



Preserving Resources,
Preventing Waste

The New Jersey WasteWise Bulletin

Newsletter of the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network – Winter, 2010
*WasteWise...improving your bottom line and the environment
through waste reduction, recycling and recycled product procurement.*

CarpetCycle Shearing Its Way to the Top

CarpetCycle, LLC, located in Elizabeth, New Jersey, has taken a big step toward becoming a much larger player in the carpet recycling industry with its recent purchase of a carpet shearing machine. The equipment purchase, which was funded in large part through a low interest loan provided by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, has enabled the company to become a supplier of sheared nylon 6 and nylon 66 fiber rather than simply a supplier of baled carpeting in need of further processing. The sheared carpet fiber has a much greater value in the marketplace and is used to make new carpeting and various automotive parts.

The shearing equipment was developed for use in the leather industry, but works well for CarpetCycle's purposes by separating the fiber from the carpet backing. As a result of this new operation, CarpetCycle has added staff and looks to add more as the company extends its reach in the commercial carpet tear-out contracting business. For more information, visit the company's website at www.carpetcycle.com.

Recyclable Commodity Prices Begin to Climb

With the worst of the national recession behind us, recyclable commodity prices have rebounded along with the economy. For example, the quarterly national average mill price for baled sorted office paper rose from \$99/ton in January, 2009 to \$169/ton in October, 2009. Similarly, the price paid for old corrugated cardboard increased from \$47/ton to \$87/ton. PET and HDPE plastic container and steel can prices also rose significantly over the course of the year.

Did You Know...

- Coffins and ash urns made from recycled newspapers and mulberry pulp are available from ARKA Ecopod Limited. The Ecopod coffin is available in a range of colors with printed motifs. Visit www.ecopod.co.uk for details.
- Starbucks is now recycling used coffee cups at seven of its coffee shops located in Manhattan. The coffee cups were tested and found to be compatible with old corrugated cardboard and are thus collected and recycled together.
- The USEPA has initiated an online forum that provides an opportunity for businesses, environmental groups and others to discuss topics relating to the agency's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response. If interested, visit <http://blog.epa.gov/oswerforum/>.
- The Drug Take-Back Network is an online information source regarding safe options for disposal of unused prescription medicine. To learn more, peruse www.takebacknetwork.com.
- The first commercially successful fluorescent light bulb was perfected in 1926 by Edmund Germer. General Electric bought the patent from Mr. Germer in 1938 and soon thereafter fluorescent lighting was found in virtually all commercial settings. While the recycling of fluorescent light tubes did not arrive for decades, today's generators can recycle this material at those facilities listed on the NJDEP's website found at the following address: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/lrm/uwaste/uwlamplst.htm>.
- Marcal Manufacturing LLC, maker of various recycled content tissue products, has developed lesson plans for teachers on recycling for four different age groups. The lesson plans are available online at www.marcalssmallsteps.com.

Staggering Amount of Trash Found on the High Seas

A patch of garbage estimated to be twice the size of Texas is floating in the middle of the Pacific Ocean approximately 1,000 miles northeast of Hawaii and is believed to be just one of five such large trash patches scattered throughout the world's oceans. While abandoned fishing gear, nets and fishing lines comprise part of this mess, a large percentage of the trash is plastic waste that got washed through storm drains found in towns and cities throughout the world and eventually made its way out to sea. While the north Pacific garbage patch was first discovered twelve years ago, this situation was not recognized by the mainstream media as a significant environmental threat until somewhat recently. The trash is floating in what is called a gyre, an area of heavy currents and slack winds that keep the trash swirling in a giant whirlpool.

The north Pacific garbage patch is not only a blight on the marine environment, but it also poses a threat to marine life. Researchers who have visited the site have found that some of the floatable plastic debris breaks down in the water into millions of fragments which are then ingested by fish that feed on plankton. Besides the obvious danger this poses to wildlife, the floating debris can also absorb organic pollutants from seawater, including PCBs and DDT, which have toxic effects on organisms. When the smaller fish are eaten by larger marine species, this toxic effect works its way up the food chain.

Various non-profit organizations have been doing what they can to study the issue and devise solutions, but it will take the coordinated efforts of many, including government, to address this growing problem. As was noted in the summer edition of "The New Jersey WasteWise Bulletin," everyone can do their part to combat this problem by making sure stormwater drains are clear of litter and other waste materials.

Businesses Can Provide Needed Recycling Boost

The annual recycling statistics compiled by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection show New Jersey to be doing a good job of recycling, but also point out that there is still room for improvement. Only 42% of the newspaper, 57% of the old corrugated cardboard, 45% of the office paper and 8% of the other paper generated in New Jersey was recycled in 2007. This, of course, means that recyclable material is being disposed of as waste, which not only makes no sense either environmentally or economically, but is also against the law.

Increased recycling in the commercial sector is one of the keys to improved recycling rates in New Jersey. Businesses must start an office recycling program if they have not already done so, reassess their existing program to see where improvements can be made or expand existing programs to include more materials. A waste audit is a good way to see what materials are not being recycled to their utmost in a recycling program. The New Jersey WasteWise Business Network's website found at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/wastewise/brbn03.htm> includes links to helpful waste audit information developed by the Rutgers University Solid Waste Policy Group.

Those looking to improve their program must also establish a continuous recycling education and awareness campaign that will instruct staff on the requirements and importance of the program. Email reminders to staff, articles in company newsletters, strategically placed posters, and special event displays are just a few of the ways by which the recycling message can be disseminated.

Well Said...

"Source reduction is to garbage what preventive medicine is to health." – William Rathje, Professor, University of Arizona

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