News Release

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Chemist Previews What is on Horizon with Canadian Plastics Regulation

SCHAUMBURG, IL – A chemist offered many considerations for finished fenestration and glazing construction products when it comes to plastics in Canada at the Fenestration and Glazing Industry Alliance (FGIA) Summer Conference in Montreal, QC. In “Plastics Regulations in Canada – What’s on the Horizon?” Dr. Peter Mirtchev, Policy Manager at the [Chemistry Industry Association of Canada](https://canadianchemistry.ca/) (CIAC), shared information about the new Canadian Federal Plastics Registry, a legally binding global treaty on plastics sought by some countries in the United Nations and other Canadian codes and regulations related to chemical use, including restrictions on Per and Poly-fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS).

CIAC’s Plastics Division represents the Canadian plastics industry. “We will talk about what is going on in the regulatory space with plastics and how you can respond,” said Mirtchev.

**Prohibition of Single-use Plastics**

Mirtchev began with current developments in single-use plastics prohibition, which was published in December 2021. Multiple Notices of Objection​ were filed in 2022, but the final regulations were published in June 2022. “Prohibition extends to the manufacturing, import and sale of the following six single use plastics: checkout bags, straws, stir sticks, ring carriers, cutlery and foodservice ware,” said Mirtchev. “But rather than bans, we need to invest in recycling infrastructure and innovation to harness the $8 billion value of plastics that are currently sent to landfill and recirculate them in the economy.”

**Federal Plastics Registry**

The new federal plastics registry was first consulted on in July 2022, followed by a technical paper in April 2023. “The government has moved fast,” said Mirtchev. The registry is a data gathering exercise that aims to align all available information on plastic flows. It seeks to make data open and accessible, provide comprehensive and comparable information, provide baselines and inform and encourage investment along the plastics life cycle, said Mirtchev. Construction materials are among the product categories included, although packaging, single use plastics and electronics are first. “The data could be useful, but the registry, while well intentioned, is too broad,” said Mirtchev.

**PFAS**

When PFAS were developed in the 1940s, “it was a different time,” said Mirtchev. “The chemists were just happy to get the performance with less thought to stewardship of the environment.” There are around 230 PFAS substances that are approved for use in Canada. “To the best of [CIAC’s] knowledge, there is no large-scale commercial manufacturing of PFAS in Canada,” he said.

**Global Treaty on Plastic Pollution**

A global treaty pertaining to plastic pollution is currently in development. U.N. member states agreed to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop a legally binding global instrument on plastic pollution by the end of 2024. There will be five meetings of the INC to negotiate the agreement, followed by a diplomatic conference to facilitate adoption of the treaty. “Progress was made in April toward streamlining the proposed text of the treaty,” he said. The final negotiating session will take place in November and December.

**Industry Advocacy**

“We are trying to solve plastic pollution, not eliminate plastics entirely,” Mirtchev concluded. “From a regulatory perspective, plastics are high on the radar and will continue to be a focus. But there are ways the industry can respond.” Mirtchev’s recommendations included:

* Advocate to governments to recognize value of plastics as the sustainable choice that enables our modern life
* Seek advancement of policies and regulations that incent and accelerate the transition to a circular economy
* Seek government support and derisking for investment priorities (e.g., advanced recycling technologies and decarbonization initiatives, recycling infrastructure)
* Seek alignment in provincial/federal/international policies to support Canadian businesses in being competitive

The FGIA Summer Conference continues through June 6. For more information about the event, visit [FGIAonline.org](https://fgiaonline.org/)/news.

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