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**VISION News Consumer Products e-Report**

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Published by INDA, Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry and organizer of the annual Vision Consumer Products Conference

**Welcome to Volume 5, No. 4 of the VISION News Consumer Products e-Report.**

The VISION News Consumer Products e-Report is written and distributed every other month for executives within the consumer products and nonwovens industries. VISION reviews the news and events of each month in the disposable diaper, adult incontinence, feminine hygiene, household wipes/cleaning products and filtration markets, among other end uses that utilize nonwoven fabrics.

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## *INDA News*

### **NOMINATIONS ARE ROLLING IN FOR 2007 VISIONARY AWARD**

Consumer products companies and their suppliers have responded in force with nominations for the industry's most prestigious recognition as the nomination process for the 2007 Visionary Award continues through the summer.

INDA, which sponsors the annual award, will be accepting nominations through September 1. Now in its sixth year, the award recognizes consumer end products that utilize nonwoven fabrics or employ nonwoven technology during their manufacturing process.

The 2007 Visionary Award will be presented at the VISION 2007 Consumer Products Conference, scheduled for January 21-24, 2007 in Denver, Colo.

The process and criteria for the 2007 Visionary Award are simple:

1. The finished consumer end product must contain a nonwoven fabric or utilize a nonwoven technology during its manufacturing process.
2. The consumer product has to have been introduced to the trade or to consumers in 2005-06.
3. The product cannot have been selected as a finalist in any previous Visionary Award competition.
4. Companies can nominate their own products. While any number of products can be nominated, only one product per company will be selected as a finalist.

Products will be judged on their novel use of nonwoven technology, as well as on their consumer and trade acceptance. Eligible consumer product categories include disposable diapers, feminine hygiene products, adult incontinence products, household wipes and home filters, among others. The nominees will then be reviewed by an INDA selection committee and five finalists will be selected to make presentations at the VISION 2007 Consumer Products Conference. Conference attendees will then vote on the recipient of the award and the recipient is announced on the final day of the Conference.

Last January at the VISION 2006 Conference in Denver, the Disaster Relief Blanket from Chicopee was named the recipient of the 2006 Visionary Award VISION 2006 attendees chose the Disaster Relief Blanket over four other finalists – the Mr. Clean Magic Reach from Procter & Gamble; Johnson & Johnson's Stayfree Advanced Protection; the

Disposable Mitt With Body Wash from Kimberly-Clark; and Cotton Enhanced Baby Wipes from PGI Nonwovens.

To nominate a product, email an explanation of the product to Michael Jacobsen, Visionary Awards coordinator, at [mjacobsen@inda.org](mailto:mjacobsen@inda.org). Samples of the product should also be sent to Michael Jacobsen, INDA, 22 Paterson Avenue, Midland Park, NJ 07432 USA.

Call 201-612-6601 with any questions. For more information on the VISION 2007 Consumer Products Conference, log on to [www.inda.org](http://www.inda.org).

### **INDA AND NONWOVENS INDUSTRY PRESENTING IDEA07 ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

For the third consecutive IDEA show, INDA and Nonwovens Industry magazine are co-sponsoring the IDEA Achievement Awards, designed to award innovation within the nonwovens and engineered fabrics industries.

The IDEA07 Achievement Awards will recognize the leading companies, individuals and new products in the global engineered fabrics industry. The awards will be presented during the Opening Keynote Presentation at IDEA07, April 24-26, 2007, at the Miami Beach Convention Center in Miami Beach, FL.

All members of the global engineered fabrics industry are eligible for the IDEA07 Achievement Awards. **NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN NOW AND WILL BE ACCEPTED THROUGH OCTOBER 1.** These nominations can be made in six categories through a number of outlets, including the INDA website at [www.inda.org](http://www.inda.org) and through the Nonwovens Industry site at [www.nonwovens-industry.com](http://www.nonwovens-industry.com). A Selection Committee will then select three finalists in each category, and in early 2007 members of the industry will have the opportunity to vote on the recipient in each category.

The IDEA07 Achievement Awards will be presented in six categories:

- ✓ IDEA07 Equipment Achievement Award ... Given to the company with the best equipment new product introduction since IDEA04.
- ✓ IDEA07 Roll Goods Achievement Award ... Given to the company with the best roll goods new product introduction since IDEA04.
- ✓ IDEA07 Raw Material Achievement Award ... Given to the company with the best fiber/raw material new product introduction since IDEA04.
- ✓ IDEA07 Short-Life Product Achievement Award ... Presented for the best new disposable product utilizing engineered fabrics introduced since IDEA04.

- ✓ IDEA07 Long-Life Product Achievement Award ... Presented for the best new durable product utilizing engineered fabrics introduced since IDEA04.
- ✓ IDEA07 Entrepreneur Achievement Award, for the company founded since IDEA04 that has made a significant impact on the engineered fabrics industry.

In addition, an IDEA Lifetime Achievement Award will be selected by the INDA Board of Directors and will be presented to an individual or company that has contributed to the advancement of the industry for at least 20 years. Ted Wirtz, who had recently retired as INDA president, received the IDEA04 Lifetime Achievement Award, and Wayne Hays, one of the founders of INDA and a pioneer in the business of nonwovens, received the inaugural IDEA Lifetime Achievement Award during IDEA01.

The winners will be revealed during a gala ceremony kicking off the Keynote Presentation at IDEA07 in Miami Beach.

Anyone wishing to submit a nomination in any of the six categories can do so by contacting project coordinator Michael Jacobsen at 201-612-6601; [mjacobsen@inda.org](mailto:mjacobsen@inda.org). In addition, nominations can be made online at [www.inda.org](http://www.inda.org) or [www.nonwovens-industry.com](http://www.nonwovens-industry.com).

### *Industry News*

#### **K-C TO KEEP NEENAH MILL THROUGH 2008**

Increasing demand for disposable diapers and training pants has given a temporary reprieve to the Kimberly-Clark nonwovens mill in Neenah. The Dallas company said late last month that it is extending the deadline for closing or selling the 165-employee plant. Initially set for the end of this year, the mill's service to Kimberly-Clark now is expected to expire at the end of 2008.

The Neenah factory makes absorbent synthetic materials used in Huggies diapers, Pull-Ups disposable training pants and Depend adult diapers, as well consumer products made by other companies.

"We are experiencing very good volume growth in both diapers and training pants, and we anticipate this to continue," Rosalind Brewer, president of global nonwovens for Kimberly-Clark, said in a statement. In announcing its second-quarter financial results last week, the company said that Pull-Ups posted double-digit increases in sales volume compared with the year before.

And although that surge in demand postpones plans with the nonwovens mill, Kimberly-Clark remains set on closing by 2007 its Lakeview mill and distribution center

in the Town of Menasha, where about 430 employees make and ship Huggies and Pull-Ups.

Dave Dickson, a Kimberly-Clark spokesman, said the Lakeview operations will be consolidated into larger plants in Beech Island, S.C.; Paris, Texas; and Ogden, Utah; all of which serve faster-growing regional populations. Work from the nonwovens mill is supposed to move to Kimberly-Clark operations in Hendersonville, N.C.; Corinth, Miss.; LaGrange, Ga.; and Lexington, N.C., all of which have more room for expansion.

Last month, Kimberly-Clark eliminated about 50 positions in research and engineering in Neenah and said it plans to cut another 100 from the area by spring through a reorganization of its North Atlantic Personal Care and Family Care business teams.

The plant sales and closings and staff reductions are part of a plan that Kimberly-Clark announced last year, through which it hopes to trim its global payroll by 10%, or 6,000 jobs, by 2008. According to Dickson, the company has notified 3,600 workers at 19 of 24 plants that it expects to close, sell or shrink.

At the same time, Kimberly-Clark revealed plans to restart one idle diaper production machine at its Lakeview production facility in Menasha, WI next month. The company brought back 20 to 25 of the workers it laid off in June as part of a corporate cost reduction initiative, according to a recent report from a local Wisconsin newspaper. The move is a result of a Huggies diaper promotion, which was more successful than expected.

#### **K-C 2Q SALES INCREASE 4.4%**

Kimberly-Clark has reported that net sales in the second quarter of 2006 rose 4.4% to \$4.2 billion. The improvement in second quarter sales reflects broadly higher net selling prices, up 2% overall, and favorable product mix of 1%. Sales in developing and emerging markets continued to expand at a double-digit rate. The company also achieved excellent volume growth for its infant, child and incontinence care brands in North America and for health care globally; however, sales volumes of consumer tissue products in North America and Europe declined.

Sales of personal care products climbed 7.1% in the second quarter, driven primarily by sales volume growth of approximately 6%, along with currency benefits of 1%. Net selling prices were essentially even with the prior year.

Personal care sales in North America increased about 6% compared with the second quarter of 2005. Sales volumes were up more than 6%, with excellent growth in most categories. Huggies baby wipes and toiletries and Pull-Ups training pants posted double-digit volume gains, while incontinence care and infant care volumes rose at high

single-digit rates. Although sales volumes of Kotex feminine care products were below last year's levels, shipments increased somewhat compared with the first quarter.

In Europe, personal care sales decreased approximately 6%. Sales volumes were down about 4%, primarily related to the timing of promotional activities for the company's infant and child care brands. Diaper volumes were off 2%, with sales volumes of Huggies diapers about the same as the prior year in the company's four core European markets -- the U.K., France, Italy and Spain.

### **PGI FILES PATENT SUIT AGAINST THREE COMPETITORS**

Polymer Group, Inc. has filed a suit against The Kroger Co., Inter-American Products, and U.S. Nonwovens Corp. for patent infringement related to private-label imaged wipes sold through Kroger's retail food stores.

The suit, filed in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, Atlanta Division, alleges that Kroger is willfully infringing PGI's U.S. Patent No. RE 38,505, which relates to hydroentangled nonwoven fabrics having raised patterns. The allegedly infringing product is Kroger's "Everyday Living Refill Dusting Cloths."

The alleged infringements are a result of what the company believes to be efforts by competitors to participate in a differentiated sector of the market to the detriment of PGI and its patent portfolio. In addition to the lawsuit filed today, PGI has notified several other industry participants, including equipment manufacturers, nonwovens suppliers and marketers of end-use products, of potential infringements.

### **AVGOL SELLS 20% STAKE, INVESTS IN EASTERN EUROPE**

[From *Nonwovens Industry*] In June, Avgol Nonwovens Industries sold 20% of its outstanding shares to Israel Petrochemical Enterprises (IPE), which also owns a 50% stake in Carmel Olefins, a polypropylene and polyethylene resin producer in Israel. Nir Peleg, Avgol CEO, said that the partnership with IPE further enables his company to globalize the Avgol brand.

In making this announcement, Peleg also confirmed that Avgol's next factory expansion is underway to serve the emerging markets in Eastern Europe, Russia, the Ukraine and "Stan" countries. The factory, located in Eastern Europe, will start operations by the fourth quarter of next year. It will house Avgol's 10th Reicofil spunmelt nonwovens line.

Avgol's 2006 sales are on pace to reach \$220 million, up from \$160 million in 2005, thanks to the full utilization of its third North Carolina line in October 2005. Avgol attributes its overall success to the robust demand for its ultra lightweight spunmelt nonwovens produced across Avgol's nine Reicofil lines in Israel, China and the U.S.

### **DIAPER GEL MAY BE USED AS FIREFIGHTING TOOL**

[From *Spokesman-Review*, Spokane, WA]: A dirty diaper that refused to burn in a Dumpster fire led a Florida firefighter in the 1990s to develop a goo that can protect structures from flames. Now, a Newport businessman is selling that goo to the federal government for testing on wildfires across the country this season, a year that officials expect to be worse than normal for fires in the West.

Dave Fredley, president of Northwest Barricade, said he signed an open-ended contract on July 5 with the Boise-based National Interagency Fire Center to provide the gel on an on-call basis to several federal agencies.

The gel, made with a superabsorbent polymer, soaks up water and stores it in several layers of tiny bubbles. When heated by fire, the gel is boiled away one layer at a time, protecting the surface below from extreme heat for long periods. After a fire, it washes away with water and is biodegradable.

The gel was originally developed after a firefighter in Florida, John Bartlett, noticed that disposable diapers didn't burn during fires. He discovered that the absorbent powder used in those diapers could be converted to a gel that, when mixed with water, could be sprayed on houses and foliage, Fredley said.

### **PAPERPAK GROWING OPERATIONS IN NORTH CAROLINA**

PaperPak has announced plans to expand its workforce by nearly a third and invest \$9.7 million in its North Carolina plant. At the same time, the company revealed plans to move its corporate headquarters from California to Greenville.

### **FLUSHAWAY SHIPS INTO CANADA**

Consolidated Ecoprogress Technology recently announced that the first shipment of its Flushaway products has been made to Canada. The product is for Tempo Sales in Richmond, BC for distribution in the Canadian market.

John Banks, President & CEO said, "Now with consistent good quality product being produced, Ecoprogress can confidently supply the Canadian market. We believe this will be welcomed by consumers and shareholders, many of whom are Canadian and have waited to see Flushaway appear on the shelves of Canadian retailers."

Flushaway pads and liners are now carried in over 1700 Wal-Mart locations and 1400 K-Mart locations in the U.S. The product is also available in South Africa and soon to be on shelves in South China and Australia.

### **TEXAS A&M TO CUT FEMALE HYGIENE DISPENSERS**

In an effort to conserve money for Texas A&M, machines dispensing feminine hygiene products will be removed from campus restrooms. Removal could allow the University

to save about \$4,000 because of supply costs and labor to restock the machines, said Custodial Manager Ginger Melton.

"It took two custodial workers to run the route; one handled the product and the other handled the money," Melton said. "This took them out of their assigned areas."

A year ago, there were 200 female sanitary dispensers throughout the Texas A&M campus, and now there are 22, Melton said. "We have been removing the units as they needed repair and/or were vandalized," Melton said.

Low usage contributed to the decision to remove the machines, Melton said. The dispensers in the Wehner Building only sold 28 sanitary napkins and 47 tampons from July 2005 to July 2006, she said.

People will most likely not voice an opinion on the issue. "I really don't think there will be too much of an outcry, because they don't seem to be really used," said one college official.

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That's all for this month. Feel free to contact editor Michael Jacobsen at 201-612-6601 or email at [mjacobson@inda.org](mailto:mjacobsen@inda.org).

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