

## **Make Your Bathroom More Environmentally Friendly**

### *Replacing PVC Shower Curtains with Bath Enclosures Makes a Difference*

TOPEKA, KS April 1, 2002 — A plastic shower curtain may seem like a harmless part of your bathroom's décor. But before you purchase a new shower curtain, you'll want to think twice.

Most shower curtains are made from polyvinyl chloride (PVC), a widely used plastic that's also used to make everything from plastic bottles to window frames, car interiors and baby toys. From its manufacture to its disposal, PVC emits toxic compounds and has been linked to several diseases, including kidney and liver disorders and cancer.

An environmentally friendly alternative to shower curtains is bath enclosures. Unlike shower curtains, bath enclosures have a long life span.

"With proper care and maintenance, bath enclosures can last up to 50 years," said Tom Sulock, president of the Bath Enclosure Manufacturers Association (BEMA). "Also, shower curtains are not easily recycled. Bath enclosures, on the other hand, are comprised of recyclable materials such as aluminum and tempered glass."

PVC is difficult and expensive to recycle, so much of it ends up in landfills. If PVC ends up in a landfill, over time it can contaminate surrounding land and water resources.

Consumers often replace shower curtains frequently, to add a new design element to their bathrooms or because they have become moldy. But throwing away a shower curtain just once a year can produce alarming results.

According to US Census 2000, there are nearly 116 million housing units in the United States. If just one-fourth of these housing units threw away one standard-sized shower curtain per year, it would result in the disposal of just over 32 thousand miles of PVC — enough to wrap around the Earth more than one time.

For more information on the benefits of bath enclosures, visit [www.bathenclosures.org](http://www.bathenclosures.org).

As the only trade association of its kind, BEMA assists consumers in the purchase, installation and maintenance of bath enclosure products and services. It has 49 member organizations with 62 locations throughout North America.