

Release

Contact: Don Hodapp
MeadWestvaco Consumer Packaging Group
(804) 241-3271
dlh42@meadwestvaco.com

Contact: Marilee Davis
Davis & Associates
(404) 261-0309
danda@mindspring.com

New Pilfer-Proof Product Packaging Doesn't Puncture the Purchaser

Innovative packaging offers consumer protection and is kinder to the environment. Consumers complain about the protective plastic clamshell packaging surrounding a recently-purchased toy or electronic gadget. Not only is it hard to open, but it has very limited recyclability. Packaging company MeadWestvaco has introduced Natralock™, paperboard-based retail packaging that lets consumers in, keeps thieves out, and is more recyclable.

*(March 8, 2006 – Richmond, Virginia) – A war is raging in homes and offices around the world. The combatants? It's man against package; consumers versus the protective plastic clamshell packaging surrounding a recently-purchased toy, electronic gadget, cosmetic product or printer ink cartridge. And, so far, plastic is winning. Consumers are emerging from the field of battle with injuries, puncture wounds, cuts, scratches, trips to the emergency room and a frustration so rampant it has been dubbed "wrap rage" by the media. Even *Consumer Reports*, concerned with consumer protection, has spun off an Oyster Awards program lambasting the frustration and force required to open today's theft-resistant retail packaging. Award results rated clamshells the #1 most consumer-unfriendly packaging among 237 product packaging nominations and from lab tests.¹*

Well, put down those scalpels, box cutters and razors; take off the gloves; close up the first aid kit and let the children back in the room. Packaging company MeadWestvaco has introduced Natralock™, paperboard-based retail packaging that lets consumers in, keeps thieves out, and is kinder to the environment.

¹ *Consumer Reports*, March 6, 2006.

“We’ve declared war on ‘wrap rage’ with a cost-effective paperboard alternative to theft-deterrent product packaging,” affirms Don Hodapp, security packaging business development manager for MeadWestvaco Consumer Packaging Group. “Natalock still provides retailers the protection they need to lock out thieves, but brings consumers just a safer scissor-cut away from getting into their purchases.”

The Challenge

Until recently, many retailers have turned to plastic clamshell packaging to discourage thieves who were slitting face seals open, hiding removed items, and dropping the empty packaging back on their shelves. However, this seemingly necessary plastic protection, especially in club store environments, has become an almost insurmountable consumer safety problem for the people who actually pay for the items.

This is particularly true for the over 43 million American adults — one in five — who suffer from some form of arthritis that makes pinching, twisting, grasping and working with small tools difficult.² For a vast percentage of the remaining population fighting their way into their purchases, the theft-resistant plastic materials have led to physical harm. In fact, according to the Center for Disease Control, “unintentional cut/pierce” is now ranked as the fifth most common cause of a nonfatal unintentional injury.

Because Natalock is paperboard, hand tools and trials of dexterity required to open plastic, pry apart plastic tabs and open theft-resistant clamshells are no longer necessary. Natalock also makes access to the clear bubble holding the product non-threatening. In the Natalock package, the bubble is sandwiched between two pieces of paperboard and sealed in. This means no bulky packages, no sharp edges. The result? Thieves are locked out; consumers are more easily let in.

The Environment

The bulk of the tear-resistant Natalock is derived from trees, renewable resources that MeadWestvaco carefully stewards from harvest to replanting of the next forest. Even the clear

² “Ease of Use in Package Design” by Dr. Brad Fain, director of the Accessibility Evaluation Facility (AEF), Georgia Tech Research Institute, PackNation, source: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/aag/aag_arthritis.htm.

APET (amorphous polyester) “bubble” is more agreeable to the environmental community than the plastic most commonly used today in clamshells.

In comparison, certain plastic clamshells offer very limited recyclability. For example, polyvinyl chloride (also known as PVC clamshells) meet EU/CEN materials recyclability standards on a limited basis. In fact, many European and Asian countries levy higher taxes and other restrictive policies on use of the material. Issues like this also recently motivated industry leaders like Microsoft³, Johnson & Johnson and Kaiser Permanente to announce their refusal to continue using PVC clamshells.

“Bottom line,” Mr. Hodapp summarizes, “we are making cost-effective security products that are predominately renewable, more recyclable, and promote consumer safety.”

To learn how Natralock makes life easier for retailers, consumers and the environment, visit www.natralock.com or call 804-327-6331 for more information.

-30-

About [Packaging Company MeadWestvaco](#)

Natralock™ is now available from MeadWestvaco Consumer Packaging Group, soon to be Consumer Solutions Group. MeadWestvaco is a global packaging company that delivers high-value packaging solutions and products to the world's most recognized companies in the food and beverage, media and entertainment, personal care, cosmetic and healthcare industries. The company also has market-leading positions in its Consumer & Office Products, Specialty Chemicals and Specialty Papers businesses. MeadWestvaco, with operations in more than 29 countries, has been selected for the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes, and manages all of its forestlands in accordance with internationally recognized forest certification standards. For more information, visit meadwestvaco.com.

³“Microsoft Is Curbing Use of PVC, A Popular Plastic” by Thaddeus Herrick, *The Wall Street Journal*, December 7, 2005, p D7.