

MRF of the Month

Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County

The Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County owns two facilities at its West Palm Beach location, one of which handles recyclables generated by the county's residential and multi-family dual-stream collection programs (33 municipalities, 333,000 households) and the other processing fiber collected via the commercial sector. Both plants are operated by FCR Florida, Inc.

The 73,322-square-foot regional materials recycling facility (RMRF) opened its doors in May 1991 and was significantly expanded in 1998 to have an annual processing capacity of 175,000 tons. For the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the RMRF processed 103,838 tons of material, with fiber representing 71,456 tons and commingled containers accounting for the remaining 32,382 tons. On a daily average, around 17 tons of commingled containers and up to 40 tons of fiber can be processed per hour.

Materials accepted at the RMRF include aluminum cans, foil and pie plates, all colors of glass, aseptic packaging, telephone books, paper and paperboard products, and all plastic containers labeled Nos. 1-7. Recovered old newspaper comprises approximately 83 percent of the paper stream processed at the RMRF, generating nearly 85 percent of the facility's revenue. Earnings from the sale of processed materials is used to offset the cost of the authority's recycling programs, as well as cover the owning and operating costs of the facility.

According to Jim Greer, manager of Recovered Materials Processing for the Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County, plastics not accepted by the countywide recycling program, most notably oversized plastic products (i.e., pails and five-gallon buckets) and single-use shopping bags, are the number one issue affecting plant processing efforts.

The RMRF is equipped with CP Manufacturing, Inc. processing and separating systems, including two Countec Recycling Systems Inc. sorting conveyors (Countec is owned by CP manufacturing). The residential processing facility also utilizes a single Bollegraaf HBC-110 baler.

The plant operates an average of 260 days per year, employing 64 workers under one shift, five days per week. The authority's 28,605-square-foot commercial MRF handles mixed office paper generated by the local business sector. According to Greer, the plant processed 22,326 tons of commercially-generated fiber during the '07-'08 fiscal year, utilizing CP Manufacturing sorting and processing equipment, as well as Sierra International Machinery and Harris Waste Management Group balers, to process the materials.

A total of 15 employees work at the plant, five days a week.

The big news coming from Greer, though, involved the construction of the authority's new state-of-the-art dual-stream facility, a plant that will replace both existing MRFs once it comes online this fall. Currently being erected by Edmonton, Alberta-based PCL Construction Inc., once completed, the nearly 135,000-square-foot MRF should take the cake as the nation's largest dual-stream processing facility.

Set to be completely equipped with CP Manufacturing sorting and processing technology, which includes three optical sorters on the commingled line and multiple star screens on the fiber lines, the new RMRF will also incorporate a first-rate education/visitors center, constructed and outfitted entirely with products manufactured from recycled materials.

*Information provided in "MRF of the Month" came courtesy of the 2007-2008 Materials Recycling Directory, as published by Governmental Advisory Associates, Inc. Resource Recycling would like to thank the GAA for its participation.



Technical Specifications*

Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County

Location:

West Palm Beach, Florida
Multi-Material MRF

Start-up Date:

1991

Number of Processing Lines:

Six

Throughput:

Tons per day:

Commingled

containers: 124.5

Fiber: 274.8

Tons per year: 103,838 (2008)

Approximate tons of material processed per year:

Commingled

containers: 32,382

Fiber: 71,456

Residue level:

Under seven percent

2007-2008 Materials Processing and Recycling in the United States: Yearbook and Directory

5th Edition — Print or CD-ROM

The 1,300 page Yearbook is the only comprehensive guide to Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) in the United States, providing information on 583 operating, planned and shut projects. A nationally recognized resource, it provides a strategic analysis of the post-consumer recycling industry and a database of U.S. Material Recovery Facilities. It is an invaluable reference tool for solid waste decision makers, planners, consultants, and organizations interested in the present and future of recycling.

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