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## **NEWSPAPERS CONVERT TO ECO-FRIENDLY NEWS BAGS STAR TRIBUNE FIRST MAJOR METRO TO LAUNCH**

**Dallas, TX-- (June 23, 3:00 p.m. CST)** – The leading manufacturer of polyethylene bags for the newspaper industry announced today that the Star Tribune in Minneapolis will be the first major metropolitan newspaper to provide degradable plastic bags to its subscribers and advertisers, beginning June 30.

In February of this year, the manufacturer announced that all of its newspaper customers would be given the option of delivering oxo-biodegradable, environmentally friendly plastic bags.

Officials of Dallas based GP Plastics Corporation said that over the next few months, many of its newspaper customers will be converting to eco-friendly PolyGreen plastic bags, and that the Star Tribune will be the first major domestic newspaper to distribute its daily and Sunday newspapers in this leading edge alternative to conventional plastic bags.

By some estimates, conventional plastic bags may remain in our environment for 500-1000 years.

Depending on the actual conditions within a landfill, PolyGreen plastic bags should degrade in 2-3 years and bags “floating” as litter in the environment will normally degrade completely in a few months.

Additionally, PolyGreen bags feature water soluble inks and non-lead based color concentrates. Also, because they are conventional plastics with an additive, they are compatible with the existing recycle stream.

Mike Skinner, CFO of GP Plastics, says “In order to insure delivery integrity (dry papers) to their subscribers, the domestic newspaper industry uses 6-7 billion bags per year. GP manufactures more than one-half of those bags.”

Skinner said that “the folks at the Star Tribune embraced the concept of oxo-biodegradation from the start. Over the next several months, many of our customers nationwide will convert to PolyGreen bags; however, this day belongs to the Star Tribune, as it’s not often that you have the chance to lead the way”.

Al Olson, Star Tribune Circulation Fleet Logistics Manager who spearheaded the research in to these bags with GP Plastics added, "In our effort to be a company that is continuously improving our processes and products, it is also critical that in our innovation we are also environmentally responsible. We are very excited about the prospect of eliminating anything relative to our newspaper that could have a negative affect on our environment."

Used in over 30 countries worldwide, oxo-biodegradation of conventional plastics occurs as a result of a fairly simple two stage process.

First, triggered by oxygen, heat, sunlight, or mechanical stress, a proprietary additive causes the plastic to oxidize. The oxidative degradation breaks the polyethylene molecules into smaller sizes.

Second, when the molecules are small enough, microorganisms (fungi, bacteria, etc.) digest the molecules, leaving only water, carbon-dioxide, and biomass, which are natural elements of nature.

Results of tests at Willow Ridge Plastics, in Erlanger, Kentucky, confirm that bags manufactured by GP Plastics, containing a proprietary additive, will meet the specification of an oxo-biodegradable plastic.

Bob Bumgarner, President of GP Plastics, said "I congratulate the management of the Star Tribune. This is a significant endeavor and there are additional costs involved. I know that their readers and advertisers are aware of the environmental issues, and I believe that both will respond favorably."

Bumgarner added "Our main focus is to transition 100% of our manufacturing to environmentally friendly products. At this point, I just do not see conventional plastics as a necessity."

**About GP Plastics Corp:**

Formed in 1968, GP Plastics Corporation is the absolute leader in the manufacture of newspaper bags for home delivery and advertising. In addition to bundle covers for the newspaper industry, GP's other major product offerings include can liners for industrial, janitorial, and institutional applications and special packaging, including produce bags used in supermarkets and special event bags. GP Plastics has been recognized for its great quality and service in the industry.