



## Greening and Recycling PVC

**The Partnership:** Vinyl 2010

**The Goal:** Reduce the environmental impacts of PVC (polyvinyl chloride) - particularly toxic emissions from manufacture and disposal and the use of toxic additives - and recycle 200,000 tons of PVC waste per year in Europe by the end of 2010.

**The Result:** Cadmium stabilizers - chemicals added to PVC to make it resistant to external factors - were phased out in 25 European countries by the end of 2006. PVC waste recycled across all sectors in Europe increased from 14,255 tons in 2004 to 38,793 tons in 2005, and reached 83,000 tons in 2006.

**How they did it:** The Vinyl 2010 Partnership, a ten-year program based on a self-regulatory approach and a set of voluntary targets, supports innovative ways to produce, collect and recycle PVC aimed at reducing the environmental impacts and improve the eco-efficiency of the entire PVC lifecycle. The partnership's focus is set out in the European PVC Industry's Voluntary Commitment, a series of specific targets and initiatives regarding emissions monitoring during PVC production, the use of additives, and waste management.

**Outlook:** Recycling of PVC in Europe has increased beyond expectations and is estimated to meet the target set for 2010. After the phase-out of cadmium stabilizers, lead-based stabilizers in PVC drinking water pipes are increasingly replaced by calcium-based stabilizers and are expected to be phased out in all 27 EU countries by 2015.

**Background:** PVC is used in areas as diverse as construction, cars, cabling, luxury goods and medical devices. It is one of the world's most widely used plastics and one of its most controversial. The chemical properties that give it such flexibility and a long serviceable life also make it an environmental liability when it's produced and when it's thrown out. Toxic emissions from manufacture and disposal, toxic by-products when burned, and the use of toxic additives are the central issues surrounding the use of PVC and the reason environmental groups are calling for PVC to be substituted with other materials.

The Vinyl 2010 partnership was formed in the year 2000 and includes European vinyl resin manufacturers, plastic converters and producers of stabilizers and plasticizers. It implements projects covering technology, research, recycling schemes, and communication. Expenditure by Vinyl 2010 amounted to 7.09 million euros in 2006, up from 4.44 euros the previous year.

**For more information:**

[www.vinyl2010.org](http://www.vinyl2010.org)

<http://webapps01.un.org/dsd/partnerships/public/partnerships/1132.html>

