, the influence of eastern MEPs is expected to grow and there our representation is weaker than in the 'historical' Member State.

So as soon as the results are published we may wish to establish in a coordinate manner a list of potential supports based on your knowledge and experience at national level. With the network in place, it should be easier to plan ahead our communication strategy for the coming years.

Swedish non-EU-ETS sectors CO₂ tax

In a recent interview, the Swedish Environment Minister, Mr Andreas Carlgren, stated that Sweden plans to press for an EU-wide tax on CO₂ emissions when it takes over the EU Presidency in July. The tax would apply to sectors not currently covered by the EU CO₂ Emissions Trading Scheme (EU-ETS). Sweden sees the tax as the best way to cover the 60% of emissions that are currently not covered by the scheme.



Publication of EU mining waste decisions



On 20 April, the European Commission published a decision on the definition of the criteria for the classification of waste facilities in accordance with Annex III of the 2006 Mining Waste Directive (2006/21/EC). An accompanying decision specifies technical guidelines for the establishment of financial guarantee in case of environment damage caused by waste facilities covered by mining waste rules.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:101:0025:0025:EN:PDF>
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:102:0007:0011:EN:PDF>

New Dutch green purchasing scheme

Durk Smink, Koninklijk Verbond van Nederlandse Baksteenfabrikanten (KNB)

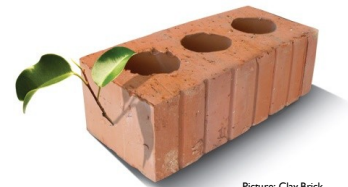
In The Netherlands, the national government is finalising the setting-up of a Green Public Procurement (GPP) system. The declared objective is the promotion of the sustainable products and services. They aim to achieve 100% public procurement by next year and this should impact annually products and services with a value of € 40 billion. Regional authorities have a target of 50% GPP by 2010, while local authorities will try to reach 75% by 2010 and 100% by 2015.

In preparation for the launch of this new system, there have been many lengthy expert discussions over the last few years over the product groups and services criteria. These have been defined for clay pavers, masonry bricks and other building materials. For clay products the choice will largely be made based on the environmental aspects,

although the social and economical characteristics are under development. LCA data for masonry units and clay pavers is currently being made available. As there are only two clay roofing tiles producers in The Netherlands, each with three factories, it has not been possible to carry out an LCA assessment.

The minimum score will be set at the building level but based on the separate building material Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) values. A national LCA database should be finalised by October of this year. No obligatory building material prescriptions are to be set but promoters should, where possible, demonstrate that their offer is sustainable on the basis of LCA data and using performance-based instruments. This should allow buildings to be compared on the environmental performance over its entire life cycle.

For new office buildings, functional environmental performance requirements will be set but there should be no other material and product requirements. More specifically, there are no additional requirements for the composition or origin of clay products. This is however the case for tar-containing asphalt granulate, wood, concrete, and perhaps for some metals. State, regional and local governments have the possibility to impose specific themes or to be more ambitious than the established minimum national requirements. It is the intention of the National Environment Ministry to stimulate such supplementary ambitions and innovation.



Picture: Clay Brick Association of South Africa

“Achieving competitive growth & environmental sustainability is possible”

On 20 April 2009 the Eco-innovation European Info Day was organised in Brussels. Over 300 participants attended the event.

The European Union (EU) has launched a number of initiatives to promote eco-innovation and support the implementation of the Environmental Technologies Action Plan under the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme. Eco-innovation is about changing consumption and production patterns and developing technologies, products and services to reduce our impact on the environment. Between 2008 and 2013 nearly € 200 million will be available to fund projects that promote eco-innovation in Europe. The objective is to boost Europe's environmental and competitive standing by supporting innovative solutions that protect the environment while creating a larger market for 'green' technologies, management methods, products and services.

The aim is to:

- Support first applications and market uptake of innovative technologies and practices;
- Help bridge the gap between research & development and the business world; and
- Help overcome the residual market barriers that currently hamper the success of eco-innovative products and service.

Priority is given to sectors that can offer significant potential improvements in the way their operations, products or services impact on the environment. The areas that receive funding vary from year to year, depending on the distribution of previous grants and project outcomes.

Amongst the priorities covered so far, we find innovative products for the building sector, which covers the production of sustainable construction materials and techniques; better use of recycled materials and renewable resources.

The closing date for the project proposal is 10 September 2009 with the evaluation set for the end of the year and the first projects to start in March or April of 2010.

