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Nanotech-enabled Consumer Products Top the 1,000 Mark *Public Inventory Continues to Grow*

WASHINGTON – Nanotech consumer products have now crossed the millennial threshold.

Over 1,000 nanotechnology-enabled products have been made available to consumers around the world, according to the Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies (PEN). The most recent update to the group's three-and-a-half-year-old inventory reflects the increasing use of the tiny particles in everything from conventional products like non-stick cookware and lighter, stronger tennis racquets, to more unique items such as wearable sensors that monitor posture.

“The use of nanotechnology in consumer products continues to grow rapidly,” says PEN Director David Rejeski. “When we launched the inventory in March 2006 we only had 212 products. If the introduction of new products continues at the present rate, the number of products listed in the inventory will reach close to 1,600 within the next two years. This will provide significant oversight challenges for agencies like the Food and Drug Administration and Consumer Product Safety Commission, which often lack any mechanisms to identify nanotech products before they enter the marketplace.”

Health and fitness items continue to dominate the PEN inventory, representing 60 percent of products listed. More products are based on nanoscale silver—used for its antimicrobial properties—than any other nanomaterial; 259 products (26 percent of the inventory) use silver nanoparticles. The updated inventory represents products from over 24 countries, including the US, China, Canada, and Germany. This update also identifies products that were previously available, but for which there is no current information.

The release of the updated inventory coincides with the first public hearing on nanotechnology being held by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). The CPSC, with a staff of fewer than 400 employees, oversees the safety of 15,000 types of consumer products.

Andrew Maynard, chief science advisor for PEN, noted that “the CPSC deserves credit for focusing on nanotechnologies. The resources available to the agency to address health and safety issues are negligible compared to the over \$1.5 billion federal investment in nanotechnology research and development.”

The inventory is available at <http://www.nanotechproject.org/inventories/consumer/>

The PEN consumer products inventory includes products that have been identified by their manufacturer or a credible source as being nanotechnology-based. This update identifies products that were previously sold, but which may no longer be available. It remains the most comprehensive and widely used source of information on nanotechnology-enabled consumer products in the world.

Nanotechnology is the ability to measure, see, manipulate and manufacture things usually between 1

and 100 nanometers . A nanometer is one billionth of a meter. A human hair is roughly 100,000 nanometers wide. The limit of the human eye's capacity to see without a microscope is about 10,000 nanometers. In 2007 the global market for goods incorporating nanotechnology totaled \$147 billion. Lux research projects that figure will grow to \$3.1 trillion by 2015.

The **Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies** was launched in 2005 by the **Wilson Center** and **The Pew Charitable Trusts**. It is a partnership dedicated to helping business, governments, and the public anticipate and manage the possible health and environmental implications of nanotechnology. To learn more, visit www.nanotechproject.org.

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