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The pandemic's impact on plastic use and recycling



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Challenges of fire prevention at recycling facilities

by MAURA KELLER

mkeller@americanrecycler.com

The number of fires at waste and recycling facilities in 2020 continued to be an issue as industry players grappled with an influx of recycled materials due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as potentially hazardous materials, including combustible lithium-ion batteries.

According to Fire Rover, a fire prevention company in West Bloomfield, Michigan, in September 2020 there were 28 waste and recycling facility fire incidents. Scrap metal fires made up 57 percent of those incidents – and when adding electronic scrap, the amount increases to 65 percent. From March 2020 to March 2021, the waste and recycling industry has experienced 302 reported facility fires in the U.S. and Canada. Considering the amount of combustibles involved and the spark-producing equipment being used, today’s recyclers must be serious about fire safety and provide safety training so that their employees can identify hazards and prevent catastrophic outcomes that can result from facility fires.

“Recycling plants are generally extremely dirty environments and therefore the movement of recyclables by heavy machinery in and of itself poses a risk,” said Andrew Guarino, chief executive officer and business strategist at AG Consulting. “Heavy machinery can overheat and catch fire. The larger machines may have some form of chemical extinguishment features but most do not.” Guarino founded, built, and operated a fire alarm and fire protection business by developing a comprehensive long term strategy and coalescing a diverse group of talented people into a powerful team that generated unprecedented profitability.

Guarino said there is greater awareness as to the complexities of recyclables movement, storage and processing. While the logistics have evolved significantly, fire safety technology has advanced little except for the design of building materials that are fire retardant used to build the facilities.

“This evolution has been a necessity. Downtime due to fire and extinguishing a fire has challenged both the fire departments and the staff manning the facilities,” Guarino said. “The incidents are so frequent as to cause great disruption and therefore loss.”

According to the Environmental Education and Research Foundation, while data exists on the frequency of fires at recycling facilities, scrap yards,



A paper recycling plant in New Brunswick burned quickly on May 17, 2021.

as well as involving collection vehicles, there is less data about what is causing the fires. However, industry experts suggested that the increased use of lithium-ion batteries has been contributing to fires recently.

For instance, in April 2021, the city of Tulsa, Oklahoma announced that it would redirect its residential recycling stream to a waste energy plant, due to a fire at a local MRF as a result of improperly discarded lithium-ion batteries. The fire took place at the Tulsa Recycle Transfer Facility, which had to suspend operations to complete repairs. In January 2021, an ion lithium battery also ignited at the ecomaine Recycling Center in Portland, Maine. The fire was quickly contained, though smoke persisted in the plant for a number of hours as crews separated flammable cardboard and paper from the affected area.

And the California Product Stewardship Council recently examined the various fires at California waste facilities and determined that over 50 percent of fires in these facilities were linked to batteries.

Of course, not all recent fires within recycling facilities are caused by batteries. In late April 2021, Northern Metal Recycling in Minneapolis experienced a fire that is believed to have been the result of spontaneous combustion that was potentially sparked by metal scraped against metal, while surrounded by combustible materials such as foam and insulation.

According to Chad Connor, owner of Affordable Fire and Safety, a fire service and inspection company in Phoenix, Arizona, the biggest issue with fire prevention and recycling is the number of different materials being handled, many of which have different

reactions and require different methods to put out a fire.

“For instance, a fire caused by recycled cardboard is going to require a different approach than a battery fire,” Connor said. “The fire is not the main safety issue but what recycled materials are causing the fire and how do you put that type of fire out.”

What fire prevention practices are being used by recycling facilities these days?

- Make fire prevention equipment accessible
- Dispose of flammable substances properly
- Use fire/smoke detectors
- Practice regular maintenance
- Safely store items
- Keep a clean environment
- Take precautionary measures
- Have proper building security
- Have designated smoking areas

Other big issues facing recycling companies as they relate to fire prevention include an exposure to harmful and combustible chemical substances, equipment, vehicles and improperly secured material bales, dust and airborne contaminants, and of course, improperly trained employees.

Connor recommended recycling facility owners and operators install a fire hose on-site and training your team to use one in order to combat recycling plant fires.

“Fire extinguishers are still the tried and true method for combating many fires though. I would recommend you know which fire extinguishers you should have on-site,” Connor said.

See PREVENTION, Page A4

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Largest collaborative effort in Michigan's history sparks 'recycling and recovery'

Leaders of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) joined with the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, bipartisan lawmakers and Meijer to announce NextCycle Michigan, hailed as the largest collaborative effort in state history to spark the state's "recycling and recovery" economy.

As part of the NextCycle Michigan initiative, EGLE announced that already in 2020 and 2021, \$97 million is being committed to recycling projects through partners that in addition to Meijer include: Henry Ford Health System, GFL Environmental, Carton Council of North America, Goodwill Industries, Keurig Dr Pepper, Foodservice Packaging Institute, U.S. Business Council for Sustainable Development, Emterra Environmental, Washtenaw County, Great Lakes Tissue and more than 30 Michigan companies, organizations and nonprofits.

"The NextCycle Michigan Initiative and Renew Michigan grants marks the largest push in state history to promote recycling activities that divert materials from Michigan landfills, boost local economies, and support Gov. Whitmer's climate change priorities through reductions in greenhouse gas emissions," EGLE director Liesl Clark said during a virtual press conference.

Emterra, for example, is opening a new \$9 million recycling sorting facility built through a collaboration with the cities of Lansing and East Lansing. The facility will use state-of-the-art robotics to process recyclables from more than 676,000 households across 12 counties in and around the capital area, increasing access to recycling throughout the region and creating new jobs in Lansing. The materials from the Emterra facility will then go to businesses like Great Lakes Tissue, in Cheboygan, Michigan, which turns old cartons into toilet paper sold in grocery stores across the state, including Meijer.

In addition, to highlight NextCycle Michigan's launch, EGLE announced a record setting combined total of more than \$4.9 million in Renew Michigan grants to recipients in 45 communities statewide that will support the initiative.

"The funding is part of EGLE's strategy to support recycling infrastructure, improve the quality of recyclable materials, and promote market development using the Renew Michigan Fund, which was created in 2019 to bolster the state's recycling efforts," Clark said.

Michigan is among the first states in the U.S. to introduce this bold partnership that leverages state dollars with private investment to fund shovel-ready projects, state-of-the-art technology installation and innovation grants, Browne noted.

"Our aim is to spark the state's "recycling and recovery" economy," she said. "At EGLE, we know that recycling is one of the most important things you can do every day to make a positive difference for our environment and climate. But what many Michiganders often don't realize is that recycling has become an essential tool in supporting our state's local economies, businesses big and small and major employers in the manufacturing sector."

By turning waste materials into new products made in Michigan, EGLE and its partners plan to achieve the state's goals of saving resources, protecting the climate and contributing to the prosperity of Michigan based companies.

Meijer routinely provides recycling solutions to its customers by offering plastic film recycling and drug-takeback programs, according to Vik Srinivasan, senior vice president for real estate and properties at Meijer. Every year, for example, Meijer keeps more than 100,000 tons of material from the landfill through recycling. Meijer also has food waste reduction programs in its stores

See MICHIGAN, Page 14

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Recycling contributes billions to economy

The U.S. recycling industry contributes \$116 billion in economic output to the national economy, according to preliminary data by the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) during its annual convention and exposition.

“As the industry is gathered virtually for our ISRI2021 annual convention this year, we are proud to celebrate how recycling plays an essential role in not only our environment, but also in the U.S. and global economies,” said ISRI president Robin Wiener. “As the world recovers from a global pandemic, the resilience of the recycling industry once

again shines through with a total economic output that is up 6.4 percent compared with pre-pandemic levels.”

Additional preliminary information from a new study conducted by John Dunham and Associates and released by ISRI finds that the U.S. recycling industry is directly responsible for more than 159,000 jobs. In addition, 346,499 jobs are indirectly supported by the industry through suppliers and services. This totals to more than 506,000 well-paying jobs.

In addition to the industry’s economic impact, recycling benefits the

environment in a number of ways including:

- Conservation of limited natural resources and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by significantly saving the amount of energy needed to manufacture the products that we buy, build, and use every day.

- Reduction in the need to mine for new ore, cut down more trees and otherwise deplete our natural resources.

- Reduction in the amount of material sent to landfills, thereby preserving the land for better uses.

Prevention

■Continued from Page 1

“Depending on what type of fire you are dealing with you may need a dry chemical fire extinguisher or a carbon dioxide one. Consult with a fire expert on what types of extinguishers you need.”

Newest Innovations

One of the key mistakes Guarino has seen recycling and waste management companies make as it relates to fire prevention within their facilities includes using fire protection engineers who design the fire detection/protection technologies without accounting for the caustic and ever active environments.

“Therefore, companies must find experienced engineers that design according to plant operations and the associated challenges,” Guarino said.

“There are two aspects of fire prevention; the design and building of these facilities and then retrofitting existing facilities. In the first case, it is a matter of designing the systems in an integrated fashion and accounting for ambient conditions such as severe humidity and high heat.”

The environments within recycling facilities are vastly different according to the materials being handled, the equipment being used, as well as the design of the building or location itself. For instance, for fire detection, devices deployed must be weatherproof and in some cases, enclosed. These devices must also be fully adjustable for a range of these ambient conditions.

“Smoke detection today utilizes technology that can compensate for these conditions and detect the difference between dust particulate as opposed to smoke particulate,” Guarino said. “In the case of fire protec-

tion, the systems must be robust enough and compartmentalized enough to extinguish the flame as quickly as possible.”

There is technology deployed in Europe and many parts of the world that uses oxygen management as a way to prevent a fire event. However, this technology has not yet been approved in the U.S. due to OSHA standards.

It is also advised that recycling companies explore and potentially invest in the newest fire prevention technologies as they become available. Connor noted that there are a lot of new technologies in the industry, such as trash compactors that have integrated fire safety technology. Trash compactors will automatically put out a fire with the right agent and the right amount of that agent.

Precautions Are Key

To head off the inherent fire risk facing companies across the recycling industry, there are some key safety practices that need to be established. Most importantly, a recycling facility should conduct a fire risk assessment and then determine proper protection strategies based upon the risk assessment.

Once the initial risk assessment is completed, that risk assessment should be valid unless changes are made at the facility or within the community.

Following that initial step, companies need to ensure there is an updated fire suppression system for the company.

Another key step that companies should take to mitigate their fire risk is to determine the applicable local fire code requirements. Once that is done, the recycling facility can utilize the approach contained in the newer editions of the national fire codes.

Partnering with local fire officials is always a positive tool to have. Try to have quarterly and yearly walk-throughs with local officials. In reality, many fire officials will want to see that, at least annually, a recycling company’s fire prevention program is being evaluated for its effectiveness. If the facility experiences an unwanted fire, it would be appropriate to review the program at that time, as well to determine what lessons were learned and determine if any changes need to be made.

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877-777-0043 | Fax 419-931-0740

Owner, Publisher and Editor

ESTHER G. FOURNIER
news@AmericanRecycler.com

Print and Digital Production

MARY E. DARLOW
mary@AmericanRecycler.com

Marketing Representatives

MARY M. THORNTON
maryt@AmericanRecycler.com

MARY E. DARLOW
mary@AmericanRecycler.com

Circulation Manager

DONNA L. MCMANUS
donna@AmericanRecycler.com

Writers and Contributors

MAURA KELLER
mkeller@AmericanRecycler.com

RON STURGEON
rons@rdsinvestments.com

MARY M. THORNTON
maryt@AmericanRecycler.com

Production Offices

1789 Indian Wood Circle, Ste 250
Maumee, OH 43537
877-777-0043 fax 419-931-0740
www.AmericanRecycler.com

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WEBCAST AUCTION

NYC puts all-electric street sweeper into action

The New York City Department of Sanitation, the world's largest municipal sanitation department, unveiled an all-electric street sweeper to lower carbon emissions and pollution as it protects the city's streets. Produced by Global Environmental Products and US Hybrid, supported by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) with technical assistance from CALSTART, the demonstration of this new equipment will be tested in an effort to fundamentally improve the way the streets are cleaned on New York's 19,000 lane-miles of roadway.

Currently, DSNY has approximately 450 traditional street sweepers in use across the 5 boroughs, including 27 hybrid-electric units. This new all-electric broom will be based out of the BKN4 garage in Brooklyn's Bushwick neighborhood. A diesel-powered street sweeper travels 7,000 miles per year and is on the road 301 workdays per year. It is estimated that the all-electric street sweeper will save 89 metric tons of carbon emissions, or the equivalent of taking 19 cars off the road for one year, over the lifetime of the vehicle.

"It doesn't make sense to clean the streets while polluting the air," said Edward Grayson, commissioner



of the New York City Department of Sanitation. "New York City has an ambitious goal of reducing GHG emissions by 80 percent by the year 2035, and greening our fleet will be a key part of getting there. I want to congratulate both our support services team under deputy commissioner Rocco DiRico and our bureau of cleaning and collection under director Garrett O'Reilly on this great new development in street cleaning."

The new street sweeper features one 120kW traction motor and NMC lithium-ion batteries (Lithium Nickel Manganese Cobalt Oxide) that are charged via an AC 20kW, SAE J1772-compliant charging system. It was produced in partnership between Global Environmental Products, who made the broom itself, and US Hybrid, who produced the electric vehicle components and also manufactured the 27 hybrid-electric brooms that are already a part of DSNY's fleet. The City of Tokyo, Japan currently also has one electric street sweeper, but it is a significantly smaller three-wheeled vehicle, making this the first of its kind in the world.

This street sweeper project shows that clean vehicles are expanding into more corners of the transportation system. NYSERDA's support of this project helps

reduce carbon emissions in communities to meet New York State's nation leading climate and clean energy goals under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. CALSTART is providing technical support and collecting and analyzing data from the vehicle to ensure this project's benefits can be measured and its successes can be replicated broadly.



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Youth Recycling Awareness Award winners demonstrate recycling's essential role

The Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) shared the winners of the global 2021 Youth Recycling Awareness Award designed to better educate youth on the value of recycling. Fifth grader Irene Park, from Fairburn Avenue Elementary School in Los Angeles, California is the 2021 poster grand prize winner. Sophomores Nadia Islam, Ada Johnsen-DeWeese, and Rosemarie Alubankudi, from Life Sciences Secondary School in New York, New York are the 2021 video grand prize winners.

The theme of this year's contest was "Recycling is Essential to My Community." In the midst of the COVID 19 crisis, recycling has fallen off many of our radars. Communities that once banned single use plastics and bags are offering these again to reduce the handling of personal cloth bags. Dining and take out is at an all time high and carry out containers are on the rise. People are ordering goods and products online like never before in lieu of in person shopping, increasing the need and use of cardboard boxes and packaging.

Students were tasked with creating a public service announcement in the form of a video or poster that explains to other members in their community or neighborhood why recycling is essential, why they should care, and how they can help.

"The ISRI contest winners serve as inspirational STEM leaders for Jason


Learning and for students across the country," said president and chief executive officer of Jason Learning Eleanor Smalley. "They created innovative, well-designed work that perfectly exemplified the contest's mission: why recycling is essential to our community. The Green Team Video Crew, from New York City, captured our imaginations as they showed why recycling is essential. And Irene Park, from Los Angeles, demonstrated why zero waste makes a better place in her poster. Jason is extremely excited and proud to see these young women interested in exploring STEM and recycling."

Park's poster, titled, "Zero Waste, Better Place," demonstrates how more classroom recyclables can be processed properly, ensuring the valuable commodities do not end up in landfills.

The winning video, titled, "Recycling is Essential to My Community," demonstrates how recycling is essential to local communities from the perspective of a cardboard box that was mistakenly placed in the trash. The video goes on to explain the importance of proper education so that communities recognize valuable recyclables.

Judges evaluated entries on the interpretation and clarity of the theme to the viewer, the persuasiveness of the message, creativity and originality, the quality of the entry, and the overall impression of the entry.



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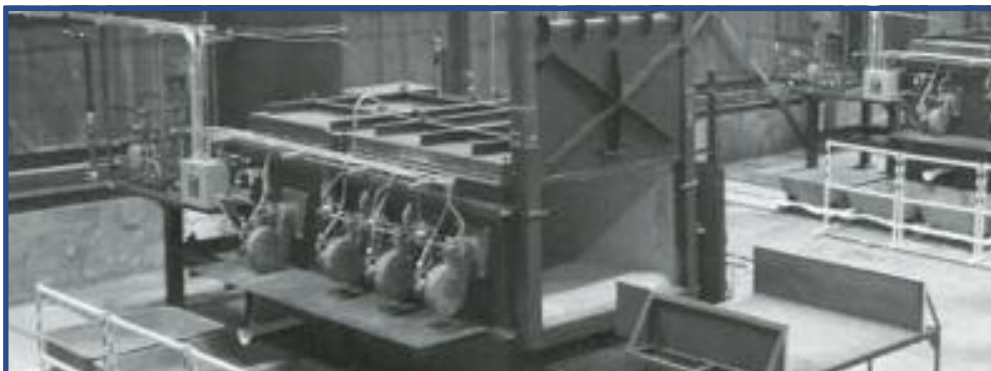
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METALS

Steel imports up over three percent through March 2021

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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 2,292,000 net tons (NT) of steel in March 2021, including 1,774,000 NT of finished steel (up 20.7 percent and 23.6 percent, respectively, vs. February final data). Through the first three months of 2021, total and finished steel imports are 6,613,000 and 4,447,000 NT, up 3.1 percent and down 1.4 percent, respectively, vs. the same period in 2020. Annualized total and finished steel imports in 2021 would be 26.5 and 17.8 million NT, up 20.1 percent and 10.2 percent, respectively, vs. 2020. Finished steel import market share was an estimated 19 percent in March and is estimated at 18 percent over the first three months of 2021.

Key finished steel products with a significant increase in imports in March compared to February are sheets and strip all other metallic coatings (up 171 percent), reinforcing bars (up 66 percent), hot

rolled bars (up 58 percent), oil country goods (up 45 percent), sheets and strip hot dipped galvanized (up 43 percent), cut lengths plates (up 33 percent), mechanical tubing (up 27 percent), wire drawn (up 27 percent), standard pipe (up 25 percent), tin plate (up 19 percent) and wire rods (up 19 percent).

In March, the largest volumes of finished steel imports from offshore were from South Korea (239,000 NT, up 4 percent from February final), Taiwan (88,000 NT, up 162 percent), Japan (85,000 NT, down 3 percent), Germany (82,000 NT, up 27 percent) and Turkey (43,000 NT, down 45 percent). For the first three months of 2021, the largest offshore suppliers were South Korea (601,000 NT, up 10 percent vs. the same period in 2020), Japan (219,000 NT, up 8 percent), Turkey (201,000 NT, up 29 percent), Germany (170,000 NT, up 1 percent) and Taiwan (149,000 NT, up 9 percent).

AR Scrap Metals MarketWatch



Commodity		Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
#1 Bushelings	per gross ton	\$335.00	349.00	343.00	432.00	561.00
#1 Bundles	per gross ton	329.00	343.00	331.00	425.00	550.00
Plate and Structural	per gross ton	310.00	329.00	359.00	405.00	430.00
#1 & 2 Mixed Steel	per gross ton	232.00	301.00	332.00	399.00	405.00
Shredder Bundles (tin)	per gross ton	160.00	181.00	223.00	290.00	295.00
Crushed Auto Bodies	per gross ton	160.00	181.00	223.00	290.00	295.00
Steel Turnings	per gross ton	105.00	104.00	113.00	160.00	201.00
#1 Copper	per pound	3.59	3.58	3.79	4.10	4.22
#2 Copper	per pound	3.30	3.34	3.59	3.83	3.81
Aluminum Cans	per pound	.66	.65	.65	.75	.64
Auto Radiators	per pound	1.61	1.49	2.10	2.04	2.24
Aluminum Core Radiators	per pound	.57	.58	.68	.64	.69
Heater Cores	per pound	1.32	1.40	1.48	1.26	1.89
Stainless Steel	per pound	.67	.66	.65	.70	.71

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

DISCLAIMER: American Recycler (AR) collects pricing and other information from experienced buyers, sellers and facilitators of scrap metal transactions throughout the industry. All figures are believed to be reliable and represent approximate pricing based on information obtained by AR (if applicable) prior to publication. Factors such as grades, quality, volumes and other considerations will invariably affect actual transaction prices. Figures shown may not be consistent with pricing for commodities associated with a futures market. While the objective is to provide credible information, there is always a chance for human error or unforeseen circumstances leading to error or omission. As such, AR is not responsible for the accuracy or completeness of the information provided, or for outcomes arising from use of this information. American Recycler disclaims any liability to any person or entity for loss or damage resulting from errors or omissions, including those resulting from negligence of AR, its employees, agents or other representatives.

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SALVAGING Millions

by Ron Sturgeon
Autosalvageconsultant.com

How an employer can learn more from resumes

Before I start, let me say this. A resume isn't the operative tool for being noticed. Imagine how many resumes the employer is seeing. What really gets you in the door is the cover letter. Research the company where you are applying. Show passion for the job. Discuss your qualifications in the framework of what you learned about the company. Have someone else check your grammar and spelling because your cover letter and resume speak volumes about how professional you are and your attention to detail. If you can establish your credibility in the cover letter, close by mentioning some thoughts on what you can do to improve something about the company's products, etc.

A while back I had to write my resume highlighting my skills and business accomplishments. Because this was the first time I wrote my resume, I researched types of resumes online. I found three common types: chronological, functional and hybrid.

Chronological resumes are almost always written in reverse chronological order with most recent employment at the top, listing strong achievements in recent positions.

Functional resumes typically use functional headings to highlight areas of expertise or specific skills. Functional resumes mostly benefit someone making a career change or a job seeker who has gaps in employment, such as time off raising children. Functional resumes highlights areas of expertise and skills as opposed to highlighting positions held.

Hybrid resumes are the best of both worlds – this is the most common resume you will see in the marketplace. Typically, with the combination resume you would begin

with skills and accomplishments, then follow with job titles listed in reverse chronological order. Hybrid resumes are best for job seekers who have performed a range of job functions. Regardless of the type you choose, remember that those seeking quality employees want to know one thing: what can you do for the company.

In December, I placed an ad to hire an administrative assistant. We received more than 300 resumes. For me, the combination resumes were the most straight forward, allowing me to quickly decide whether to discard the resume or interview the person. Remember that resumes are about looking good, but job seekers must be truthful.

A recent article I read stated that about one third of all job seekers provide false or exaggerated information on their resumes and that men are more prone than women to do so. I interviewed a promising applicant to replace my assistant. The first interview went well, but there were some things about her past employment that did not ring true to me. I did some checking and found that she had blatantly lied during her interview. Of course, we did not hire her.

A little resume sprucing is part of the process; employers expect you to jazz up your resume to tailor it for their job, but there's a big difference between jazzing up and lying.

When sending your resume include a cover letter indicating how your background matches the job specifications. When communicating by email use the subject line to your advantage, reference the job number or position because that makes it easier for the recipient to get your resume and cover letter to the right person.

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



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AUTOMOTIVE

Adesa assures buyers with undercarriage imaging

Adesa, a business unit of KAR Auction Services, Inc. dba KAR Global, has launched new condition report capabilities including the addition of high definition vehicle undercarriage photos on all Adesa condition reports. The launch of this enhanced imagery is aimed at providing buyers with relevant, actionable data to support smart and confident bidding and buying decisions. The images, which launched in mid-April, are now available across the U.S. and Canada.

Undercarriage images are captured using Adesa's new inspection technology platform – launched earlier this year – that powers high quality and high resolution photos to enhance vehicle condi-

tion reports. With this technology, vehicle inspection specialists are able to complete inspections more quickly and accurately – providing better, more consistent information to buyers.

The undercarriage images can be found in the photos section of the condition report. They include left side, right side, rear and front views and allow buyers to better assess a vehicle's undercarriage for rust, any damaged structural components or leaks as well as exhaust, frame and rocker panel conditions, which may be visible in such photos. And because the images are static, dealers can enlarge the photos using the zoom-in function to see close-up, highly specific undercarriage detail.

Principal Solar partners with eTruck

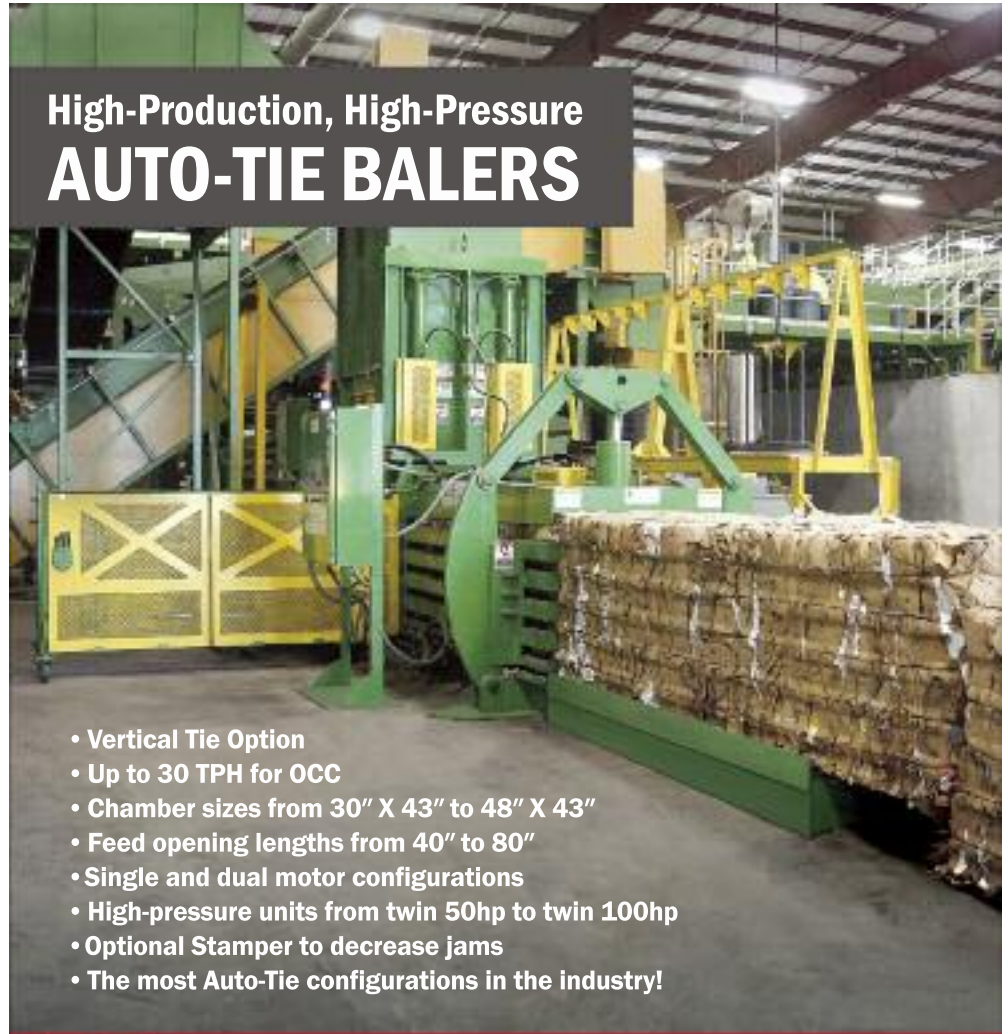
Principal Solar, Inc. stated its intention to participate in the Department of Energy's (DOE) SuperTruck 3 program by application, via its subsidiary partnership with vehicle conversion company eTruck Transportation. The program, announced on April 15, 2021, provides \$162 million in opportunities aimed at electrifying freight trucking, along with efforts to expand infrastructure and lower emissions.

According to the DOE's announcement, the program seeks to fund solutions that will mitigate the largest contributors to transportation sector greenhouse gas emissions, of which

medium and heavy duty trucks are responsible for nearly a quarter.

The DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy launched the original SuperTruck initiatives in 2009 with the goal of improving heavy freight truck efficiency by 50 percent. SuperTruck 2, launched in 2016, sought to double the efficiency of 18 wheeler (class 8) trucks. SuperTruck 3's funding is focused on even higher efficiency via a range of approaches to electrification.

For a direct link to more details, view this article on www.AmericanRecycler.com.



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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Jeff Gloyd leaves Universal Recycling Technologies

■ Universal Recycling Technologies (URT), a provider of full service electronic and universal recycling waste and IT assets disposition solutions, announced Jeff Gloyd, vice president of sales and marketing is leaving the company to pursue other opportunities. His resignation as a senior executive and transition from his role at URT was effective on May 14th. At that time, Ken Thomas, president, and other senior leaders within the organization assumed his responsibilities.

Gloyd joined URT in 2013 as the director of business development and brought with him a little over a decade of industry experience serving as an expert in the reuse and recycling industry. He became URT's vice president of sales and marketing and led the company's sales and marketing efforts and strategic partnerships while developing new business initiatives.

Bob Doll joins Durex Products as sales manager

■ Durex Products Inc., a manufacturer of wire and polyurethane screen media technologies, recently hired Bob Doll, who joins as a regional sales manager covering the eastern U.S.

Doll comes to Durex as an industry veteran with 43 years of experience in crushing and screening, working for W.S Tyler, Metso, Buffalo Wire Works, and McCourt and Sons Equipment.

Doll currently resides in Louisiana, but will relocate to South Carolina to serve the eastern market.

Advanced Disposal's CEO inducted into Hall of Fame

■ The National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) announced that Richard Burke is the Class of 2021 inductee to its Hall of Fame. He was chosen by the board of trustees from a list of distinguished finalists submitted by the association's awards committee.

Burke is the former chairman and chief executive officer of Advanced Disposal Services. His career spans more than 30 years, most recently leading Advanced Disposal through its merger with Waste Management.

Hall of Fame inductees are selected based on scores in five categories, including recognition in the industry as a founder, pioneer, visionary or icon; enduring legacy and impact of contributions to the industry for a minimum of 25 years; steadfast values such as integrity, respect, courage, mentorship, volunteerism and inclusiveness; inspirational leadership at an NWRA service provider or supplier and on issues important to NWRA at the national, state and/or local level; and active association engagement and service as an ambassador of the industry.

I tried having my mother's phone disconnected, but the customer-service rep told me that since the account was in my dad's name, he'd have to be the one to put in the request. The fact that he'd been dead for 40 years didn't sway her. Then a solution hit me: "If I stop paying the bill, you can turn off the service, right?" "Well, yes," she said reluctantly. "But that would ruin his credit."

Michigan

■Continued from Page 3

and manufacturing facilities that recycle waste food into animal feed and compost.

"We're proud to say that, since 2018, we've achieved more than a 95 percent waste diversion rate at our five food manufacturing facilities," Srinivasan said. "But we still have a long way to go to reach our goals, which is why we're excited to be partnering with EGLE in support of the NextCycle program.

"This program will help us find new ways to recycle some of the most challenging materials in our supply chain, which include packaged food waste from our stores and difficult-to-recycle materials in our distribution centers," he added. "We look forward to our shared innovation not only to help us reach our sustainability goals, but also to help build the infrastructure for our successes to be replicated statewide."

Gov. Whitmer and the state Legislature are committed to raising Michigan's recycling rate to 30 percent by 2025 and ultimately reach 45 percent annually – Michigan's current recycling rate is at 15 percent, the lowest in the Great Lakes region and among the nation's lowest.

"To ensure we reach this goal, recycling across Michigan is receiving a major boost in 2021 through Renew Michigan grant funding," said Democratic U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens, who serves the state's 11th Congressional District in southeast Michigan.

Among the grants Stevens unveiled in her region of the state were:

•Next Energy: \$50,000 for an assessment of electric vehicle battery recycling system needs in Michigan.

•Battery Solutions: \$75,000 for battery sorting technology upgrades.

•Schupan: \$250,000 for equipment that empties packaging, allowing for additional containers to be recycled.

•Recycle Livingston (City of Howell): \$282,504.80 for Howell drop-off site upgrades that will improve collection and processing capacity and worker health and safety conditions.

•City of Ypsilanti: \$73,440 for recycling bins in downtown and public parks.

•City of Detroit: \$20,000 for residential recycling carts, part of multi-year, on-going EGLE support of City of Detroit recycling program.

•Huron-Clinton Metroparks: \$48,816 for plastic bottle recycling bins in Metroparks.

•The Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwest Oakland County: \$32,000 for Novi drop-off site upgrades.

•MSU Recycling (MSU Recycling and Surplus Store): \$170,000 for robotic sorting equipment that will improve drop-off recycling in the region, as well as worker health and safety conditions.

•Vartega: \$100,000 for the production of new recycled thermoplastics products.

•Emterra Environmental: \$250,000 for technology to produce cleaner glass material that will be used to make beverage containers and insulation.

The Legislature two years ago in a bipartisan move voted to increase EGLE's funding for recycling projects from \$2 million annually to \$15 million per year moving forward.

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

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BRIEFS

Eriez appoints Olsen as new CFO and treasurer

Eriez® has appointed Andrew Olsen as chief financial officer and treasurer, effective April 19, 2021. He will be based out of the company's global headquarters in Erie, Pennsylvania and will report to Eriez president and chief executive officer Lukas Guenthardt.

Olsen brings extensive experience in corporate and operational finance to his new role on the Eriez corporate leadership team. He served most recently as chief financial officer at General Electric Aviation – Advanced Atomization Technologies, a joint venture of Parker Aviation and General Electric based in Clyde, New York. His background, which includes high level positions at several industrial manufacturing companies, has helped him develop a deep understanding of the finance and accounting principles critical to Eriez' business, according to Guenthardt.

Olsen, a long time resident of western New York, holds a dual bachelor's degree in management and marketing from Canisius College and a master's degree in business administration from The State University of New York at Buffalo. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in economics through Purdue Global University.

Timken increases quarterly dividend by 3 percent

The board of directors of The Timken Company, a global industrial leader in engineered bearings and power transmission products, approved a three percent increase to the company's quarterly cash dividend, raising it to \$.30 per share. The dividend is payable on June 3, 2021, to shareholders of record as of May 21, 2021.

The Timken Company has paid a dividend on its common shares every quarter since its listing on the New York Stock Exchange in 1922. The upcoming dividend represents 396 consecutive quarters, one of the longest-running dividend streaks among NYSE-listed companies.

Meridian Waste closes new acquisition in Raleigh

Meridian Waste, a non-hazardous solid waste services company, has closed on the purchase of an acquisition in the greater Raleigh, North Carolina marketplace, its second in the state.

The acquisition includes McConnell Waste Systems, Inc., located in Fuquay-Varina. The terms of the asset purchase agreement remain private. Assets will be managed under the current Meridian Waste structure and operate from the company's hauling location in Raleigh.

The acquired assets from McConnell Waste Systems, Inc. include industrial commercial contracts in the greater Raleigh metro area. The acquisition will build collection density within the marketplace as well as volume through the company's network of North Carolina transfer stations.



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The pandemic's impact on plastic use & recycling

by MAURA KELLER

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From PPE to medical and laboratory equipment to cold-chain insulation for vaccine transport, and even vaccine syringes, plastics play a significant role in treating and protecting people, especially frontline workers, against COVID-19. Additionally, as people have spent more time at home, there's been a surge in home delivery, resulting in greater use of takeout containers and mail packaging. These trends have led to a significant uptick in demand for plastic domestically and across the globe.

Due to its performance benefits, industry experts expect strong reliance on plastic to continue.

"This year, the introduction of president Biden's Build Back Better plan for recovery has sparked a movement to rebuild the nation's infrastructure, and plastics will play a critical role," said Joshua Baca, vice president of plastics at the American Chemistry Council. "Plastics are essential to infrastructure components, such as more energy-efficient homes and buildings including insulation and sealants, more fuel efficient cars, solar panels, wind turbines, electric and autonomous vehicles, and bridges. All of these will help America build more sustainable and resilient communities, and a stronger, more sustainable economy."

So what does the influx plastics use during the ongoing pandemic mean for the recycling industry?

As Baca explained, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an outsized impact on U.S. recycling and waste management systems. Not only did the need for plastic increase, but some municipalities paused recycling programs to limit potential worker exposures to COVID-19. So, in the short-term, the pandemic has amplified many of the economic and operational challenges the industry faces.

Dr. Marta Guron, assistant teaching professor of chemistry at Villanova University said that unfortunately, the plastic industry is not prepared to take



In the short-term, the pandemic has amplified many of the economic and operational challenges the plastics recycling industry faces.

in extra plastic waste. Single use masks, for example, can have mixed media, which makes them much more difficult to process in addition to the concern over whether the masks are contaminated, therefore putting recycling industry workers at risk.

"Thankfully, the COVID virus doesn't live on surfaces for very long, but there are limited capacities in recycling plants and waste processing facilities, creating an even greater strain on the industry," Guron said. "Additionally, no help has come from the government in terms of improving infrastructure or streamlining plastic waste processing. So different regions have different capabilities in recycling." Since the market for recycled plastic has decreased owing to the increased supply and the already exist-

ing strain created by the policy changes in China in 2018, it is reasonable to believe that without some infrastructure and government support, the ability to recoup processing costs will continue to diminish.

Regardless, America's plastic makers are continuing their efforts to end plastic waste. "In 2018, we announced goals for all plastic packaging used in the U.S. to be recyclable or recoverable by 2030 and to be recycled, reused, or recovered by 2040," Baca said. "We continue to focus on investing and innovating to modernize and expand plastics recycling infrastructure. That's why forward-looking legislation like the bipartisan RECOVER Act is so important." This bill, if passed, would provide federal grants to states, municipalities and

tribal governments to invest in improving recycling.

"Not only will this help ensure recycling remains economically viable and competitive, it will help our country build an infrastructure that continues advancing efforts to create a circular economy for plastics," Baca said.

Of course, during the pandemic, there's been a shift in the recycling and waste management stream from the commercial sector to the residential sector as more people worked and lived in their homes.

"Many recyclers are relying more on residents for their materials, and minimizing contamination in the waste stream has become even more important," Baca said. "Recycling education

See PLASTIC USE, Page B7

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DuPont shareholders vote to support plastic pellet pollution reporting

In the highest vote on plastic pellet pollution to date, a majority of investors at DuPont voted in support of an As You Sow shareholder resolution asking the company to produce an annual report on the amount of pre-production plastic the company releases into the environment annually.

Plastic pellets are the building blocks for nearly all plastic products and are estimated to be the second largest direct source of microplastic pollution in the ocean by weight. Once produced by petrochemical companies like DuPont, pellets are transported by rail, ship, or road to a second or third destination before being melted into a final product. It is estimated that throughout the pellet supply chain, an estimated 10 trillion plastic pellets are spilled and unrecovered every year.

DuPont is the latest in a series of companies As You Sow has engaged, regarding reducing plastic pellet pollution. Companies that have agreed to report their spill data include: Chevron Phillips Chemical, Exxon Mobil Chemical, Eastman Chemical, Westlake Chemical, Occidental Petroleum, and Dow Chemical. However, so far, only Chevron Phillips Chemical, Exxon, and Dow have begun to provide data.

An estimated 11 million metric tons of plastics – including pellets – leak into oceans annually and this figure is expected to grow to 24 million metric tons by 2040. Once in the environment, pellets can absorb toxins from the water. Often mistaken as food, these pellets can be eaten by marine life when pellet absorbed toxins can be potentially transferred to humans through consumption of seafood. Ocean plastic pollution causes fatalities in more than 800 marine species from ingestion, entanglement, suffocation, or drowning.

More than 200 pellet, flake and powder spills have been reported to the National Response Center since reporting began. These pellet spills create financial risk. Petrochemical and plastics companies have recently paid substantial fines for pellet releases, with the largest fine reaching \$50 million.

DuPont is a member of Operation Clean Sweep, an industry program that has been revealed to be designed largely to fend off regulation, not to ensure compliance nor success. Operation Clean Sweep provides best practices to reduce pellet loss but does not facilitate public reporting on spill incidents, as the As You Sow resolution requests.

Grants funded to improve polypropylene recycling

The Recycling Partnership announced a second round of grant funding through its Polypropylene Recycling Coalition, distributing nearly \$1 million in catalytic grants to advance polypropylene recycling in the U.S. Launched in July 2020, the Polypropylene Recycling Coalition (Coalition) is a cross-industry collaboration supported by steering committee members Keurig Dr Pepper, Braskem, NextGen Consortium, and the Walmart Foundation, along with other members of the polypropylene value chain. Polypropylene, sometimes referred to as No. 5 plastic, is used in an array of food and non-food packaging and is in strong demand as a recycled material.

Through its second round of grant funding, the Coalition will provide an additional three grants to materials recovery facilities (MRFs) across the United States to boost sortation of polypropylene and support targeted consumer education efforts. To date, the Coalition has awarded grants for seven MRFs across the U.S. These investments aim to improve curbside polypropylene recycling access for an additional 3 percent of all U.S. households, impacting a total of 7.2 million people nationally. This aims to increase the recovery of polypropylene by an estimated 4,300 tons annually to be made into new products, such as consumer packaging and automotive parts, rather than being sent to landfills or incineration.

The Coalition awards grants to MRF candidates that face significant challenges in their ability to effectively sort and recycle polypropylene. With these strategic investments, polypropylene will now be accepted curbside in more communities and sent to established end markets, encouraging the shift to a circular economy. Further supporting the shift, community members in these areas will also be educated as to what is and isn't accepted in their curbside recycling.

The three newest grantees include:
•American Recycling in Candler, North Carolina

•DEM-CON in Shakopee, Minnesota

•Independent Texas Recyclers in Houston, Texas

The combined geographic reach of the first two rounds of grantees includes MRFs across the Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western regions of the U.S. The widespread interest and commitment from MRFs across the U.S. to growing the collection and sortation of recyclable polypropylene clearly demonstrates the market strength for this material nationwide.

The Coalition received a strong response to both the first and second rounds of requests for proposals and continues to accept grant applications to further its efforts to advance polypropylene curbside recycling. The next grant proposal request is due June 30, 2021. MRFs interested in sorting and recycling polypropylene are encouraged to apply.

The mission driven work of the Coalition is supported by contributions from organizations representing all segments of the material's value chain, including the Coalition's newest member, Sabert Corporation. In addition to the steering committee members, other members of the Coalition include American Chemistry Council, Campbell Soup Company, Danone North America, EFS-plastics, The Kroger Co. Zero Hunger | Zero Waste Foundation, KW Plastics, LyondellBasell, Merlin Plastics, Milliken & Company, Nestlé, PolyQuest, Procter & Gamble, St. Joseph Plastics and Winpak. The Polypropylene Recycling Coalition is advised by industry leaders including: Association of Plastic Recyclers, former EPA Administrator Carol Browner, Closed Loop Partners, Sidewalk Infrastructure Partners, Sustainable Packaging Coalition and World Wildlife Fund.

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RecyClass publishes quick test washing procedures

Test washing procedures were developed to determine whether on-pack adhesive and label combinations are fully compatible with the post-consumer HDPE or PP recycling stream. They are destined for the label and adhesive industry as well as the recognized Certification Bodies which perform recyclability assessments of labeled packaging.

These standard procedures were developed at a laboratory scale to allow companies to easily and quickly check the wash-off compatibility of their labels with recycling. The documents describe the steps that must be followed to carry out the analysis, as well as the assessment criteria to evaluate the behavior during washing.

As reported in the HDPE & PP Design for Recycling Guidelines, any label and adhesive combination must be water soluble or water releasable at 40°C to get separated from the packaging during the recycling process. Additionally, paper labels must ensure no loss of fibers during the washing step to avoid wash water contamination and recycle damaging.

Coon Rapids expands capacity to recycle more packaging

Foam Recycling Coalition grant helps increase city's recycling center processing capabilities

The Coon Rapids Recycling Center received a \$50,000 grant from the Foam Recycling Coalition (FRC) to increase the recycling center's capacity to manage, process and recycle more post-consumer foam polystyrene, including foodservice packaging and protective packaging.

The Coon Rapids Recycling Center, a residential drop off center located in Coon Rapids, Minnesota, focuses on materials that cannot be recycled at curbside – items ranging from carpet to appliances and electronics. The FRC funding, along with funding from a state of Minnesota Capital Improvement Project grant, allows the center to expand their current operations, purchasing equipment to assist in additional foam polystyrene recovery and performing maintenance and repairs to their existing foam densifier.

The recycling center accepts common household recyclable materials, oil and oil filters, scrap metal, organic food waste, electronic waste, batteries, mattresses and other materials. With a repaired densifier and new forklift, the center can expand their current foam polystyrene recycling program to

The Washing Quick Test Procedures were developed by the RecyClass HDPE and PP Technical Committees and, in particular, the adhesive and label manufacturers including Henkel, UPM Raflatac and Avery Dennison, that carried out internal testing to validate their feasibility.

In the case of the non-removable adhesives in combination with film labels, they can be tested by RecyClass following a complete assessment according to the RecyClass Recyclability Evaluation Protocols, to identify their impact on the quality of recycled HDPE & PP.

Every component of plastic packaging must be considered when evaluating its recyclability. Labels and adhesives are just one of the examples. Making sure that they are compatible with recycling technologies is indispensable in driving high-quality recycling. By ensuring compatibility with the recycling process the quality of the recycled material increases and so does their potential for being used in high-end applications.

accept foam foodservice packaging, cups, trays and other containers.

"It's terrific to see more foam material coming to our recycling center. But with the increase, we needed to expand, find a solution to maintain our existing equipment and handle additional material," said Colleen Sinclair, City of Coon Rapids recycling coordinator. "The Foam Recycling Coalition grant means we can continue serving our residents and collecting these recyclable materials for the foreseeable future."

Coon Rapids is the 18th grant recipient to receive FRC funding since 2015. Over three million additional residents in the U.S. and Canada can recycle foam as a result of FRC grants.

"We work with forward thinking communities, like the City of Coon Rapids to expand recycling programs for their residents," said Natha Dempsey, president of the Foodservice Packaging Institute, which houses the coalition. "We've kicked off another year of FRC grants to continue to fund innovative programs that will help recover foam polystyrene packaging throughout North America."

Smithfield Foods pledges recyclable packaging and plastic reduction

Smithfield Foods, Inc. launched bold new commitments across its portfolio by 2030: to achieve consumer packaging that is 90 percent recyclable, reusable or industrially compostable and to halve use of virgin petroleum based plastic.

To meet these goals, the company has established an internal cross-functional team to investigate and explore new strategic packaging and plastic-use reduction options. Among the team's current efforts is the identification and testing of replacements for products currently packaged using polystyrene (PS) trays.

Both the new recyclable packaging and plastic reduction goals build upon the company's zero waste to landfill initiative, which outlines a plan to reduce overall solid waste sent to landfills 75 percent by 2025 through utilizing or recycling materials once disposed of as garbage.

"Continual efforts to innovate packaging in favor of materials that can be recycled, reused and composted is an important component of holistic, sustainable food production," said



Stewart Leeth, chief sustainability officer for Smithfield Foods. "As a food industry sustainability pioneer, Smithfield recognizes the importance of continuing to explore new ways to build upon our ambitious commitments and reduce waste across production and operations."

As part of its ongoing commitment to sustainability and constant product innovation, Smithfield launched the Pure Farmland™ brand in 2019, a plant-based protein line featuring sustainable packaging and trays made from more than 50 percent recycled material.

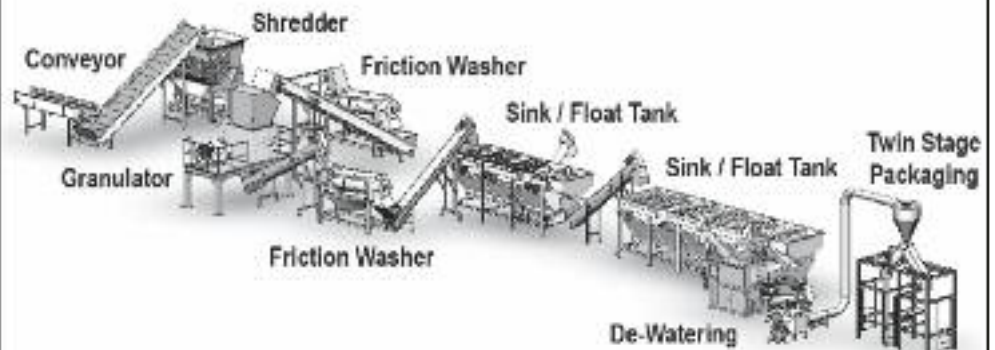
Smithfield is also an active member of the Sustainable Packaging Coalition (SPC), the authority and leading voice on sustainable packaging and related initiatives.



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EQUIPMENT SPOTLIGHT

Granulators

by MARY M. THORNTON

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Plastics were 12.2 percent of municipal solid waste (MSW) generation in 2018 (most recent data available), according to the American Chemistry Council. As the recycling industry strives to increase efficiencies in reducing the impact of plastic in the environment and marketplace, granulators may be involved in the process.

Established as the first granulator company in 1939, "Cumberland leads the way as the world's brand leader in size reduction equipment, with the broadest line of granulators and shredders. Our top-of-the-line series includes the FX700, FX1000, FX1600 and Cumberland beside-the-press granulators, available to meet the growing needs of the plastics and recycling industries," Andre Adams, senior product manager, stated.



Cumberland Size Reduction

Cumberland staff recently worked with a client to quantify specific improvements that grinding and reusing plastic scrap had, in that client's operations. The previous, dated, central granulation process was confirmed as financially detrimental. The inefficient and complex workflow was damaging the firm's bottom line, causing the loss of 20,000 to 30,000 lbs. of reclaimed material every year. To eliminate the issue, Cumberland's beside-the-press (BTP) granulator technology was installed. Cumberland's John Farney and Gary Gill identified the challenges in their customer's operations and knew that a BTP configuration would improve efficiency. That change, along with reconfiguring workflow, allowed the

company to expand and grow, all with existing staff. Workflow is also now more efficient because Cumberland's top-of-the-line FX Series equipment is involved. Each of Cumberland's BTP granulators feature several durable, high performance machines, and all are equipped to integrate with any molding or extrusion operation for resin reclaim, directly at the side of the press.

Adams described how that customer "gained tangible results in several key areas, including eliminating several manual steps, which were replaced with a less complex process, reducing clean-out times for more efficiency and substantially decreasing the need to handle regrind materials, which made the process safer. If you'd like to assess your size reduction processes, the experts at Cumberland can help you determine the best plan and products to achieve optimum efficiency."

Foremost Machine Builders offers a 24 x 24" granulator, Model HD-7, which utilizes a four-bladed, open, ribbed, staggered, skewed rotor in grinding PET bottles and other tough materials. The Model LD-7 is a two-bladed, open, ribbed, hook-knife rotor design and available for grinding HDPE and polycarbonate blow molded parts. Each machine is equipped with a rear access door to the cutting chamber for easy cleanout or knife adjustment. Air feed and mechanical conveyor or hand feed hoppers are available as standard for these units. "We've served the plastics industry for over 60 years and along with manufacturing a complete line of granulators for plastics recycling, Foremost Machine Builders also offers material handling, storage and blending solutions," Walt Folkl, sales manager said.

Herbold Meckesheim USA, a subsidiary of Herbold Meckesheim Germany, sells and installs durable, high quality size reduction equipment (granulators, shredders, grinders, pulverizers, etc.) and wash-line systems for the recycling of all kinds of industrial and post-consumer plastics. Units

are designed as modular "building blocks" so that a system can be extended or modified according to the customer's requirements.

Last fall, Herbold introduced five models of the HOS Heavy-Duty Pipe Shredder, which efficiently (up to approximately 3,400 lbs. per hour) reduces large (to 0.8' in diameter); thick-walled plastic pipes to chips of approximately 2.5 to 4 sq.in. Herbold's extensive line of granulators includes heavy-duty, general-use, and compact machines. Popular HB and SB Series horizontal models employ a hydraulic ram or screw-feed mechanism, which makes them quieter and more efficient (30 to 50 percent higher throughput) than same-size gravity-fed cutting chambers. Suitable for dry or wet operation, these granulators are capable of processing up to eight tons of plastic per hour.

The blade geometry of Herbold granulators, in combination with an open rotor, "provides for cleaner cuts, higher capacity, fewer fines and less noise. The knives can be removed easily and safely and adjusted precisely in a fixture outside the unit. Furthermore, Herbold Meckesheim knives last longer because their design provides 18 millimeters of regrind capacity, nearly twice that of most competing models. Yet another benefit of Herbold horizontal granulators is a diagonally split housing that allows complete access to the cutting chamber for faster maintenance. And the rotor bearings are positioned outside the cutting chamber, to keep grease from contaminating product," said David Lefrancois, president.

He continued, "The trend toward recycling and sustainability is on the upswing and thanks to recent

advances in automated separation equipment, more receivers of recycled plastics are separating the waste stream by material type, for single-line recycling systems. This makes it easier for generators of plastic waste to recycle and consequently more likely that they will."

See GRANULATORS, Page B6

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Leadership award created to honor plastics professionals

At its annual meeting and fall conference in St. Petersburg, Florida, the Plastics Industry Association (PLASTICS) will present its inaugural William R. Cardeaux Leadership Award to an industry professional who has achieved distinction working for the betterment of the plastics industry.

Any employee of a PLASTICS member company, who personifies the values Bill Cardeaux made the hallmarks of his career – unity, dedication, perseverance and selflessness – is eligible for the award, named for the former PLASTICS president and chief executive officer.

Tony Radoszewski, current PLASTICS president and chief executive

officer, will present the new award as part of the Plastics Hall of Fame Ceremony during the board dinner, where the recipient will stand alongside 2021 Hall of Fame inductees.

Prospective candidates can be nominated by their peers, family or friends. The Plastics Academy, which administers the Plastics Hall of Fame, will serve as a screening committee, with officers of PLASTICS making the final selection.

Nominations should include basic information about the nominee, as well as a brief description of his or her merits. Supporting letters will be accepted as well. Nominations will be accepted through June 30, 2021.

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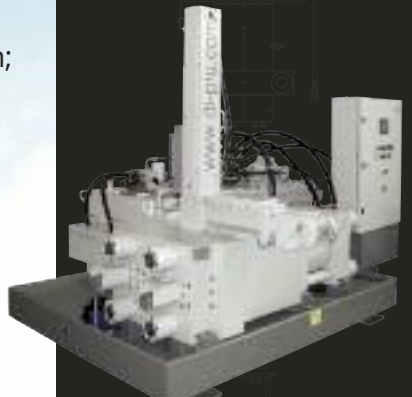
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Muncie Power Products, Inc. released the new A20 Series power take-off, designed to fit on Allison 3000 and 4000 Series transmissions.

The big changes with this PTO focus on the installation process. The goal was to find ways to make it not only easier, but less time consuming. The A20 Series PTO features a new rotatable flange with 30 unique, identifiable positions providing users with great flexibility in finding the optimal position for installation.

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Petoskey Plastics expands

Petoskey Plastics, an environmentally focused recycler and plastic film, bag and resin manufacturer, will invest \$30 million in a new manufacturing facility.

The COVID-19 pandemic pushed the company over capacity and created high customer demand for its blown film products such as trash bags, construction sheeting, and automotive seat covers. A combination of converting and extruding lines in the new Texas facility will increase output by approximately 15 percent over the next 12 months to help meet this growing demand. Petoskey Plastics currently manufactures blown film products with post-consumer recycled content in Petoskey, Michigan, Hartford City, Indiana and Morristown, Tennessee.

The existing Texas facility size is over 53,000 sq.ft. Building expansion is scheduled for completion in August

2022 and includes an additional 40,000 to 60,000 sq.ft. for converting and warehouse space, nine silos and rail spurs.

The facility will provide the opportunity to be closer to raw material suppliers in the Gulf and will aid in servicing West Coast customers. Delivery time will be cut in half for both raw material and finished goods and will be more competitive overall. The plant is to receive the most state-of-the art equipment available in the blown film market space over the coming months.

Petoskey Plastics plans to grow the Texas facility to a total of approximately 130,000 sq.ft. within 5 years.

Petoskey Plastics currently employs 564 associates and initially, the company plans to hire 20 associates at the new facility in Texas. After the expansion, they will add 55 new jobs.

Granulators

■Continued from Page B4

Zerma offers the plastics recycling industry a full range of industrial recycling machinery; heavy-duty and central plastics granulators, beside the press grinders, single shaft shredders and PVC pulverizers. E. J. Stratman, national sales director, commented, "Along with auxiliary equipment such as conveyors, separators and metal detection, we are one of the very few recycling machinery makers with the whole equipment spectrum under one roof. This gives us the most economical advantage in assembling a size reduction system that will best fit the requirement of each client's operation."

Zerma machines can be found in plants across the world. Zerma's plastic waste shredders and heavy-duty granulators can play an integral recycling role in plastic shredding as part of injection molding, extrusion, blow molding, rotational molding, thermoforming, blown film, cast film factories and general recycling applications. Zerma products process rejects, runners, sprues, parts, purgings, pipe, profiles, bags, bottles, bales, buckets, tubs, film, fiber, containers, drums, IBCs – in short, anything made of plastic.



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Plastic use

■Continued from Page B1

focused on the ins-and-outs of what to recycle curbside, how to pre-clean items, and what needs to be dropped off at a specific recycling location is always helpful. But these factors also points to the need to establish a national recycling standard to eliminate the conflicting patchwork of local and state standards currently in place and make recycling easier for everyone."

Darrel Collier, executive director of the National Association for PET Container Resources (NAPCOR) said increased consumption of products utilizing bottles and containers made from PET will result in recycling only when those items land in recycling bins or redemption centers.

"At the height of the pandemic in 2020, many states that have redemption centers were closed to the public – retailers would not allow drop offs, and in some cases the actual redemption location was closed – in some cases for more than 30 days," Collier said. "Anecdotally, we heard that some consumers were storing their redemption bottles until locations reopened. However, we will not know the true impact until we release our 2020 PET Recycling Report later this year."

PET is the most widely recovered plastic material, and globally has a recovery rate of nearly 56 percent. Prior to the pandemic, NAPCOR saw costs for postconsumer recycled PET rise above that of virgin PET.

"This was driven by demand and a realization that RPET is a different product than virgin PET, therefore having a unique value," Collier said. "We saw this decoupling of RPET from virgin PET pricing continue through the pandemic and into present times. We also launched our Positively PET campaign just before the pandemic, but chose to continue with our messaging. Educating consumers about PET and its recyclability attributes – ultimately encouraging recycling – is our goal."

Increased Challenges

Plastic waste in the environment is never okay, and the American Chemistry Council and others are working to accelerate the transition toward a circular economy, in which used plastic and other materials are reused and treated as valuable resources instead of discarded.

"We're working to provide Congress and state legislatures with holistic solutions to address plastic waste. As part of this, we need to expand access to advanced recycling technologies that pick up where traditional recycling methods leave off," Baca said. "Traditional recycling is a critical part of our recycling infrastructure and needs to thrive for us to succeed. At the same time, to fully transition to a circular economy, we have to increase our ability to recover and recycle more types of plastic materials through advanced recycling."

Advanced recycling further reduces hard-to-recycle plastics, like multi-resin food packaging, to their molecular level, and then turns them into feedstock for future plastic materials and other valuable products. American companies like Agilyx, Braven Environmental and Brightmark, for example, are leading in this area.

Guron stressed that educating all facets of the system, including consumer, manufacturing and governmental is paramount to offsetting the challenges the plastic recycling industry faces.

"The educational component must, first and foremost, target government leaders at all levels of the political system," Guron said. "Without increased spending to improve sorting infrastructure and without acknowledgement that recycling should be profitable and viewed as a service to future generations, the industry is destined to struggle long term."

Additionally, she added that perpetuating the idea that plastics can be recycled without having space or processing ability does more harm than good.

"Keeping in mind that it is plastic manufacturers that perpetuate the education intended to get more people to recycle, that sort of education muddles reality. People believe that anything with a 'recycling triangle' is recyclable, which contaminates entire waste streams and does not help the plastic recycling industry," Guron said. "Supporting legislation that puts the onus of the packaging waste on manufacturers and supplementing with government support to create a robust recycling network, would provide long term solutions and help the plastic recycling industry stand more firmly in its foundation."

A Positive Outlook

The last year has been difficult for many and has emphasized the need to build a more advanced, sustainable and resilient American manufacturing base. This requires both innovation and investment, and Baca believes the future looks promising.

"As we work toward a circular economy for plastics, and our brand partners continue to incorporate more recycled plastic material into products and packaging, the demand for recycled plastic will continue to rise, helping to sustain the modernization of our recycling systems," Baca said. "Many are seeing this shift as an economic opportunity." According to a recent report from ResearchandMarkets, the global plastic recycling industry is expected to recover and grow, reaching \$50.4 billion by 2027.

"State-level legislation will continue to support this growth. Twelve states have already passed laws that support the growth of advanced recycling to increase the capture and reuse of plastic materials," Baca said. "Plastic recycling will be instrumental in developing a more efficient economy and a cleaner world."

Coca-Cola introduces 100 percent recycled plastic bottle in the U.S.

The Coca-Cola Company introduced a new 13.2oz bottle made from 100 percent recycled plastic material (rPET) in the U.S. This new bottle will be available first in the company's biggest and most iconic brand: Coca-Cola®. In addition, the company announced the transition to bottles made from 100 percent recycled plastic material across a selection of brands in the portfolio, including DASANI® and smartwater®, which will be available in various package sizes this year. The moves are a substantial step in addressing plastic waste, among the top environmental concerns globally, reducing the company's use of new plastic by more than 20 percent across the portfolio in North America compared to 2018.

Starting this month in select states in the Northeast, Florida and California, Coca-Cola Trademark (Coke, Diet Coke, Coke Zero Sugar, Coca-Cola Flavors) will roll out the new, 13.2oz bottle made from 100 percent rPET. The new bottle is conveniently sized in a more sippable package and reduces the use of new plastic. This summer, the 13.2oz, 100 percent rPET bottle will roll out across additional sparkling beverage brands nationwide.


As part of a portfolio approach, 20oz bottles made from 100 percent rPET are being introduced across Coca-Cola, Coke Zero Sugar, Diet Coke and Coca-Cola Flavors in California and

New York and will continue to roll out in Texas. DASANI and smartwater will follow suit, introducing 20oz bottles made from 100 percent rPET. Finally, people in select markets will see a new 13.2oz clear bottle from Sprite, also made from 100 percent rPET. The clear package makes it easier for bottles to be recycled and remade into new bottles. All Sprite packaging will transition to clear packaging by the end of 2022.

"Given our scale and resources, we realize our unique opportunity and clear responsibility to make a positive difference in the global plastic crisis, bringing us closer to our ambitious World Without Waste goals," said Alpa Sutaria, vice president and general manager, sustainability, North America operating unit, The Coca-Cola Company. "Plastic is a valuable packaging resource and these innovations in the U.S. represent meaningful action that focus not just on what goes into the bottles, but on innovation of the bottles themselves."

In 2018, the company pledged robust World Without Waste goals to collect and recycle the equivalent of a bottle or can for every one the company sells by 2030, to make 100 percent of packaging recyclable by 2025 and to use 50 percent recycled material in bottles and cans by 2030. By introducing 100 percent rPET bottles in the U.S., this marks a total of 19 markets globally offering recycled packaging.

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