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New Zealand vape recycling programme expands into homes

More options available to recycle e-cigarette waste

13 March 2019 – New Zealanders who vape can now responsibly dispose of their e-cigarette waste in two ways: drop off at Vapo and Alt. stores or send their collected waste for free through the post.

Last December, leading vape suppliers, Vapo and Alt. New Zealand, partnered with global recycling pioneers, TerraCycle, to offer the first programme of its kind to recycle vaping devices and pods.

At the time, participants could drop their waste off at the eleven Vapo and Alt. stores in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Nelson. Beginning today, the items can now also be collected at home and sent through the post.

To recycle from home, participants simply sign up to the programme at www.terracycle.com, collect their waste in any available cardboard box (up to four batteries per shipment), print off a free shipping label then drop it off at their nearest post office. Additionally, for every kilogram of vaping equipment sent to TerraCycle, Vapo and Alt. will donate \$1 towards the charity Sustainable Coastlines – which works to keep New Zealand's coastlines beautiful.

A growing problem in New Zealand, e-cigarette waste is particularly difficult to recycle due to the complexity of separating out the different materials. However, when Vapo first approached TerraCycle for a recycling solution for their products, General Manager Jean Bailliard rose to the challenge.

"The process of recycling e-waste is far more complex than traditional forms of waste, however it is not impossible. As TerraCycle's mission is to eliminate the idea of waste, we couldn't pass up the opportunity to prove that technically, everything is recyclable."

"We will turn the waste into new products such as outdoor furniture, something we have done many times in the past. This moves waste from a linear system to a circular one, allowing it to keep cycling in our economy," Bailliard said.

Whether the materials come through store drop off or through the mail, TerraCycle will then disassemble and separate Alt. and Vapo Haiz vaping devices into their different metal/electrical components, batteries and plastics. The plastics are then shredded and melted into pellets that can be remolded to make new recycled products such as garden beds and park benches, while the metals and batteries are separated and recovered.

This process will potentially save millions of pods, e-waste and batteries from ending up in New Zealand's environment.

Jonathan Devery, co-director of Vapo and Alt. New Zealand alongside Ben Pryor, said the company was excited to be taking the lead on e-cigarette recycling in New Zealand.

"Not only is vaping much safer than smoking, our products are now also much more environmentally friendlier."



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"A national litter audit this year found that more than 10 billion cigarette butts pollute New Zealand's ecosystem. We don't want to be like the tobacco industry! Instead, we're committed to a smoke-free country and a sustainable future," said Mr Devery.

Mr Pryor said as the largest Kiwi-owned vape company, achieving positive environmental outcomes is a priority for Vapo and Alt., with other announcements to follow

"The billion-dollar Big Tobacco companies should be investing in our country's future with waste reduction programmes, but sadly they're not. Instead it's a couple of Kiwis who are providing solutions to the damage that tobacco products have done to both individuals and the environment.

"We're proud to work with TerraCycle to deliver this globally-unique recycling initiative, and we're delighted to donate to Sustainable Coastlines to support their great work," said Mr Pryor.

About TerraCycle

TerraCycle is an innovative waste management company with a mission to eliminate the idea of waste. Operating nationally across 21 countries, TerraCycle partners with leading consumer product companies, retailers and cities to recycle products and packages, from dirty diapers to cigarette butts, that would otherwise end up being landfilled or incinerated. In addition, TerraCycle works with leading consumer product companies to integrate hard to recycle waste streams, such as ocean plastic, into their products and packaging. Its new division, Loop, is the first shopping system that gives consumers a way to shop for their favorite brands in durable, reusable packaging. TerraCycle has won over 200 awards for sustainability and has donated over \$44 million to schools and charities since its founding more than 15 years ago and was named #10 in Fortune magazine's list of 52 companies Changing the World. To learn more about TerraCycle or get involved in its recycling programmes, please visit www.terracycle.com.

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