Steady increases in recycling for ACH Foam Technologies and EPS Packaging Industry

The recently released 2010 EPS Recycling Rate Report conducted by the Alliance of Foam Packaging Recyclers (AFPR) demonstrated steady growth in the amount of expanded polystyrene (EPS) packaging recycling since the 1990s. AFPR releases recycling rates every two years. Total EPS recycling increased to 71.3 million lbs. in 2010. A total of 28 percent of all post-consumer and post-commercial EPS was recycled in 2010, an increase of 3.5 million lbs. over the 19.5 percent recycling rate in 2008 – one of the highest recycling rates among all plastics products.

Post-commercial and post-consumer packaging is any material that is recycled after its intended end-use. 2010 marks the highest post-consumer and post-commercial recycling rate for the industry since the inception of the recycling rate report in 1990. The report illustrates that EPS recycling has reached a stable baseline of incremental growth and end-use market developments.

“ACH Foam Technologies alone recycled about 4 million lbs. of both post-industrial and post-consumer EPS in 2010,” said Todd Huempfner, vice president of operations. “Considering that EPS is 98 percent air, this is a huge volume of material.” ACH Foam Technologies has become actively involved in assisting companies with their recycling needs, as reflected by the company’s large volume of recycled material.

Sanofi Pasteur has partnered with AFPR to develop a successful collaborative EPS recycling program. EPS has proved to be an environmental material choice, according to Bill Tarabek, director of U.S. distribution for sanofi pasteur. “Unlike material such as paper, EPS does not degrade and will not leach any substances into groundwater, nor will it form harmful gases. Sanofi Pasteur developed a Return and Recycle Program for our customers who prefer to recycle.”

Since January 2008, Sanofi Pasteur has offered its United States customers a prepaid mail-back recycling program that works through its partnership with AFPR. Sanofi Pasteur’s customers – physicians and healthcare providers – who receive EPS shippers containing their medical supplies are provided with tape strips and a shipping label. They simply empty the EPS container, tape the lid closed, apply the label and give it to their courier for shipment to a recycler.