

For immediate release 19.05.05

PRESS STATEMENT

Disposable Nappies - Great news for modern mothers!

Environment Agency report shows there is little or no difference between the environmental impact of cloth nappies and disposable nappies.

Parents across the UK can gain peace of mind from a government study, which confirms that disposable nappies have no greater overall environmental impact than cloth nappies.

A Government commissioned life cycle assessment (LCA), co-ordinated by the UK Environment Agency, has been published today. The study reviewed the complete life of disposable nappies and cloth nappies from raw materials through production and use of the products, to re-use, recycling and final disposal.

The LCA confirms that:

- Neither disposable or cloth nappy systems can claim overall environmental superiority
- The differences in the impacts between the three nappy systems¹ are not significant enough to voice support for one nappy type over the other on the basis of environmental factors alone.

The Environment Agency states “The study, which looks at and evaluates the environmental impacts arising from every stage of the life cycle of disposable and reusable nappies, found that there was little or nothing to choose between them. The study, which was carried out by independent environmental consultants, is the most comprehensive and thorough independent study of its kind ever undertaken.”

Tracy Stewart, Director General of AHPMA and mother of two said: “This long awaited study can finally lay to rest the exaggerated and misleading claims that have been made about the environmental impact of disposable nappies. Parents can now enjoy the benefits of disposable nappies without feeling they are compromising their own environmental values.”

For further information visit www.nappyinformationservice.co.uk or contact Tracy Stewart at AHPMA on 01483 418221 The Environment Agency press statement can be read at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/news/1072187?lang=e®ion=&projectstatus=&theme=&subject=&searchfor=&topic=&area=&month= and the Executive Summary and full Report can be read at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/science/922316/?version=1&lang=e

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EDITORS NOTES:

¹ The three nappy systems assessed were disposable nappies, home laundered cloth nappies, and commercially laundered cloth nappies.

The Environment Agency states 'The only fair way to compare the environmental performance of different types of nappy is across their whole life cycle. This means taking into account all the environmental impacts that result from the production of raw materials, the manufacture of the products through to their laundering, use and final disposal'. Link to the report www.environment-agency.gov.uk/science/922316/?version=1&lang=_e

A Life Cycle Assessment is a tool to assess the potential environmental impacts of products systems at all stages in their life cycle – from extraction of resources, through production and use of the product, to re-use, recycling or final disposal. The LCA has been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) in its ISO 14040-43 standards, and has been used to report the environmental aspects associated with cloth and disposable nappies.

The Absorbent Hygiene Products Manufacturers Association (AHPMA) is the trade association that represents the key UK manufacturers of disposable nappies, feminine care and continence care products. Member companies are Accantia Health and Beauty Ltd, Arquest Ltd, Johnson & Johnson GmbH, Kimberly-Clark Europe Ltd, Multibrands Ltd, Ontex Retail UK Ltd, Playtex Products Inc, Procter & Gamble UK, SCA Hygiene Products UK Ltd., Toiletry Sales Ltd.

Web links:

AHPMA Nappy Information Service
www.nappyinformationservice.co.uk

Environment Agency
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Disposable Nappy Industry sustainability dossier
www.hapco.edana.org