

The Business of Recycling — Part 2 — Paper Power

Recycling Local Paper makes Good Economic & Environmental Sense

By Diane Strandberg, *Tri-City News*, Wednesday, January 25th, 2006, page 16.

The recycling efforts of Tri-City residents have not gone unnoticed by Tom Fawcett. The general manager of *Catalyst Paper* (www.catalystpaper.com) recently paid the Tri-Cities a compliment for the fact that our old newspapers and magazines are delivered to his plant on United Boulevard virtually free of contaminants. And because the papers and magazines are local, he doesn't have to spend a great deal on transportation or spew more greenhouse gasses into the air from truck exhaust than necessary.

"We have been targeting this area," said Fawcett of his efforts to get more of his newspaper from the Tri-Cities and surrounding municipalities.

Approximately 65% of the approximately 163,000 tonnes of newspapers consumed by the plant, owned by the international pulp and paper giant *Norske Skog*, come from BC and Alberta. The rest of the newspapers come from the US, mostly by train from Minnesota and Kansas City.

His company pulps them and removes the ink at its large plant with a spectacular view of the Fraser River. The de-inked pulp is then shipped by barge to a pulp and paper mill in Crofton.

You would think newsprint would be a simple material to sort. But you would be surprised at all the junk Catalyst workers find among the mostly American newspapers and magazines. Sometimes, the contaminants are worth something — as in the case of one worker who collected \$700 US among the piles of newspapers, although such activity is not encouraged.

But most of the time it's just junk — plastic, tin, old running shoes, even medical waste and glass that are mixed in with the newspapers. A machine removes this material before the newspapers are pulped and the garbage is then sent to the landfill. Canadian newspapers, Fawcett said, are a better bargain than those from the US.

"By focusing on local suppliers, we've been able to reduce what we send to the landfill by 20%," he said. That means 40,000 tonnes of material won't be trucked next door to the *Coquitlam Resource Recovery Plant* (Wastech), where it would otherwise be squashed and baled for shipping to the Cache Creek landfill.

Buying garbage-free newspapers also makes good financial sense because *Catalyst* pays its suppliers by the pound — top dollar, too — so the extra junk costs his company money.

BIG BUSINESS

Coquitlam benefits from the newspapers and magazines it recycles. *Catalyst Paper* pays \$7.5 million annually in wages, another \$1.3 million annually in property taxes, and buys \$17.5 million of goods from Coquitlam vendors, according to the company.

Recycling newspapers also saves on garbage and landfill costs, and it's a big, profitable business. The company sells its products all over the world. Paper with recycled content is particularly important to environmentally-conscious purchasers, such as those California, Fawcett said. It is mostly used for paper for telephone directories, flyers and inserts and newsprint.

The result is that *The Tri-City News* and all those flyers are turned into more newspapers. Here's how it works: The newspapers are decontaminated, batched and then pulped.

The soggy newsprint then moves through a series of cleansing baths before it is pressed and then packed into bales of pulp, at which point it is shipped to Crofton or Port Alberni for remixing with virgin fibre.

Sixty-five workers, in shifts, oversee the operation, which runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

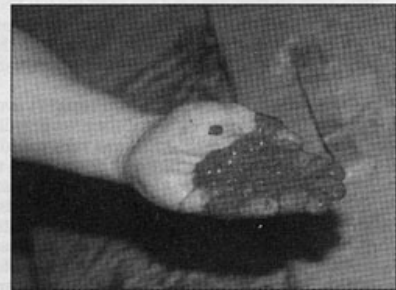
The company prides itself on its safety record and is waiting to see if it will beat another Canadian pulp mill for the number of days without injury. When *The Tri-City News* visited, the number of days without

injury stood at more than 600. "It's a philosophy. What we're told is that our priority is safety, environmental quality and cost of production," Fawcett said.

Among its environmental efforts, the company has registered with an international environmental standard for operations called ISO 14001. It also keeps to a minimum its own waste by reselling leftover material to companies for other products, such as fuel for boilers and kilns, soil enhancers for turf farms and compost. As well, the company may soon do something useful with the residual gas from Coquitlam's old landfill across the street.

According to Fawcett, the company is poised to spend \$200,000 on a boiler retrofit so it can burn landfill gas along with natural gas it currently uses as fuel. "There's a business case for it and we want to do the right thing from an environmental perspective," Fawcett explained.

From a financial perspective, those Tri-City newspapers are more valuable as a commodity than they are as a liner for the bottom of the bird cage. When it comes to the business of recycling, newspapers are at the top.



CRAIG HODGE/THE TRI-CITY NEWS

Catalyst paper, formerly Newstech, at 1050 United Boulevard, Coquitlam, is the largest de-inking facility in Western Canada. It consumes about 163,000 tonnes of old newspapers and magazines, mostly from B.C. and Alberta. Left, Tom Fawcett, general manager, with a tower of paper ready for pulping and de-inking. Above: The residue - ink that has been removed from the pulped paper.