

THE HINDU

January 17, 2008

[Now green certificates for lead battery makers](#)

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Those meeting the standards will be eligible to place the eco-label on their products

OK International launches BEST certification

Voluntary certification by industry, environmental organisations

NEW DELHI: Not just the common man's wonder car "Nano", the ongoing Auto Expo at Pragati Maidan here has also seen the launch of the environmental certification for lead battery manufactures in India.

Occupational Knowledge International (OK International) – a non-government organisation that works for improving public health through innovative strategies to reduce exposure to industrial pollutants -- launched the Better Environmental Sustainability Targets (BEST) certification for lead battery manufacturers.

Under the BEST programme, lead battery manufacturing facilities that implement a collection programme and meet minimum emission standards for used batteries will be eligible to place the eco-label on their products.

This is an international effort which has been launched for the first time in this country.

It is a voluntary certification effort developed by a consensus of industry and environmental organisations for manufacturing an industrial product while protecting public health and the environment.

The BEST certification standard was developed through a two-year multi-stakeholder process organised by OK International of San Francisco, Development Alternatives of Delhi and the National Referral Centre for Lead Poisoning of Bangalore.

The World Health Organisation estimates that 120 million people are over-exposed to lead -- three times the number infected by HIV/AIDS -- and that 99 per cent of the most severely affected are in developing countries. Batteries account for more than 80 per cent of all lead production.

Major battery manufacturers and automotive firms including Hero Honda and Tata Motors developed the standard along with Indian government representatives. The programme was recognised as one of the world's top 12 projects for sustainable development by the Supporting Entrepreneurs for Environment and Development sponsored by the United Nations Environment and Development Programmes.

“The BEST standard is needed due to the growth of the battery industry for two-wheelers and automobiles in India,” said Hero Honda assistant general manager Rakesh Baweja.

Stating that as responsible manufacturer of lead acid batteries the industry should take upon itself to work towards a standard put together by non-government partners in the areas of lead emission and battery handling, Amara Raja Batteries Ltd deputy manager Vijayanand said: “The project brings long-term benefits to the world at large and also for the way the battery industry is perceived.”

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