

Paris, June 7th, 2017

Position paper on littering

The main mission of the French National Packaging Council (Conseil National de l'Emballage, CNE), which has represented all the key players in the field of packaging since 1997, consists in elaborating and conveying good practices in designing, marketing and using product packaging.

As a responsible civil society organisation, CNE cannot be indifferent to the pollution caused by littering. Despite the continual efforts by local authorities and militant organisations, such as « Vacances Propres » since 1971 in France, one has to admit that some uncivilized attitudes are hard to die among our fellow citizens.

In big cities, we can all see cigarette butts, chewing gums, leaflets on windshields, discarded paper handkerchiefs but also small flexible packages, fast-food leftovers and even more substantial waste.

The texts which are in the process of being adopted at a European level stress the shared responsibility of those who launch the products on the market, the public authorities and private citizens.

- Since 1992, the firms which launch packaged products on the market have funded, as part of their extended responsibility, the implementation of a sorting device throughout the national territory so as to make it possible for authorities to collect and recycle packaging sorted by the local population. Producers eco-design their packaging and are regularly in touch with the authorities in order to remind consumers that they are the first actors in the recycling chain and that their attitude is essential. For this reason, a piece of information on sorting is affixed to all packaging in order to help consumers sort in a more efficient way.
- Public authorities constantly improve the devices which allow consumers to dispose of packaging in the correct way. They also provide information on the right attitude to sorting and raise awareness about the environment through educational programs at a local level, although much remains to be done in the big cities, and where tourists are concerned.
- Citizens have a key role to play in continuing to do what they do well at home when it comes to consuming products outside their homes. Education, information, even sanctions should most probably be increased. Developed countries such as Japan, Switzerland and other countries may be taken as models.

The commitment of the key players in the packaging value chain with reference to the efficiency of the device implemented in the framework of the extended producer responsibility is total. Their responsibility with regard to littering is thus not directly concerned by our fellow citizens' lack of civic spirit. However, CNE is committed to providing, as far as packaging is concerned, its expertise for any research and any action aimed at eradicating this phenomenon.