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Reality hits in the aftermath of 2021 Texas energy crisis

by MAURA KELLER

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In February 2021, millions of Texans were left without power for days due to power outages caused by a deadly winter storm. The storm caused sub-freezing temperatures and overwhelmed the state's electricity infrastructure, causing massive power outages across every type of power source: natural gas, coal, wind and nuclear. At the height of the crisis, nearly 4.5 million Texas homes and businesses were without power.

As a result of the storm's impact on the wind and solar power systems in the Lone Star State, many people focused on Texas' wind and solar infrastructure when looking to see how the impact could have been mitigated.

Despite popular belief, lower wind production wasn't solely to blame for the spike in energy prices. According to Paige Janson, chief operating officer, sustainable resource management at ENGIE Impact, renewable resources are often the solution to modern energy challenges, and corporate investment in wind and solar is only expected to grow as companies modernize their energy infrastructure.



Frozen turbines were just a small part of the overall disaster Texas faced.

"In the case of Texas specifically, while many wind turbines froze, so did the water lines needed to cool nuclear reactors and pipelines needed to fuel gas-fired generation," Janson said.

An onset of relatively rare, low probability events triggered a cascade of effects. So what were the key factors that caused the power outage in Texas and what does this mean for solar and wind energy industries in the future?

Alberto Lamadrid, associate professor of economics at Lehigh University and an expert in energy economics, pointed to key issues that resulted in the deadly winter storm in Texas.

The winter storms and temperatures dipped below freezing and were below expectations. "The buildings and homes in Texas, in many cases, were dealing with conditions beyond design specifica-



Texas added 2.5 GW of solar capacity in 2020, bringing the total to 5 percent capacity. PHOTO BY MARY DARLOW

tions, which prompted consumers to increase their energy use. This led to seasonal demand records in excess of 69 gigawatts," Lamadrid said.

Second, around half of the expected energy supply had issues, triggered by the weather conditions. As the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) investigation advances, other information has become available in the aftermath of the storm. Specifically, more gigawatts of wind could not generate power due to the freezing conditions. Conventional generators including over 15 GW of natural gas could not get gas to burn, 3GW of coal generation could not produce due to frozen coal piles, and nuclear power generators could not operate due to freezing water, decreasing their supply by around 1.3GW. In total, around 48.6 percent of generation supply was forced out at the highest point due to extreme weather conditions. This happened with several generating technologies.

"It's important to note that solar power is very minimal in Texas, representing around 5 percent of installed capacity, contrasting with gas, which is over 47 percent of the installed capacity in Texas," Lamadrid said.

Third, the current market design structures and regulation, or lack thereof, interacted with the external stressors. "Natural gas is prioritized for 'human need customers,' as determined by the Texas Railroad commission," Lamadrid said. "Suppliers relying on gas were faced with limited availability due to frozen pipelines and contracts that could be interrupted."

Fourth, in addition to the interactions between gas and electric systems, there are interdependencies with water systems that can lead to failures in one

system cascading to the other.

"Usually electricity is a critical lifeline, and in extreme events and natural hazards like hurricanes, it is quickly restored," Lamadrid said. But Texas has limited electric connectivity to the surrounding systems.

Jeff Wolfe, chief executive officer of Veloce Energy said that "what we saw in Texas was a failure of fossil fuels, deregulation and a lack of leadership. This was not a failure of renewables. In fact, this crisis shows the importance of bringing more renewables online and expanding distributed energy sources."

As Wolfe explained, the biggest loss of electric generation was from natural gas-fired plants. Several issues contributed to the plant failures, including control lines and other components that froze in the extreme cold, stopping operation at the plants.

Gas supply to the plants was interrupted or reduced due to several reasons. The pipelines froze or lost pressure, which was due to the cold weather. Some of the compressor plants that move the gas along the pipelines are powered by electricity (others are powered by onsite natural gas generators or direct-fired natural gas compressors).

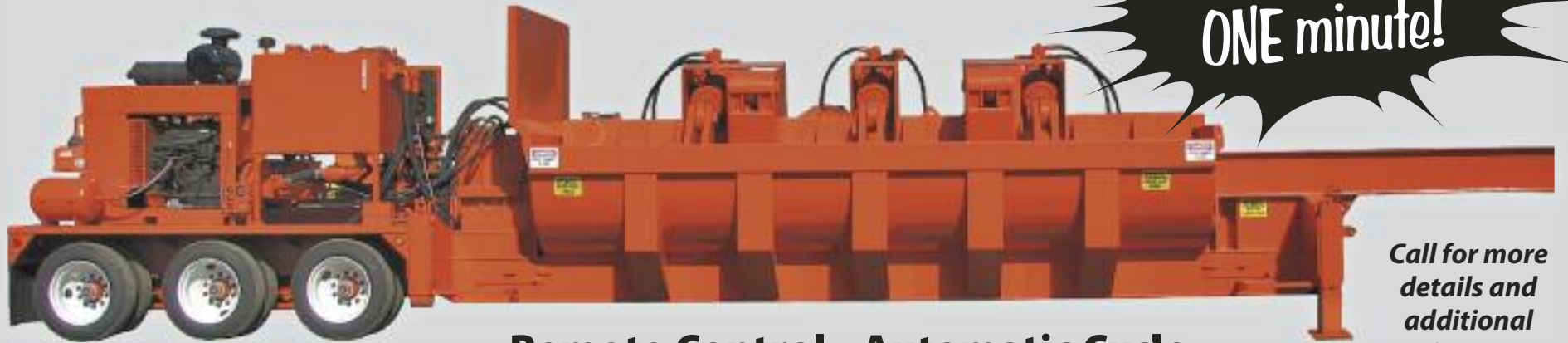
"Some plants powered by electricity had their power shut off due to load shedding because they had not been listed as 'critical infrastructure,'" Wolfe said. "No electricity means the gas does not flow to the generating plants, which means the plants cannot generate. Compressor plants can be listed as critical infrastructure and not shut down in an emergency but the operators had not completed the required two-page form."

Additionally, gas well heads froze. Natural gas coming out of the wells is wet as it contains a lot of moisture in the

See CRISIS, Page A4

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NWRA calls for Biden's American Jobs Plan to focus more on infrastructure

The plan also contains a destructive 33 percent increase in the corporate tax rate

The National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) expressed its disappointment in President Joe Biden's \$2.3 trillion American Jobs Plan that short-changes traditional infrastructure, only allotting \$115 billion over eight years, or just five percent of its overall price tag, to highways, roads and bridges. The waste and recycling industry travels every road in the nation at least once every week, something only the U.S. Postal Service can also lay claim to, making it one of the most significant stakeholders in America's surface transportation system.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, growing wear and tear on our nation's roads have left 43 percent of our public roadways in poor or mediocre condition with an overall report card grade of D. The U.S. currently has a \$786 billion backlog of road and bridge capital needs, yet the American Jobs Plan only funds roughly 15 percent of this while allocating nearly \$1.7 trillion to non-transportation-related items.

Even among non-transportation infrastructure, Biden's proposal fails to take into account the need for increased domestic recycling infrastructure that was highlighted by shortages of manufacturing feedstock during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic last year. Likewise, the plan's \$174 billion allocated for investments in electric vehicles does not include any tax credits or other incentives for the private sector to purchase these vehicles similar to ones in place to encourage adoption of compressed natural gas-fueled vehicles.

Furthermore, this plan contains one of the largest tax increases in American history. It would be the fifth

largest when adjusted for inflation, according to PolitiFact, and the largest when unadjusted. At the forefront of this is a 33 percent increase in the corporate tax rate from 21 to 28 percent that will destroy job creation just when it is needed the most.

"While we are glad that President Biden has recognized the need to invest in our nation's crumbling infrastructure, instituting job killing tax hikes is not the solution," said NWRA president and chief executive officer Darrell Smith. "We call on the President to reprioritize his proposal to focus more on surface transportation infrastructure needs while maintaining the funding link with the system's users."

"This plan represents a troubling break from the traditional user fee funding model for infrastructure construction and maintenance that has been in place for decades, which has ensured that there is a correlation between usage of the system and the amount one pays to support it," stated NWRA chief counsel and senior vice president of government affairs Jim Riley. "While the model needs to be overhauled to address the diminishing revenues from the gas tax resulting from more fuel-efficient and alternate fuel vehicles, tossing out the user fee concept reduces the ability for long term infrastructure project planning as general funds are subject to the whims of the day."

Apart from these issues, the proposal also includes the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, legislation opposed by NWRA and a coalition of other trade associations, which would significantly restructure federal labor laws and infringe on workers' rights to a secret ballot.

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Crisis

■Continued from Page 1

gas and is dirty. It is cleaned on-site before injection into the pipelines. That cleaning equipment froze, stopping or reducing the flow of gas into the pipeline, lessening the gas available to generators.

“This doesn’t need to happen every time the temperature dips below freezing,” Wolfe said. “Well heads can be weatherized to operate in cold temperatures as they are in the northern U.S. and Canada.”

It’s also crucial to point out that coal power also went offline. In cold weather, the coal piles freeze, making it more difficult to deliver the coal from the pile to the crushing equipment and then to the boiler. In colder weather states, coal plants have elaborate equipment and systems to excavate and process frozen coal. In Texas they do not have these systems in place.

“While some wind turbines did stop operating, the amount of wind available throughout the crisis exceeded ERCOT’s forecast; thus, while the state’s turbine fleet could have produced more energy if it was operating at full capacity, wind did not contribute to the problem,” Wolfe said.

As Wolfe explained, approximately 48.6 percent of generation was forced offline at the highest point of the crisis due to weather impacts. The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) had planned on relying on natural gas for at least 80 percent of its power this winter when demand was high. Wind power shutdowns accounted for less than 13 percent of the outage. The worst part of the crisis happened in the middle of the night. Obviously, ERCOT had planned on having no solar available at that time.

As with natural gas, coal and nuclear plants, wind turbines can be winterized to avoid freezing. In fact, wind turbines operate successfully in extreme northern climates. However, just like natural gas, coal, and nuclear plants, there is both an upfront cost and an operational cost for winterizing. “The Texas market does not provide enough incentive, or regulations, to

encourage most plant operators to do this,” Wolfe said.

Heading Off Future Problems

With catastrophes like what took place in Texas now being nearly impossible to predict, Janson said companies, cities and governments must plan for the unpredictable and place higher value in back-up and resilient power sources. Texas and other states should develop a disaster response plan that may include, among other measures, a review of scarcity pricing models and expanding transmission infrastructure.

“To stay ahead of extreme weather events brought on by climate change, Texas, as well as the businesses that operate within the state, should invest in climate risk management,” Janson said. “This will allow leaders to better understand how potential climate crises may disrupt operations and better prepare to minimize damage.”

Transitioning to new technologies has growing pains. Additionally, there are competing priorities that happen in the marketplace, pressuring for cheaper energy but less investments in resiliency measures.

“Texas had a disruption due to cold weather 10 years ago, when wind was still a small part of the generation portfolio,” Lamadrid said. “However, the recommendations made after the investigation took place were not implemented.”

Lamadrid stressed that we do not need to pay for fuel for producing wind or solar energy. But we do need to pay for the gas we consume or the coal we burn. The operation costs are low for variable renewable energy (VRE).

“On the other hand, we need to pay for the development of new wind and solar farms. Those are capital investments, as opposed to operational expenses,” Lamadrid said. “Generally, we can request more weatherization and coordination across systems – particularly with natural gas. This will affect both conventional and VREs.”

At the national level, it is likely both wind and solar technologies will continue to grow, perhaps coupled with some forms of storage. Electrochemical storage like batteries and ultracapacitors may support the intermittency of these technologies. Also, it is possible to

produce other energy carriers like hydrogen with surplus VREs energy.

“This produced hydrogen could be later used in situations in which the wind is not blowing or it is not possible to produce with solar energy,” Lamadrid said.

Wolfe added that since natural gas had far more problems during the Texas storm, in the future we would accelerate the drive to deploy more wind and solar. One Iowa utility pulled 80 percent of its energy from wind turbines in 2020. Texas has more wind than Iowa and already has more turbines. Developing turbines in more locations (most are currently in west Texas) would diversify the timing of wind power production and diversify weather impacts.

“Wind energy has grown at a very rapid pace in Texas for a decade, and this trend should continue,” said Wolfe. “Wind and solar are now the least expensive generation sources in Texas and in much of the U.S. Solar energy is growing at an even faster pace. With the decrease in energy storage costs, an increasing percentage of energy can come from these sources. Building – really overbuilding – solar and wind would create hundreds of billions of dollars of economic activity and protect Texas from future catastrophe.”

Janson added there is no evidence to suggest that corporate demand for wind and solar resources in Texas will wane as a result of February’s weather events. Rather, industry experts expect demand to continue or even accelerate as a result.

“We do expect, however, changes in the types of renewable energy products that have become commonplace in Texas. Many renewable energy producers, along with fossil generators, suffered significant financial losses and there may be a consolidation of the industry,” Janson said. “We’ve also seen legislation proposed in Texas that could more significantly impact wind and solar commercial models, but few details are available and the likelihood of those changes is yet to be seen. Throughout the U.S., there will also be more discussions around integrating back-up, distributed and resilient generation technologies and microgrids.”

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Pandemic recycling data reveals big spikes

Republic Services released pandemic recycling data showing significant increases in the recycling of cardboard boxes, aluminum cans and plastic and glass bottles over the last year, reflecting a shift in consumer behavior to more at-home consumption. All of these high demand materials can be put back into the circular economy through recycling.

"The pandemic's effects were clearly seen in home recycling bins," said Pete Keller, vice president of recycling and sustainability. "We know that Americans are willing to recycle and are becoming more aware of their impact on the environment, so it's vital that we continue to help consumers understand what can and cannot be recycled this Earth Day and beyond."

Since the beginning of the pandemic, online shopping has risen to new heights and those cardboard boxes have shown up in recycling bins with a 63 percent increase in residential cardboard in some markets. In addition, households have been consuming more food and beverages at home, resulting in significant increases in recycled aluminum (17 percent), glass (13 percent) and plastic bottles (7 percent).

Organic waste, which includes food and yard waste, also experienced a major increase, as people cooked and did yard work while at home over the last year. Republic Services processed 20 percent more food and yard waste in 2020 and recycled this organic material into more than half a million tons of nutrient-rich compost.

Virginia enacts recycling policy

Virginia Governor Ralph Northam signed SB 1164 into law; this legislation passed with overwhelming bipartisan support and will enable greater adoption of advanced recycling. The American Chemistry Council welcomed the legislation and issued the following statement, which may be attributed to Joshua Baca, ACC's vice president of plastics:

"The American Chemistry Council's Plastics Division is pleased to see bipartisan policy supporting advanced recycling become law in Virginia. Virginia is the 10th state to pass such legis-

lation since 2017. It joins Florida, Wisconsin, Georgia, Iowa, Tennessee, Texas, Illinois, Ohio and Pennsylvania in encouraging the growth of advanced recycling.

"With this step, Virginia is poised to take a leading role in helping tackle one of our planet's most pressing environmental challenges: eliminating plastic waste in our environment. Signing SB 1164 into law moves the Commonwealth closer to enjoying the economic and environmental benefits of advanced recycling manufacturing."

NJ DEP awards \$16 million to enhance local government recycling programs

To further support local government efforts to ensure that all New Jersey residents enjoy cleaner communities, the Murphy Administration is awarding \$16 million in grants to municipalities across the state to enhance waste reduction and recycling efforts, Department of Environmental Protection acting commissioner Shawn LaTourette announced.

"Thirty years after becoming the first state in the nation to enact a recycling law, New Jersey remains steadfast in its commitment to reducing, reusing and recycling solid waste," LaTourette said. "By supporting our local government partners through these grants, we can deliver waste reduction and recycling programs that enhance the quality of life for all New Jersey communities."

The awards, which are based on local governments' 2018 recycling performance, represent a \$1.8 million increase from the prior year. The grants are awarded through the state's Recycling Enhancement Act and are funded through a \$3 per ton surcharge on trash disposed at solid waste facilities statewide. The DEP then allocates that money back to municipalities based on how much recycling each community reports accomplishing during a particular calendar year.

Grants must be used to continue and improve municipal recycling programs. This can include doing educational visits to generators of recyclable materials to ensure proper separation, sponsoring household hazardous waste collection events, providing recycling receptacles in public places, maintaining leaf composting operations and more.

For calendar year 2018, the most recent year for which data is available, New Jersey municipalities and counties generated 23 total tons of solid waste, with 13.3 million tons recycled and 9.7 million tons disposed. This represents a total solid waste recycling rate of 58 percent. Solid waste includes municipal waste plus construction debris and other types of non-municipal waste.

New Jersey generated 9.8 million tons of municipal solid waste, of which 3.8 million tons were recycled and 6 million tons were disposed. This

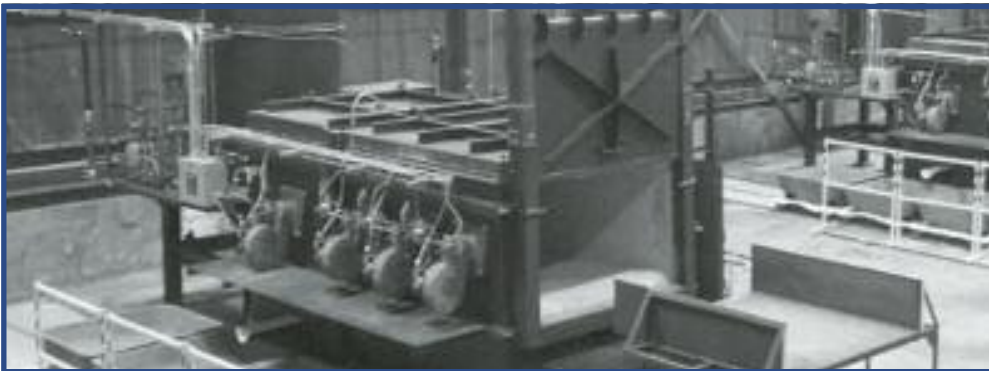
represents a municipal solid waste recycling rate of 39 percent.

New Jersey's municipal solid waste recycling rate exceeds the national recycling rate average of 34 percent but is below the state's municipal solid waste recycling goal of 50 percent.

"We are pleased to distribute grants for recycling initiatives that will educate the public about the importance of keeping our environment clean," said Mark Pedersen, assistant commissioner for site remediation and waste management. "While New Jersey continues to be a national leader in recycling, these grants demonstrate our commitment to continually improve our recycling program."

Municipalities receiving grants of more than \$100,000 for 2018 recycling efforts are:

- Bergen County: Paramus, \$190,034; Fair Lawn, \$142,154
- Burlington County: Florence, \$105,695
- Camden County: Cherry Hill, \$135,871; Camden, \$117,450; Gloucester Township, \$107,425
- Cumberland County: Vineland, \$386,442
- Essex County: Newark, \$328,618; East Orange, \$111,604
- Gloucester County: Logan, \$184,995; Mantua, \$116,155
- Hudson County: Jersey City, \$319,944; Secaucus, \$161,010; Union City, \$122,917; Bayonne, \$109,084
- Mercer County: Hamilton, \$200,305; Robbinsville, \$108,199
- Middlesex County: Edison, \$265,870; South Brunswick, \$243,868; Woodbridge, \$239,802; Piscataway, \$125,029; Monroe, \$116,211; East Brunswick, \$108,966; Old Bridge, \$102,639
- Monmouth County: Middletown, \$110,242; Wall, \$106,713
- Morris County: Parsippany-Troy Hills, \$188,816
- Ocean County: Toms River, \$240,939; Lakewood, \$148,992; Brick, \$115,554
- Passaic County: Paterson, \$248,632; Passaic, \$153,337; Clifton, \$140,305; Wayne, \$103,805
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More solar for Maine and Maryland

UGE International Ltd., a leader in commercial and community solar energy solutions, has signed agreements for the development of solar projects in Maine and Maryland. Together, the projects are expected to have a total rated capacity of 9.0MW DC and a project backlog value of \$18.1 million.

The Maine community solar project builds on UGE's strength in the market, which saw the company secure several agreements in the state over the past year. The most recent project is expected to have a rated capacity of 6.5MW DC and generate annual rev-

enue of approximately \$1.1 million once operational. After building one client-financed project in Maine last year, UGE expects to commence construction on its first self-financed projects in the state this summer.

The Maryland community solar project is UGE's first in the state. Maryland is one of several states that have adopted community solar regulations in recent years, making it an attractive market for UGE's continued expansion. The 2.5MW DC project is expected to generate annual revenue in excess of US\$0.5 million once operational.

PAPER

DS Smith marks anniversary of recycling plant opening



After a pandemic driven spike in e-commerce and the spread of unrecyclable problem plastics, DS Smith marked the anniversary of the opening of its Reading, Pennsylvania recycling plant with achievements in reducing waste.

The company, a global leader in producing recyclable packaging, is operating a “circular economy trifecta,” thanks to the combination of its year old recycling plant, paper mill and packaging manufacturing facility, all within a few miles of each other in Reading.

That concept allows corrugated packaging to be made, produced, collected and recycled within just 14 days, critical as retailers have scrambled to keep pace with higher demands for shipping boxes from stay-at-home shoppers over the past year.

Reading’s circular approach is a model for the company’s operational expansion in North America and demonstrates DS Smith’s commitment to developing a circular economy.

The local recycling facility, capable of processing more than 36,000 tons of corrugated cardboard each year, contributes to the company’s goal of sending zero cardboard and paper to landfills after packaging is used.

The recycling plant takes in recyclable papers and cardboard and compresses them into large bundled bales, as heavy as a ton each. Those bales are sent across the street to the paper mill where it is processed into the recycled-content paper used at the nearby packaging facility.

“Having these three facilities in such close proximity enables us to reduce corrugated waste to local landfills with our 14 day box-to-box process, where we collect, recycle and convert old corrugated cardboard into new, sustainable packing, ready for the supply chain,” said Giancarlo Maroto, managing director of paper, forestry and recycling for North America.

AF&PA releases updated paper reports for March

The American Forest & Paper Association released its March 2021 U.S. paper reports.

Printing-Writing Paper

According to the report, total printing-writing paper shipments decreased 20 percent in March compared to March 2020. U.S. purchases of total printing-writing papers decreased 18 percent in March compared to the same month last year. Total printing-writing paper inventory levels decreased five percent when compared to February 2021.

•Uncoated free sheet (UFS) paper shipments decreased 14 percent compared to March 2020 while the inventory level decreased six percent compared to February 2021. UFS imports increased five percent while exports decreased 39 percent in February 2021.

•U.S. purchases of coated free sheet (CFS) papers in March decreased 29 percent compared to last March while the inventory level decreased six percent compared to February 2021. CFS imports and exports both decreased compared to February 2020, down 23 percent and two percent respectively.

•Coated mechanical (CM) paper shipments decreased 40 percent compared to March 2020 while the inventory level increased two percent compared to February 2021. CM

imports and exports both decreased compared to February 2020, down two percent and nine percent respectively.

•U.S. purchases of uncoated mechanical (UM) papers in March decreased 15 percent compared to last March while the inventory level decreased eight percent compared to February 2021. UM imports remained essentially flat (-0.2 percent) while exports decreased 28 percent in February 2021.

U.S. Packaging Papers & Specialty Packaging

Total packaging papers & specialty packaging shipments in March increased three percent compared to March 2020. They were up three percent when compared to the same three months of 2020.

•The operating rate was 91.0 percent, down 2.2 points from March 2020 and up 0.6 points year-to-date.

Boxboard

Total Boxboard production in March remained essentially flat (-0.4 percent) compared to March 2020. It was down two percent when compared to the same three months of 2020. The boxboard operating rate was 94.0 percent, up 1.4 points from March 2020 and up 1.1 points year-to-date.

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METALS

Recyclers receive beverage can grants

Recycling facilities in North Carolina and Texas will use Can Manufacturers Institute (CMI)'s aluminum beverage can capture grants to install equipment that will result in 540 tons, more than 36 million aluminum beverage cans, per year being captured that were previously missorted. These recycling facilities are the initial recipients of a grant program made possible with the generous support of can manufacturers Ardagh Group and Crown Holdings. The Recycling Partnership helped select the grantees and will provide technical assistance to ensure successful implementation.

The grant program builds off the CMI research released last year that found it is critical to capture all used beverage cans (UBC) flowing through material recovery facilities (MRF), which play the critical role in the U.S. recycling system of sorting recyclables. This research concluded that most MRFs in the U.S. would not be able to operate without the revenue from UBCs, considering they are consistently the most valuable beverage packaging material in the recycling stream.

Due to the success of this initial round of grantees, a new round of applications to the pilot program has been added. The deadline to submit an application is Tuesday, May 11.

About the grant announcement, CMI president Robert Budway said, "It is important for the health of our nation's recycling system to capture every aluminum beverage can for

recycling. Aluminum beverage cans provide 33 percent of the revenue to MRFs in non-deposit states, which is more than any other residential recyclable.

Additionally, CMI beverage can members, Ardagh and Crown, want all used cans back to make them into new cans using the infinitely recyclable aluminum. Capturing missorted cans at the MRF is a cost effective way to capture the valuable aluminum from cans. The return on investment of capturing incremental used can volumes is so high that the cost of additional equipment acquired will be recouped in a short period of time."

The grant money provided to these two MRFs is being combined with other sources of funding at a ratio of more than 1 to 10. The two MRFs are operated by Independent Texas Recyclers (ITR), Houston, Texas, and Curbside Management, Asheville, North Carolina.

The ITR facility is a single stream MRF serving the Houston area. It will put the grant funding toward installing a second eddy current to capture UBCs from the containers in the residue (i.e., material destined for landfill) line.

The Curbside Management facility is a single-stream MRF serving Asheville, North Carolina and surrounding communities, and it is the largest MRF in Western North Carolina. The facility is replacing its existing eddy current with a state-of-the-art eddy current that can more effectively

sort aluminum packaging at the volume flowing through the facility.

ITR and Curbside Management are just the first two recipients, with additional grantees expected to be announced in the middle of this year and initial impact results expected by the end of 2021. The Recycling Partnership led the effort to methodically analyze and rank the received proposals. These grants are part of an aluminum can capture program that was initially announced in October 2020 with a request for proposals released in January 2021.

Capturing and recycling these more than 36 million aluminum cans each year will have a significant environmental and economic impact. These aluminum cans when sold will generate more than \$500,000 in much needed revenue for MRFs. When these cans are recycled, it will save more than 15 million kilowatt hours of energy and will avoid more than 3.5 million kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions.

This grant program is the latest aluminum beverage can industry effort to build on its industry leading recycling rates and recycled content. The grant program will foster additional examples of MRFs that have successfully invested in can capture equipment, providing case studies to spur more MRFs to invest in aluminum can capture.

For additional information, view this article on www.AmericanRecycler.com.

Domestic mills shipped 6.7 million tons

The American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI) reported that for the month of February 2021, U.S. steel mills shipped 6,735,067 net tons, a 9.2 percent decrease from the 7,420,816 net tons shipped in the previous month, January 2021, and a 13.3 percent decrease from the 7,771,656 net tons shipped in February 2020. Shipments year-to-date in 2021 are 14,155,883 net tons, a 13.2 percent decrease vs. 2020 shipments of 16,307,411 for two months.

Production of crude steel increased

World crude steel production for the 64 countries reporting to the World Steel Association was 150.2 million tonnes (Mt) in February 2021, a 4.1 percent increase from February 2020.

China is estimated to have produced 83.0 Mt in February 2021, up 10.9 percent on February 2020. India produced 9.1 Mt, down 3.1 percent. Japan produced 7.5 Mt, down 5.6 percent. The U.S. produced 6.3 Mt, down 10.9 percent. Russia is estimated to have produced 5.7 Mt, down 1.3 percent. South Korea produced 5.5 Mt, up 1.2 percent. Turkey produced 3.0 Mt, up 5.9 percent. Germany produced 3.1 Mt, down 10.4 percent.

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Commodity		Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
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#1 Bundles	per gross ton	318.00	342.00	329.00	421.00	535.00
Plate and Structural	per gross ton	305.00	329.00	341.00	399.00	425.00
#1 & 2 Mixed Steel	per gross ton	219.00	295.00	319.00	376.00	390.00
Shredder Bundles (tin)	per gross ton	142.00	178.00	210.00	250.00	252.00
Crushed Auto Bodies	per gross ton	142.00	178.00	210.00	250.00	252.00
Steel Turnings	per gross ton	104.00	101.00	115.00	161.00	198.00
#1 Copper	per pound	3.35	3.46	3.69	3.74	3.74
#2 Copper	per pound	3.12	3.22	3.49	3.47	3.44
Aluminum Cans	per pound	.65	.64	.64	.66	.61
Auto Radiators	per pound	1.58	1.47	2.01	1.87	2.19
Aluminum Core Radiators	per pound	.56	.56	.64	.56	.63
Heater Cores	per pound	1.28	1.41	1.34	1.25	1.74
Stainless Steel	per pound	.64	.64	.67	.67	.74

All prices are expressed in USD. Printed as a reader service only.

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METALS

AM/NS Calvert breaks ground for new steelmaking facility

With a small gathering of internal leadership, AM/NS Calvert commemorated the groundbreaking of their new \$775 million steelmaking facility. The significant investment in the facility located in Calvert, Alabama was announced in December 2020 by ArcelorMittal and Nippon Steel Corporation, the joint venture partners for AM/NS Calvert. The company has officially broken ground at the expansion site.

“Alabama and the steel industry go hand in hand, and I am proud to see continued growth through AM/NS Calvert’s

\$775 million expansion,” Governor Ivey said. “Shovels have officially hit the dirt, and I look forward to the advancements this project will bring. Alabama continues to prove to be the place for business and industry.”

Once completed, the planned facility will be capable of producing 1.5Mt of steel slabs for the hot strip mill and producing a broad spectrum of steel grades required for Calvert’s end user markets. Construction is expected to take 24 months and the new facility is anticipated to create 200 direct and 100 indirect jobs in the community.

Nucor Corporation plans to build TrueCore facility in Utah

Nucor Corporation plans to build a third TrueCore manufacturing facility to be located in Brigham City, Utah. The 120,000 square foot facility will manufacture insulated wall and roof panels using state-of-the-art continuous line equipment. The new facility is expected to be operational in 2022 and will employ 50 teammates.

TrueCore produces insulated metal panels that are used as exterior walls, interior partitions, ceilings and roofs in

the cold storage, commercial and industrial construction markets. With thicknesses ranging from 2 to 8 inches and widths up to 44 inches, the company’s panels and facilities are designed to deliver consistent quality as well as reduced lead times.

In 2019, TrueCore was acquired by Nucor Corporation and is part of the company’s Nucor Buildings Group division.

A man was boasting to a friend of his about his new hearing aid. He said, “It’s the most expensive one I’ve ever had! It cost me \$3,500.”

His friend asked, “What kind is it that costs that much?”

The braggart replied, “Half past four.”

Steel imports down in February

U.S. IMPORTS OF FINISHED STEEL MILL PRODUCTS

BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (Thousands of Net Tons)

Preliminary	MAR 2021	FEB 2020	2021 (annualized)	2020 (12 months)	% Change 2021 Annual vs. 2020
SOUTH KOREA	239	231	2,404	2,015	19.3%
JAPAN	85	87	874	767	14.0%
TURKEY	43	77	803	562	42.9%
GERMANY	82	65	682	725	-6.0%
TAIWAN	88	33	596	573	4.1%
BRAZIL	13	33	350	504	-30.5%
CHINA	27	33	344	376	-8.6%
NETHERLANDS	39	36	313	463	-32.3%
All Others	1,159	840	11,422	10,154	12.5%
TOTAL	1,774	1,435	17,790	16,139	10.2%

Based on preliminary Census Bureau data, the American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI) reported that the U.S. imported a total of 1,888,000 net tons (NT) of steel in February 2021, including 1,424,000 net tons (NT) of finished steel (down 22.0 percent and up 15.0 percent, respectively, vs. January final data).

Through the first two months of 2021, total and finished steel imports are 4,310,000 and 2,662,000 net tons (NT), down 7.5 percent and 11.1 percent, respectively, vs. the same period in 2020. Annualized total and finished steel imports in 2021 would be 25.9 and 16.0 million NT, up 17.4 percent and down 1.0 percent, respectively, vs. 2020. Finished steel import market share was an estimated 18 percent in February and is estimated at 17 percent over the first two months of 2021.

Key finished steel products with a significant increase in imports in February compared to January are tin plate (up 158

percent), cold rolled sheets (up 69 percent), hot rolled sheets (up 63 percent), line pipe (up 38 percent), mechanical tubing (up 19 percent) and wire rods (up 17 percent). A product with a significant year-to-date (YTD) increase vs. the same period in 2020 was structural pipe and tubing (up 13 percent).

In February, the largest volumes of finished steel imports from offshore were from South Korea (231,000 NT, up 75 percent from January final), Turkey (77,000 NT, down 6 percent), Japan (76,000 NT, up 65 percent), Germany (65,000 NT, up 180 percent) and Brazil (33,000 NT, down 20 percent). For the first two months of 2021, the largest offshore suppliers were South Korea (362,000 NT, up 6 percent vs. the same period in 2020), Turkey (158,000 NT, up 28 percent), Japan (123,000 NT, down 16 percent), Germany (88,000 NT, down 12 percent) and Brazil (75,000 NT, down 41 percent).

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AUTOMOTIVE

Volvo Group and SSAB to collaborate on the world's first vehicles of fossil free steel

Volvo Group and SSAB have signed a collaboration agreement on research, development, serial production and commercialization of the world's first vehicles to be made of fossil-free steel.

Volvo plans already this year to start the production of concept vehicles and components from steel made by SSAB using hydrogen.

"We are determined to be a climate neutral company by 2050 in line with the Paris Agreement. This means that our vehicles and machines will be emission-free when in operation but also that we will review the materials, like steel, used in our products and will gradually switch to fossil free alternatives here as well. This is an important step on the road to com-

pletely climate-neutral transports," says Martin Lundstedt, president and chief executive officer at Volvo Group.

"We are now taking a giant leap towards an entirely fossil free value chain all the way to the end customer. Together with Volvo Group, we will start work on the development and serial production of fossil-free steel products. We will work together with our customers to reduce their climate impact while strengthening their competitiveness. We are constantly looking at how we can become a more comprehensive supplier of fossil-free steel to customers like Volvo. We see a new green revolution emerging," said Martin Lindqvist, president and chief executive officer at SSAB.

Volvo will start manufacturing the first concept vehicles and machines with steel from SSAB using hydrogen already in 2021. Plans are for smaller scale serial production to start during 2022 and for a gradual escalation towards mass production to follow. Volvo and SSAB will also work together in research and development to optimize the use of steel in Volvo's products with regard to weight and quality. Together, the two companies will develop a number of products of fossil-free steel with the goal of reaching serial production within a few years.

Newly made fossil-free steel from SSAB will be an important complement to the traditional and recycled steel used in Volvo's trucks, construction equipment and other products. Fossil-free steel will be made by a completely new technology using fossil-free electricity and hydrogen. The result will be a much lower climate impact and a fossil-free value chain. The steel industry considers that the need for steel will grow significantly in the long term and that newly made fossil free steel will be needed to meet this demand.

The collaboration framework also includes a review of common logistics solutions that can contribute to reducing SSAB's environmental impact from internal and external transports. The ambition is to use Volvo vehicles that are powered by batteries or fuel cells.

SSAB aims to start supplying the market with fossil free steel at a commercial scale in 2026. Development of a fossil free value chain from mine to finished steel products will take place within the framework of the HYBRIT initiative, which SSAB has been driving with LKAB and Vattenfall since 2016. A pilot plant has been in place since August 2020 and this will soon start to produce smaller volumes of sponge iron made using hydrogen. This steel will be used to make the steel for use in this collaboration.

PLASTICS

Grant funding for foam recycling continues

The Foam Recycling Coalition (FRC) opened its grant submission process to support increased recycling of packaging made from foam polystyrene. The FRC, part of the Foodservice Packaging Institute, seeks applicants looking to start or strengthen a post-consumer foam polystyrene recycling program.

"During the past six years, the Foam Recycling Coalition has awarded nearly \$780,125 in grants to communities and recycling businesses in the U.S. and Canada," said Natha Dempsey, president of the Foodservice Packaging Institute.

Many communities across North America have started or expanded foam polystyrene recycling programs due to this grant.

Both public and private organizations involved in managing residential drop-off and curbside recycling programs or material recovery facilities are eligible to apply for funding.

This initiative helps fund infrastructure for the collection, processing and marketing of products made from foam polystyrene. It targets post-consumer foam polystyrene products, which includes foodservice packaging (i.e., cups, plates, bowls, clamshells and cafeteria trays) and other types of packaging (i.e., egg cartons, meat trays and protective packaging used when shipping electronics and other fragile items).

The FRC distributes up to \$50,000 for each grant. Grant amounts are determined on a case-by-case basis dependent upon equipment needs. Although no cash match is required, additional costs may be incurred by the grantee for related items, such as site preparation, provision of conveying system, electrical infrastructure, freight and other installation costs.

Grantees are required to communicate the addition of foam polystyrene in their recycling program, both directly to households and in their regular communication materials. Grantees also must commit to collecting, processing and marketing foam polystyrene for a minimum of three years, which includes reporting on the volumes to FRC.

Formed in 2014, the Foam Recycling Coalition focuses exclusively on increased recycling of post-consumer foam polystyrene. Its members include Americas Styrenics; Cascades Canada ULC; Chick-fil-A; CKF Inc.; Dart Container Corp.; Dolco Packaging; Dyne-A-Pak; Genpak; INEOS Styrolution America LLC; Pactiv Foodservice/Food Packaging; and Republic Plastics.

Applications must be submitted by Friday, May 28, 2021 for priority consideration. The FRC will announce grant recipients throughout the year.

SALVAGING Millions

by Ron Sturgeon
Autosalvageconsultant.com

Make a plan and know your customer

The first article in this series listed more than 25 tactics to increase your business success, all of them based on my experience. I started with nothing and didn't attend college, so I know you can achieve maximum success, regardless of your education.

Chapter 2 of my book, *How to Salvage Millions from Your Small Business*, discusses making a plan and understanding your customer. It's funny how we wave our arms in the air (figuratively speaking) and talk about what we are going to do, but never get around to putting the plan on paper. Equally humorous is how we have selective memory and justify our lack of success by remembering only what we want to recall from that plan.

There is no substitute for putting the entire plan on paper for these reasons:

- With the plan on paper, you can show it to key employees for comments and ultimately use it to get their buy-in.

- You can show the plan to your banker and gain great respect. You may want to "dial it back" for the bank so that you can always exceed the banker's expectations.

- In the process of putting it on paper, you will find many assumptions you thought you understood but which don't play out as anticipated.

- Putting it on paper will force you to go back and look at prior periods to "test" your assumptions. You will learn a lot from this exercise.

- You will probably realize, as a result of putting it on paper, that

you haven't been gathering all the operating information and metrics necessary to make fully informed projections.

Setting goals on paper will also allow you to set milestones. In other words, if you are now at \$100,000 per month in sales, and you are predicting that you will be at \$135,000 per month in 12 months, it's easy to see that you need to have one or more milestones along the way.

Although you may not have achieved 50 percent of the forecasted increase in 6 months, it's reasonable to assume that you will have achieved, say, 40 percent of the goal. If at that point you haven't achieved the milestone, you need to figure out how to get back on track. Don't wait until year-end to adjust.

When consulting, I frequently target the lack of operating metrics and absence of a written plan.

Meet with your staff and identify your core customer. Following that, in every planning meeting, make sure you are matching your product, warranty and service level to that customer. Recyclers, I believe, have tried to be too much for too many for too long. Many of us believe anyone driving a vehicle (regardless of age, whether it's import or domestic, customer's location, wholesale or retail purchaser, or type of part needed) is our potential customer.

To thrive and achieve significant success, you simply must decide who your core customer is and act accordingly.

Remember, only you can make BUSINESS GREAT!

This article was provided by autosalvageconsultant.com, which was formed in 2001 by recyclers for recyclers, to help them improve their businesses.

PLASTICS

Keurig Dr Pepper reduces virgin plastic by 20 percent

After engagement with As You Sow on reducing single use plastic packaging, Keurig Dr Pepper Inc., the third largest non-alcoholic packaged beverage company in North America, has agreed to cut its use of virgin plastic for packaging by 20 percent by 2025. Keurig Dr Pepper used 208,000 metric tons of plastic packaging in 2018.

Citing urgent new data on the growing plastic pollution problem, As You Sow filed shareholder proposals with 10 leading consumer goods companies and retailers for 2021, including Keurig Dr Pepper, calling for commitments to reduction in use of plastic packaging. Improved recycling, the focus of As You Sow's earlier work with companies, is not sufficient to stem the tide of plastic pollution engulfing oceans and must be coupled with reductions in plastic use, materials redesign, and substitution.

Keurig Dr Pepper has informed As You Sow it will achieve the 20 percent virgin plastic reduction goal through increased use of recycled content, elimination of unnecessary material, redesign of packaging, and exploration of reuse models. The company will provide more information on how it intends to achieve its goal in its 2020 Corporate Responsibility Report to be published summer of 2021. The company goals will be tied to a baseline year and will reduce an absolute amount of virgin plastic.

"This agreement represents a substantial commitment by Keurig Dr Pepper to reduce its use of virgin plastic used for packaging," said Conrad MacKerron, senior vice president, As You Sow. "We look forward to continued engagement with management on achieving this goal. We encourage other companies to step forward and make bolder, larger absolute cuts in overall plastic packaging."

The largest cut in overall plastic use to date by a major consumer goods company was in 2019 by Unilever to cut virgin plastic use by 50 percent, including a total elimination of 100,000 tons of plastic packaging by 2025.

In recognition of this significant step by Keurig Dr Pepper, As You Sow withdrew the shareholder proposal it filed with the company.

The company's goal builds on its previously announced 2025 commitments to use 30 percent post-consumer recycled content across its packaging portfolio and convert all packaging to be recyclable or compostable.

Keurig Dr Pepper is the third company this year to reach an agreement with As You Sow to reduce use of virgin plastic. PepsiCo committed to a reduction of virgin plastic across its business units and will announce the size of the goal later in 2021. Mondelez International agreed to a 5 percent reduction in virgin plastic use, including a 25 percent cut in virgin plastic for its rigid plastic packaging.

Tupperware to use Eastman Tritan Renew in packaging

Tupperware Brands Corporation has announced the expansion of ECO+, the brand's revolutionary product portfolio made with sustainable material, with two new products, Lunch-It® Containers and Sandwich Keepers, and a new material partner, Tritan™ Renew from Eastman. Tritan Renew will enable Tupperware to further expand ECO+ to select products that require a clear, glass-like design. This strategic partnership and new material will allow Tupperware to further expand innovation and introduce products that are functional, environmentally friendly and on-trend for consumers.

Tupperware introduced ECO+ in 2019 with a new material that sourced mixed plastic otherwise destined for incineration or landfill. The use of this initial circular material has resulted in the avoidance of more than 100 tons of CO2 emissions from diverted waste that would otherwise be landfilled. Following the initial success, ECO+ has expanded a line of products made from a variety of sustainable, recycled, biobased and environmentally-conscious material. The ECO+ product

portfolio includes the ECO+ Straw Set, ECO+ To-Go Cups and now, the new ECO+ Lunch-It Containers and Sandwich Keepers.

Tritan Renew is a revolutionary resin made with Eastman's polyester renewal technology that recycles at the molecular level, breaking down plastic waste to its fundamental building blocks that are then converted to create pristine new material. The material is highly durable, dishwasher safe and free of BPA, BPS and BPF. Tritan Renew uniquely offers Tupperware the ability to design clear or transparent products with 50 percent certified recycled content without compromising quality or clarity.

This latest strategic partnership and expansion of ECO+ will further Tupperware Brand's No Time to Waste vision, which outlines the company's dedication to innovation and design to minimize food and single-use plastic waste. The new material development in the ECO+ line diverts waste from landfills while reducing plastic consumption through the production of reusable products.

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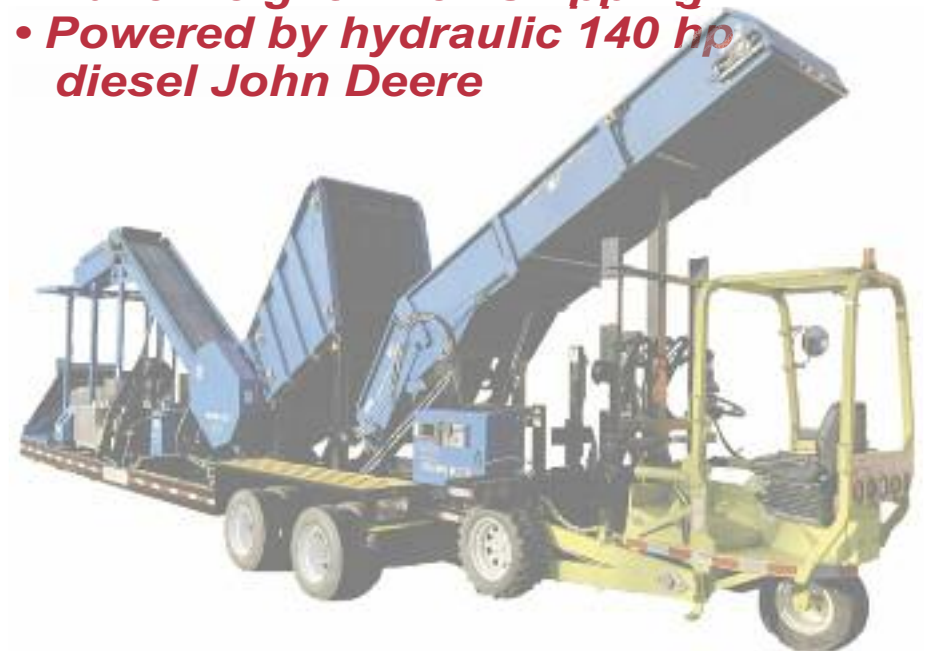
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BUSINESS BRIEFS

New Way Trucks expands its dealer network

■ New Way Trucks, a large private manufacturer of refuse equipment in North America, has once again bolstered its distributor network. New Way distributors are product experts, serving as trusted local resources and the go-to authority for service and parts.

New Way welcomed A/J Equipment, New England Truck Equipment (NETE) and Solid Waste Applied Technologies (SWAT) to its network.

A/J Equipment, based on the South Shore in Massachusetts, is responsible for the Rhode Island and eastern Massachusetts areas of responsibility (AOR). NETE is responsible for the Connecticut AOR, and covers Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire Counties in central Massachusetts. SWAT is directly responsible for the southeast Georgia AOR.

SWAT has quickly become a respected name in the refuse industry, beginning as a parts and service facility before expanding into refuse truck sales. Their new 23,000 sq.ft. facility in Statesboro, Georgia, is well equipped to meet all customer needs.

Long-time New Way distributor Sansom Equipment has expanded their AOR for New Way by adding the Atlanta Metropolitan area and western Georgia to its Alabama, Florida Panhandle, Louisiana, Mississippi and western Tennessee market area. Sansom will be announcing a new Georgia location in the future.

DS Smith hires two new directors in Atlanta

■ DS Smith, a leading supplier of sustainable packaging solutions, has announced two new key hires in Atlanta. Evan Johnson has joined the DS Smith North America Supply Engine Team as external paper sales director and Emma Budzisz joins as director of marketing for North America Packaging.

Johnson has held sales roles across multiple industries focused on national account development, territory management, business to business and consumer sales and merchant development at ECHOTape, Pak-Lite, Inc. and Priority Payment Systems.

Budzisz joins DS Smith as director of marketing for North America Packaging. She joins DS Smith from The Coca-Cola Company, where she focused on the development of brand vision and consumer and commercial marketing plans rooted in consumer and shopper insights for traditional and digital/social media campaigns at local, regional and international levels.

Budzisz brings extensive experience from additional senior marketing roles in consumer, retail and e-commerce marketing across various portfolios of well-established and start-ups brands. She will lead the development of marketing and E-commerce objectives, supporting sales and growth initiatives for DS Smith Packaging in North America, and develop and drive promotions, marketing and e-commerce strategies.

Biehn Family acquires Barclay Roto-Shred

■ The Biehn Family, investors in multiple industrial companies, announced their acquisition of Barclay Roto-Shred, Inc., a Stockton, California based OEM tire shredder equipment manufacturer. Barclay Roto-Shred will operate under the name Barclay Roto-Shred, LLC.

Sales and customer service of equipment will remain in Stockton, California as the facility in Dayton is prepared to take on the manufacturing operations of Barclay equipment.

This acquisition will bring about some changes as owner Mark Diemunsch transitions to retirement. Jim Southern, will take the role of sales manager at Barclay Roto-Shred, LLC to learn the line from Diemunsch. Over time, Southern will assume responsibility for driving the business forward. Southern brings a decade of industrial knife manufacturing experience to the table, including significant time spent working with tire recycling OEMs.

Additionally, Ron Combs, who has been with Barclay Roto-Shred for over 25 years will lead Barclay manufacturing in a newly tooled facility in Miamisburg, Ohio.

GPA's March container trade leaps 48 percent

■ The Port of Savannah handled an all-time record of nearly 500,000 20' equivalent container units in March, an increase of more than 48 percent, or 162,275 TEUs, compared to the same month in 2020.

Counting the 498,000 TEUs moved in March, GPA wrapped up the third quarter with a fiscal year-to-date (July-March) total of 3.9 million TEUs, on track to top 5 million for the first time ever in a single year.

GPA's Mason Mega Rail Terminal volumes grew by 29.7 percent in March, moving an additional 10,924 containers for a total of 47,684. At the Appalachian Regional Port, intermodal lifts increased 37.7 percent for the month, up by 761 containers compared to March 2020, for a total of 2,782 containers.

Over the coming months, GPA will add container yard space and rail capacity, as well as growing its big ship service capabilities and crane fleet. By September, GPA will commission Phase I of a project that will add a total of 650,000 TEUs of space at Garden City Terminal. A separate project adding 750,000 TEUs of annual capacity will open for operation in 2023.

Georgia's deepwater ports and inland barge terminals support more than 496,700 jobs throughout the state annually and contribute \$29 billion in income, \$122 billion in revenue and \$3.4 billion in state and local taxes to Georgia's economy. The Port of Savannah handled 9.3 percent of total U.S. containerized cargo volume and 10.5 percent of all U.S. containerized exports in FY2020.

RTS hires chief revenue officer to boost growth

■ Recycle Track Systems, Inc. (RTS), a waste and recycling management company, has named Kristopher Glotzbach as the company's chief revenue officer. Glotzbach will oversee the company's sales and business development operations for its municipal and commercial divisions in the newly created chief revenue officer role reflecting RTS's continued growth during the pandemic.

An accomplished sales strategy executive, Glotzbach brings more than 25 years of experience scaling businesses and expertise in logistic software and transport solutions from industry leading transportation companies including Uber Freight, Shipwell and C.H. Robinson.

RTS has seen significant growth in its municipality business as communities shifted to stay-at-home measures during the pandemic. Earlier this year RTS broadened its presence in three new cities adding to its existing portfolio of residential business in the northeast, midwest, and west regions. In addition, RTS continues to extend its commitment to sustainable solutions and recently acquired Industrial Organic PBC (DBA Ambrosia), a closed-loop manufacturing company that turns food waste into circular products and commodities.

Glotzbach comes to RTS from Shipwell, a leader in supply chain management solution for shippers, 3PLs, and carriers, where he served as chief revenue officer.

Prior to Shipwell, he led national sales for Uber's freight division and held key leadership positions at C.H. Robinson. He was a top producer in C.H. Robinson's business development division and responsible for building the company's ChemSolutions platform, which provides logistics services to chemical manufacturing and distribution customers.

SWANA hires Rademacher as tech division manager

■ The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) has named Theresa Rademacher as their new technical division manager. Rademacher joins SWANA after managing the education, outreach and communications for Ada County Solid Waste in Boise, Idaho. Prior to the role, she was the deputy director and business analyst for Ada County Solid Waste Management.

SWANA's seven technical divisions keep track of hot topics, connect experts and shape the future of the solid waste industry.

Members of the technical divisions use the groups as an opportunity to share experiences and knowledge in their respected areas as well as network with others across the United States and Canada. Rademacher's extensive experience in solid waste management will make her a valuable resource to SWANA and the technical divisions.

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Going solar pays at closed landfills



Washington Gas Energy Systems hired Sundurance Energy to construct this 4-megawatt solar array built on a Marshfield, Massachusetts capped landfill. The solar array consists of 13,518 panels covering 13 acres of land with Garden State Engineering, Surveying and Planning, Inc. providing the foundation design required to distribute the power produced by the solar panels at this site.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GARDEN STATE ENGINEERING, SURVEYING AND PLANNING, INC.

by MAURA KELLER

mkeller@americanrecycler.com

Closed or capped landfills dot the landscape of many states. While many of these closed landfills can't be used for any sort of development due to the residual toxins gracing the ground, more and more states are exploring placing solar energy arrays on this barren land – putting the tainted ground to good use as renewable energy landscapes.

Developing solar systems on closed landfills is a growing trend, which really took off a few years after the EPA launched its RE-Powering America's Lands Initiative in 2008.

The first landfill project was completed on a landfill at Nellis Airforce Base in Nevada in 2007. The following year the U.S. Army built a system on a construction landfill at Fort Carson, Colorado. Also in 2008 was the first municipal solid waste landfill built in Sarasota, Florida. This was co-located with a park, covers one-half acre and is a .25 megawatt system.

Today there are thousands of inactive or closed landfills in the U.S. and more continue to close each year,

which presents plenty of opportunity for development. Nichole Coulter, vice president of development at Distributed Solar Development, has also noticed an increase in development activity on landfills in certain states, such as New York, Massachusetts and New Jersey, due in part to new incentive programs being implemented. Solar developments on closed landfills are typically most common in states that offer incentive programs for developing landfills or community solar incentive programs, which are often built on landfills.

“By far, Massachusetts leads the states with this technology,” said Dr. Anthony DePrima, executive director of Energize Delaware, a non-profit organization helping residents and businesses save money through clean energy and efficiency. Of the 144 projects listed in the RE-Powering the Land database from 2008 to 2018, 66 (45 percent) are in Massachusetts.

“Massachusetts has a history of providing incentives for municipal-owned solar projects through renewable energy credit set-asides or reservations and financial incentives in the form of add-on value tariffs,”

DePrima said. “There were many municipal owned, closed landfills in Massachusetts that took advantage of these programs.”

At Its Core

The process for developing solar installations on closed landfills depends on the location as every state and local jurisdiction has varying rules and regulations for development. As Coulter explained, some states, mainly concentrated in the northeast, have incentive programs in place to drive renewable energy adoption. Developing in these states can be extremely beneficial as the incentives provide financial support for the project.

There must be a demand for renewable energy in the area being developed, so assessing that need and identifying the potential energy off takers (i.e., the entities who will buy the energy created) is an important first step.

“The developing party will also need to get buy-in from the landfill owner, perform due diligence on the site to ensure it's suitable for development and identify any potential setbacks or site restrictions early on,” Coulter said. Obtaining the closure

report for the landfill is critical as it provides information on the makeup of the landfill, what the cap is composed of and the thickness of the geomembrane layers. Once due diligence is completed, the permitting process begins at the federal, state and local levels. Upon permitting approval, construction can move forward.

DePrima said the physical processes for placing solar arrays on closed landfills is not much different from a greenfield site, with a few exceptions.

“A closed landfill generally has a physical cap. The solar installation must respect the cap and any environmental prohibitions over penetrating the cap,” DePrima said.

Benefits Aplenty

As Coulter explained, using closed landfills for solar development offers several benefits. First, installing a solar system on a closed landfill is a beneficial use of an otherwise undevelopable area.

“For many municipalities with a desire to implement local solar projects, closed landfills are among the best candidate sites, often offering both the

See GOING SOLAR, Page B6

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Veolia and Suez reach merger agreement

Veolia and Suez announced that their respective boards of directors reached an agreement in principle on the key terms and conditions of a merger between the two groups.

The two groups have agreed on a price of €20.50 per Suez share subject to the signature of a Combination Agreement. Subject to obtaining a fairness opinion in accordance with applicable regulations, this offer would be recommended by the board of directors of Suez upon signature of the definitive agreements.

The agreement would allow:

- The creation of a new Suez made up of assets forming a coherent and sustainable group from an industrial and social standpoint, with real growth potential, with revenues of around €7 billion.

- The implementation of Veolia's plan to create a global champion of ecological transformation, with revenues of around €37 billion, through the Suez takeover bid, in which all the strategic assets identified by Veolia will remain.

- The reiteration of Veolia's social commitments for a period of four years after the closing of the offer.

- With a view to the integration and mix of teams, commitments to be made by Veolia regarding the composition of the management teams at headquarters and in the countries.

The two groups propose that the new Suez resulting from this agreement should be owned by a group of shareholders including financial partners from both groups and by employees. The majority of the shareholders of the new Suez will be French.

In order to guarantee the conditions for the long-term development of the new Suez:

- Its shareholders will have to subscribe to the social commitments for

four years from the closing of the takeover bid;

- Its shareholders will have to undertake to maintain their positions over the long term.

Its scope will be the municipal water and solid waste activities of Suez in France (including CIRSEE, the main research center in France), as well as the activities of Suez in particular in water and in the following geographies: Italy (including the stake in Acea), the Czech Republic, Africa (including Lydec), Central Asia, India, China, Australia, and the global digital and environmental activities (SES).

This agreement in principle also provides for:

- The termination of the agreements with Cleanaway in accordance with their terms concerning the disposal of the assets in Australia (subject to the Sydney assets) and the suspension of any other significant disposal, which allows Veolia to acquire in particular all the assets designated as strategic in its draft offer document filed on February 8 with the Autorité des marchés financiers.

- The deactivation of the Dutch foundation in relation with the Suez announcements.

- The suspension of ongoing legal proceedings and, upon signature of the final agreements, the withdrawal of Suez and Veolia from all ongoing litigation and the absence of any new proceedings between them.

- The full cooperation of Suez, Veolia and the shareholders of the new Suez in obtaining all necessary authorizations (competition, foreign investments, etc.) as quickly as possible and under the best possible conditions.

The two groups have agreed to enter into definitive merger agreements by May 14.

Rumpke acquires 466 acres of land in Ohio for landfill

Rumpke purchased 466 acres of land adjacent to the current Bond Road Landfill in Whitewater Township, Ohio. With this purchase, Rumpke will continue to develop the site and make improvements to the site including:

- New entrance: Relocating the landfill entrance to Sand Run Road, which will improve traffic safety, ensure direct access to I-275 and create an attractive façade along Sand Run Road.

- New infrastructure: Rumpke is adding a new commercial drive, truck scales, scale house, wheel wash and storage area.

- New space: Rumpke will begin permitting additional landfill space as a contingency only, with no plans for immediate use.

These renovations and site updates will occur from now through 2024, and over time the landfill will begin to accept trash daily. Although engineering work, the renovations mentioned above and landfill permitting for additional capacity may begin within the next couple of years, landfill construc-

tion on the newly purchased property won't start for decades. In fact, many of the previous homeowners will continue to live in their homes.

It's important to clarify and emphasize that there are no plans to make the Bond Road facility the same type of disposal site as Rumpke Sanitary Landfill in Colerain Township. The two facilities are very different and will remain that way. Rumpke's Colerain Township landfill will continue to be the primary site for the tri-state's trash. The Colerain site recently received permitting for 30 years of additional capacity and is permitted to accept up to 12,500 tons per day.

Rumpke's New Baltimore Landfill, a much smaller construction and demolition debris site, is almost full and will close later this year, prompting consideration of alternative capacity for smaller landfill volumes. Identifying alternative landfill capacity at Rumpke's other sites, allows us to better conserve essential capacity at Rumpke Sanitary Landfill.

Waga Energy to deploy its landfill renewable natural gas technology in Quebec

Waga Energy, a European leader in landfill gas-to-renewable natural gas (RNG) technology, has been enlisted by The Mauricie Residual Materials Management Board (RGMRM) to deploy its innovative gas upgrading solution at the Saint-Étienne-des-Grès landfill, in Quebec. The green gas produced will be purchased by Énergir, the largest gas distribution company in the province, and injected into its gas grid on-site. This landfill gas-to-RNG project will be the first in Canada to use the Wagabox® technology, developed by Waga Energy to recover landfill gas in the form of RNG, also known as bi-methane.

Under the agreement, Waga Energy will buy the landfill gas from RGMRM for a period of at least 20 years. It will then be transformed into grid-compliant RNG by a Wagabox gas treatment unit built on-site. Waga Energy will generate income by selling its RNG production to Énergir. Until now, the landfill gas at Saint-Étienne-des-Grès was captured and burned in a flare.

Designed to process 3,400 cubic meters of biogas per hour, the Wagabox unit in Saint-Étienne-des-Grès will produce 468,000 GJ of renewable gas per year, corresponding to the annual consumption of 8,000 local households. The Wagabox unit will be built in Shawinigan by a local company under the supervision of Waga Energy's Canadian subsidiary, except for the cryogenic distillation

module which will be imported from France. The project is scheduled to be completed by 2022.

Mathieu Lefebvre, president and co-founder of Waga Energy, said, "Thanks to the Wagabox solution, hundreds of landfill sites across the U.S. and Canada will be able to produce renewable natural gas, contribute to the energy transition, and generate a new revenue stream, without the need for investment, and free from additional operating constraints."

The project carried out jointly by RGMRM and Waga Energy will improve the environmental record of Mauricie and will contribute to Quebec's energy transition. It will prevent the release of 23,000 tons of CO₂ per year into the atmosphere by substituting renewable gas for fossil natural gas.

Michel Angers, president of Renault Lortie, vice-president, customers and gas supply, at Énergir, concluded: "The development of the green gas industry in Quebec is one of the cornerstones of our efforts to decarbonize our economy. Énergir aims to inject an ever-increasing amount of renewable gas into its network, corresponding to a volume of at least 10 percent that of the annual volume it distributes by 2030. This fantastic project brings us a step closer to this objective, demonstrates the value of smart circular economy, and allows more and more of our customers to benefit from clean and local energy".

AR EQUIPMENT SPOTLIGHT

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UPCOMING TOPICS

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U.S. EPA orders cleanup at waste hauler facility in Guam

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has ordered Detry Pumping Services, Inc. to adopt environmentally responsible practices for disposing and storing of fats, oils and grease (FOG) and upgrade its facility to address Clean Water Act violations at their Piti-Santa Rita facility.

“Facilities that store large amounts of fats, oil and grease must comply with the Spill, Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure requirements,” said Amy Miller, EPA Pacific Southwest regional director of enforcement and compliance assurance. “Improper storage and disposal of fats, oil and grease at Detry Pumping Service, Inc. pose a risk to aquatic life in nearby Antantano river.”

Since 1998, Detry has operated a facility that collects fats, oils and grease from local restaurants in Guam. An EPA inspection in 2017 found that Detry had not prepared an adequate Spill, Prevention, Control and Countermeasure Plan (SPCC) to prevent discharge of oil to surface waters nor implemented all requirements of the Clean Water Act. Furthermore, the inspection found the facility mixed FOG with powdered-lime mineral to create a slurry and then dumped it on the facility grounds, 300 feet from the Antantano river. In 2019, a second site visit by EPA found no significant improvements.

Detry is required to take the following actions:

- Dispose of improper stored waste in a manner consistent with federal and local laws.
- Remove all partially buried oil storage tanks.
- Conduct an analytical report of the FOG and lime slurry waste.
- Make facility upgrades, including above ground storage tank testing.
- Update the facility’s SPCC plan and complete a final cleanup report.

FOG from restaurants, homes and industrial sources are the most common cause of reported sewer blockages (47 percent) nationwide. According to the Guam Water Authority, these blockages cost Guam residents over \$500,000 annually and cause raw sewage spills. Installing grease traps or grease interceptors and/or collecting used FOG in containers for proper disposal at facilities designed and operated to manage this waste can reduce impacts to the environment.

A nurse told the new parents, “You have a cute baby!”

The smiling dad said, “I bet you say that to all the new parents.”

She replied, “No, only to the really good looking babies.”

When the dad asked what she says to the other parents, she winked and said, “I always tell them that the baby looks just like them.”

Ten waste industry businesses merge to form WIN Waste Innovations

Wheelabrator Technologies Inc. announced the integration of 10 leading waste industry businesses into a single company operating under the WIN Waste Innovations brand name. As one entity, the legacy businesses now represent a vertically integrated, curb-to-grid waste management company designed to enhance customer service and deliver superior, sustainable waste solutions tailored to the needs of each customer.

Along with the new operating name, WIN Waste Innovations unveiled its tagline to convey the brand’s dual focus on customer service and sustainability: Performance for the Planet.

WIN Waste Innovations is comprised of the former Wheelabrator Technologies as well as Stamford, Connecticut-based City Carting & Recycling and Tunnel Hill Partners; Londonderry, New Hampshire-based Charles George Waste Disposal & Recycling; Westboro, Massachusetts-based United Material Management; Eliot, Maine-based Shipyard Waste Solutions; Atkinson, New Hampshire-based Bay State Disposal; Westchester

County-based County Waste Management, Inc.; Fitchburg, Massachusetts-based Fiore Trucking Recycle & Disposal and the commercial and residential subscription business of West Bridgewater, Massachusetts-based Noonan Waste Service.

“By bringing together these 10 industry leading companies under a single brand, WIN Waste Innovations has positioned itself to deliver essential services to our customers and communities while performing for the planet,” said WIN Waste Innovations president and chief executive officer Robert C. Boucher. “We strive to exceed our customers’ expectations every day, delivering comprehensive, tailored waste services from a professional, responsible team you can count on. Our passionate and professional employees are dedicated to delivering exceptional customer service and end-to-end solutions that begin with reliable waste pickup at the curb and end with flexible disposal options designed to support a healthier planet.”

The company operates from Maine to Florida and as far west as Ohio. By retaining the well-established teams

that managed the respective legacy brands, WIN Waste Innovations will broaden and deepen its operational footprint in the Northeast and other markets of strategic interest, while ensuring a seamless transition for customers. In all, the combined company operates 50 strategically located collection, transfer and disposal assets, and serves more than 110,000 collections customers on 231 collection routes utilizing 346 total collection vehicles and eight hauling locations.

“The combination of these established collection, hauling, transfer and waste-to-energy companies enables WIN Waste Innovations to provide the holistic approach to waste management our customers and communities need,” said Boucher. “In addition to providing exceptional customer service at every point along the value chain, we are preserving our natural resources.

“As a combined company, each year we convert 6.7 million tons of waste into clean, renewable energy to power 340,000 homes and recycle more than 234,000 tons of plastic, paper and metal from the waste stream.”

Ohio man fined for illegal waste dumping

A waste hauler in Clermont County, Ohio has been ordered to pay \$1.5 million in civil penalties after an investigation by the office of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost found that he illegally dumped significant amounts of waste on his property.

In February, Yost filed an eight count complaint in Clermont County Common Pleas Court against Donald Combs of rural Milford and his wife, Anita. In March, a judge upheld the complaint and found violations of Ohio’s laws on solid waste, construction and demolition debris. The judge also held that the waste constituted a public nuisance.

The case was referred to the Attorney General’s Environmental Enforcement Section (EES) by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and Clermont County Public Health after numerous complaints of open dumping and open burning.

The court found that the Ohio EPA and Clermont County Public Health spent substantial time inspecting Combs’ properties for persistent violations of court orders. These inspections, followed by the significant legal work of the EES, were “extraordinary,” according to the judge.

The EES proved that Donald Combs for years covered acres of land near his home and commercial properties with tens of thousands of pounds of construction debris, solid waste, trash and scrap tires. An Ohio EPA inspector testified that some of the piles were over 20’ high and that cleanup costs for the sites approach nearly \$1.3 million.

Goshen Township Fire Department Chief Steve Pegram testified that the fire department had been to Combs site numerous times and that the site was a fire hazard.

Combs, who solicited business mostly via Craigslist, undercut competitors who were factoring in the appropriate costs of properly dumping waste in a landfill.

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EQUIPMENT SPOTLIGHT

Compactors

by MARY M. THORNTON

maryt@americanrecycler.com

Business owners face many challenges when it comes to waste handling and the environment is burdened by non-compacted trash, which enlarges landfills and causes more frequent hauling and increases CO2 emissions. An industrial compactor can help reduce or eliminate such problems, providing a minimum 4:1 compaction ratio, when compared to open top dumpster use.

The Baletch Recycling Equipment compactor line, manufactured by J.M. Hydraulics, includes stationary and self-contained units. Self-contained units are manufactured on a 22 foot skid to allow for optimal waste intake. "Our under carriage skid is constructed like no other in the industry. It includes a system Baletch developed, which prevents flexing or bowing. Our stationary units are offered in various sizes to suit each customer's particular needs. Along with choosing the best compactor for the customer's application, we offer custom-made feed hoppers to maximize the feeding ability and make it as easy as possible for each specific need," stated Angel Martinez, sales manager.



JM Hydraulics, Inc.

He continued, "Whether stationary or self-contained, our rams are built heavy duty and have wear liners to extend the life of the equipment. Each unit is built with ease of repair in mind and not only to keep costs down, but allow for extended life with easily replaceable wear and tear parts. As an example, our model #SC6042 has improved over the years as industry quality and durability requirements evolve. Our customers know that when it comes to their waste compaction needs, Baletch products will ensure that units are filled to maximum vol-

ume, saving them money. Baletch produces quality you can depend on and our heavy duty compactors are built tough enough to surpass today's recycling needs."

"We also manufacture industrial vertical and horizontal balers, dumpers and custom equipment. Based in Southern California, we can save coast customers quite a large amount in freight and installation charges. Along with recycling centers, we've provided equipment and services to retail, distribution, medical and apartment settings and more, for over 20 years. We've provided repairs services to our local community for over 30 years."

Epax Systems offers a wide range of waste compactor products. Stefan Nielsen, chief operating officer, explained, "The most unique among them is the Ropax Rolling Compactor. Designed specifically for use with open top containers or dumpsters, they utilize a two ton rolling drum with solid steel metal spikes attached to an articulating arm. As the arm moves back and forth, the drum repeatedly rolls over the waste and rips, tears and compacts debris, allowing for maximum dumpster usage capacity. Uncompacted dumpster waste can be as much as 80 percent air. With the Ropax, up to 80 percent of dumpster capacity is filled with waste and only 20 percent air. By maximizing the amount of waste a dumpster can hold, waste hauls and the associated costs are dramatically reduced."

Three styles of Ropax compactors are available. The Ropax Jumbo services a single container. The Ropax Traversing Compactor sits on a rail system and can service up to eight side-by-side containers. Also, the Ropax Mobile can be driven to various locations at a facility or manufacturing campus, to service containers in several locations.

"Users of open top containers routinely attempt to increase the amount of waste dumpsters can hold. Unfortunately, in doing so, they often employ ineffective and sometimes dangerous techniques, including climbing into a

dumpster. A Ropax Rolling Compactor offers a far more effective and much safer solution to open top container compaction. In addition to cost savings, Ropax addresses important sustainability issues, including minimizing landfill waste volume—and limiting truck travel and associated vehicle emissions and fossil fuel consumption."

Harmony Enterprises manufactures 16 models of indoor, stationary, vertical



Epax Systems, Inc.

and self-contained compactors. Machines range in size from 1 to 40 cubic yards, can be vertical or horizontal in orientation, and compact dry or wet waste types. Each product is designed for specific applications to reduce waste volume, hauling, vermin, odor, pilferage, carbon emissions from trucks and waste handling expenses. "Harmony's long lasting compactor solutions are constructed with heavy-duty steel and provide industry leading cycle times and compaction ratios. "Our outdoor stationary and self-contained compactors are configurable for a variety of feeding options, depending on customer volume and operations," said Lane Powell, new business development manager.

He added, "We assist clients in choosing the correct compactor for their business, depending on factors such as the type of waste being compacted, available space, the volume of waste generated, and budget. To meet these challenges, Harmony provides purchase, leasing, and rental options – all with industry leading warranty and service coverage throughout the U.S. All equipment meets or exceeds OSHA and ANSI safety standards and their control panels are UL listed.

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See COMPACTORS, Page B5



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Second trash executive charged with bribery

John Francis Porter, the former vice president and group manager of Recology's San Francisco Group, has been charged in a federal criminal complaint with bribing former director of San Francisco Department of Public Works (DPW) Mohammed Nuru and with money laundering, announced Acting U.S. Attorney Stephanie Hinds, Internal Revenue Service – criminal investigation acting special agent in charge Michael Daniels, and Federal Bureau of Investigation special agent in charge Craig D. Fair.

The complaint alleges that Porter of San Francisco, bribed Nuru and participated in laundering the proceeds of the bribe as part of an alleged years-long scheme to defraud the public of its right to honest services. Porter was group controller and later vice president and general manager of Recology's San Francisco Group, which provides refuse collection and disposal services in the City of San Francisco. Porter was a central player in the scheme detailed in the complaint that provided Nuru, then the DPW director, with a continuous stream of money and benefits to influence Nuru to engage in official acts benefitting Recology.

Nuru resigned as the director of San Francisco's DPW after being charged in a January 16, 2020, federal complaint with honest services fraud for a scheme to bribe a San Francisco Airport Commissioner. The prosecution of Nuru remains underway.

Porter is the second Recology employee charged. Paul Giusti, the former Recology San Francisco group gov-

ernment and community relations manager who reported to Porter, was charged in a November 18, 2020, federal complaint with bribery and money laundering for his role in the same conduct described in complaint allegations against Porter. Giusti's prosecution is continuing.

The specific charge of the complaint alleges that in the summer of 2018, Recology sought to raise the "tipping fees" it charged the City of San Francisco for dumping materials at the Recology Sustainable Crushing facility. During the summer and fall of 2018, the complaint alleges, Porter sought Nuru's assistance with Recology's efforts to increase the tipping fee. Porter enlisted the help of his subordinate Giusti, who had a close relationship with Nuru.

The complaint states that Porter emailed Nuru seeking assistance in obtaining the tipping fee increase on November 26, 2018. Thereafter, Giusti agreed to give Nuru a bribe of \$20,000 to influence his official actions on the proposed increase. The complaint describes that Porter gave written approval for Recology to issue a \$20,000 check described as a "holiday donation" to the Lefty O'Doul's Foundation for Kids, a non-profit organization to help underprivileged San Francisco children run by Nick Bovis. Giusti provided the bribe money to the Lefty O'Doul's Foundation, and Bovis used the Recology money to pay for Nuru's elaborate DPW holiday party, not to help underprivileged San Francisco children. Despite the bribe, the attempt to increase the tipping fee was

ultimately unsuccessful. Bovis pleaded guilty to honest services fraud in May 2020 for bribing Nuru.

The complaint further describes Porter's role in the Recology San Francisco Group's efforts, acting through executives including Giusti and Porter, to direct benefits to Nuru totaling over \$1 million to influence Nuru, who was Recology's regulator. Recology had an ongoing need for Nuru's approvals, including for rate increases for residential garbage collection. The complaint cites an email that Porter sent in 2015 to a colleague at Recology: "Mohammed is the director of the DPW who ultimately signs off on our rates. Needless to say, keeping him happy is important."

To keep Nuru happy, the complaint alleges that Giusti, with the approval of Porter or Porter's immediate predecessor, arranged for Recology to provide Nuru with a stream of benefits over years. Porter ultimately approved \$55,000 to fund Nuru's DPW holiday parties in payments disguised as charitable Lefty O'Doul's Foundation donations. The complaint also describes Porter's role in approving hundreds of thousands of dollars over years in Recology payments made, at Nuru's directions, to a San Francisco non-profit, ostensibly for a DPW program called "Giant Sweep." That non-profit held the money for about a week or two, then took a 5 percent cut and sent the money at Nuru's direction to accounts controlled by Nuru at another non-profit. Recology's payments to Nuru were closely tied in time to specific needs for Nuru's assistance and approval.

Porter is charged with one count of bribery, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 666(a)(2), and one count of laundering the proceeds of honest services fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1956(a)(1)(B)(i). If convicted of bribery, he faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. If convicted of concealment money laundering, he faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison, a fine of \$500,000 or twice the value of the property involved in the transaction, or both. However, any sentence following conviction would be imposed by the court only after consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal statute governing imposition of a sentence, 18 U.S.C. § 3553.

The charges contained in the criminal complaint are mere allegations. As in any criminal case, the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

Thus far in the San Francisco City Hall corruption probe, 11 defendants have been charged, and multiple defendants have pled guilty. Most recently, Sandra Zuniga of South San Francisco and the former director of both the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services and San Francisco's Fix-It Team, entered her plea of guilty to a charge of conspiring to launder money with the former DPW director Muhammed Nuru. Zuniga entered her guilty plea in a plea agreement that remains partly under seal in which she agrees to cooperate with the FBI in the public corruption investigation relating to San Francisco government.

Compactors ■Continued from Page B4

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Going solar

■Continued from Page B1

largest potential project space and the greatest economic value for the municipality," Coulter said. "Landfills make great sites for community solar installations, which provide local municipalities and residents access to renewable energy at a reduced cost, and for which municipalities can receive lease revenue for hosting the solar project."

In addition to the environmental benefits, solar installations on landfills can also generate up to millions of dollars in economic benefits to municipalities in the form of lease revenue and/or electricity bill savings.

Also, according to Coulter, when a solar installation is developed on a close landfill, the long term owner of that solar asset often takes over the operation and maintenance responsibilities for the landfill (e.g., maintaining the grass, etc.), which can save local municipalities money and resources.

"The benefits of these projects bring new revenue to landfill owners through the sale of electric to the local electric utility or displacing electric use on site," DePrima said. "In some states there are other cash benefits like the sale of renewable energy credits. For landfills owned by the private sector there are federal tax incentives. Some public landfill owners lease the land to third party operators, generating additional land lease income. In general, these sites help the economy by creating green construction jobs. Finally, many local governments and private operators have sustainability goals for which these projects help them fulfill their mission."

Embracing Challenges of Closed Landfills for Solar Energy

And while there are many benefits to developing solar systems on closed landfills, there are also a few drawbacks. The main drawback is that closed landfills are typically more expensive to develop compared to open greenfield sites, due to the higher level of complexity and the specialized equipment, materials, and skills required for the installation.

For example, according to Coulter, ballasting systems are often

required to anchor the installation without puncturing the landfill's cap, or a crane may be needed to keep the landfill from caving in while the systems are being put into place.

"Additionally, the permitting process is often tougher for landfills than other greenfield sites as any changes to post-closure plans must be filed. This process can be lengthy, adding additional costs for consulting and regulatory filing," Coulter said. "The landfill owner may also stipulate that repairs be made to the landfill, such as fixing the cap, before developing the site for solar, which can also add costs. Additionally, since many landfills are located in rural areas with outdated electrical systems, developers may need to upgrade portions of the electrical system to connect into the grid."

In addition, the shape and the age of the landfill will also impact the ability to develop. If a landfill has too many slopes or not enough surface area, it can be difficult to design a system with a large enough capacity to make it worthwhile. The age of the landfill is very important as the settlement rate is often highest during the first 10 years after being closed or capped. Landfills which have been closed for over 10 years are often best suited for development.

Looking Ahead

Industry experts agree that landfills will continue to close and present opportunity for development. As Coulter said, these sites are particularly great for community solar installations, which continue to grow in popularity as the country increasingly prioritizes sustainability initiatives that will help slow the impacts of climate change. "I can only see this trend continuing to grow as more and more states implement community solar or similar incentives," Coulter said.

DePrima said that as the cost of constructing solar systems continue to fall, and as electric rates continue to rise across the country, economic incentives for constructing solar systems on closed landfills will increase. "Also, the technology for placing solar arrays over closed landfills has become proven, closing the risk gaps that previously may have discouraged operators in the past," DePrima said.

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ALDI takes steps to reduce waste

ALDI disclosed a new sustainability charter to demonstrate its commitment to protecting the planet's resources and ecosystems with a series of initiatives that will be achieved between now and 2030. The bold approach highlights commitments to lower greenhouse gases, reduce food and operational waste, improve packaging and source responsibly. Each of these commitments will have a positive impact on the environment while continuing to provide customers with accessible and affordable choices.

"ALDI has a responsibility to protect the environment and we know it's an important priority for our customers," said Jason Hart, chief executive officer, ALDI U.S. "We are committed to evaluating and implementing sustainable business practices while always offering the highest quality products at prices that can't be beat."

The ALDI sustainability charter includes the following initiatives:

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent by 2025.

The grocery retailer will reduce emissions through a continued transition to solar and wind energy sourcing and build out its renewable infrastructure to rely less on grey power grids. ALDI currently has solar panels at 111 stores and 12 distribution centers nationwide and will add solar to warehouses in Alabama and Kansas, as well as roughly 60 stores by the end of 2022. ALDI has been recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a green power leader and currently purchases enough renewable energy annually to power its more than 2,000 stores, 25 warehouses and offices. ALDI is sourcing this power through Green-e and receives renewable energy certificates to validate its clean energy investment.

All ALDI U.S. warehouses and nearly 400 stores use natural refrigerants that reduce the environmental impact by up to 4,000 times compared to common refrigerants. ALDI will continue to shift to natural refrigerants in all store locations. In 2020, ALDI earned more EPA GreenChill store certifications than any supermarket chain previously, all at the highest platinum level.

Divert 90 percent of operational waste by 2025 and strive to reduce food waste by 50 percent by 2030.

Plans to achieve these aggressive goals are in development and are expected to include composting, non-food donation programs and expanded recycling and food recovery initiatives. ALDI already diverts waste from store and warehouse operations and has recycling efforts in place for food, plastic film, corrugated cardboard, paper, metals and other materials. In 2020, ALDI recycled nearly 300,000 tons of material, avoiding the greenhouse gas emission equivalent of nearly 9 million gallons of gasoline per month. In the same year, to combat both food waste and food insecurity, ALDI donated more than 29 million pounds of product that would have otherwise gone to landfills to local food banks through its longstanding partnership with Feeding America.

Reduce packaging materials by 15 percent and convert all ALDI-exclusive packaging to reusable, recyclable or compostable materials by 2025.

The company's ability to influence packaging is significant, as more than 90 percent of the products ALDI sells are exclusive items. By the end of 2021, Styrofoam will be removed from all produce packaging. ALDI will continue to make progress toward a series of packaging commitments made in 2019 to reduce packaging and to make 100 percent of ALDI-exclusive packaging – including plastic packaging – reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025. To date, ALDI has redesigned packaging to remove or reduce excess plastic from products such as teas and bread. In select stores, ALDI is also introducing alternative packaging for perishables like blueberries and tomatoes, which uses 20 percent less plastic than traditional containers, and for mixed bell peppers, which uses 44 percent less plastic.

In addition, the grocery retailer is labeling products to promote recycling at home, using cardboard sleeves for more than 90 percent of apparel items, and trialing recyclable and compostable paper bags for apples in some stores.

ALDI has never offered single-use plastic bags at checkout and only sells reusable plastic and cloth bags, which the company estimates has kept more than 15 billion bags out of landfills and oceans. ALDI is also testing a new initiative to remove all multi-use plastic bags from six stores in Richmond, Virginia. "The global impact of plastics can't be ignored," said Hart. "We can't get rid of plastic everywhere overnight, but we continue to work to eliminate plastics anywhere we can. Where we do need plastic, we are committed to choosing materials that contribute to a circular plastic economy."

Expand sustainable sourcing of coffee, while continuing to source cocoa and seafood sustainably.

Together with its business partners, ALDI will promote human rights, increase supply chain transparency and ensure products are designed and produced in an environmentally friendly way. More than 40 coffee products are currently certified as sustainable, and ALDI is the second-largest private-label purchase of Fair Trade USA coffee. In addition, all Barissimo and Simply Nature coffees will be certified as sustainably sourced by the end of 2022.

All ALDI exclusive brand chocolate bars and chocolate confectionery are certified as sustainably sourced by Fairtrade, Fair Trade USA or Rainforest Alliance, which drives long-term environmental impact across the globe.

All ALDI-exclusive brand fresh, frozen and canned seafood is sourced from responsible fisheries and farms, and 100 seafood products are certified as sustainably sourced by a third party. ALDI has taken a further step in its commitment to seafood sustainability by making the origin of its brand of wild-caught seafood transparent and available to the public through the Ocean Disclosure Project.

WM elects new board members

Waste Management announced that Sean Menke, president and chief executive officer of Sabre Corporation, and Maryrose Sylvester, former U.S. managing director and U.S. head of electrification for ABB Ltd., have been elected to its board of directors, effective immediately.

Menke is a proven transformation leader, using his extensive experience in technology and transportation operations to bring together strategy and data to address complex issues. Since the end of 2016, he has served as president and chief executive officer, and a member of the board of directors, of Sabre Corporation, a global software and technology company that powers the travel industry. Before joining Sabre, Menke spent more than 20 years in executive leadership roles in the airline industry, including at Hawaiian Airlines, Pinnacle Airlines, Frontier Airlines and Air Canada.

Sylvester is a strategic, growth-oriented leader who is passionate about technology, innovation and automation. Most recently, she served as U.S. managing director and U.S. head of electrification for ABB Group, a global technology company, operating mainly in areas of electrification, robotics, power, and automation. Prior to joining ABB Group, Sylvester spent more than 30 years at GE, serving most recently as president and chief executive officer of Current, a digital power service business that delivers integrated energy systems. She serves on the board of directors of Harley-Davidson, Inc.

Menke will serve on the audit committee, and Sylvester will serve on the management development and compensation committee. These elections expand Waste Management's board of directors to 10 members, 9 of whom are independent directors.

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