

MRF of the Month

Greenstar North America Recycling Facility

The San Antonio recycling facility owned and operated by Greenstar North America, the country's largest private processor of recyclable material, is easily one of the nation's largest automated single-stream facilities and is, by far, the largest MRF operating in the Lone Star State.

Located off Interstate 410 on nine acres of land, the 180,000-square-foot Cornerway Boulevard facility accepts single-stream material from San Antonio (nearly 400,000 households) and Austin (about 200,000 households), as well as the Hill Country region of Central



Texas. The facility handles commercially-generated recyclables as well, which are collected single-stream via front-end-loader truck routes.

According to city data, since switching to single-stream collection in October 2006 and converting from an 18-gallon bin to a 95-gallon rollcart, the

Alamo City's recycling rate has doubled, if not tripled, compared to the city's rate under the previous collection approach.

The facility operates one processing line for incoming material, of which then splits into two parallel lines for further separation of recyclables. Designed by Van Dyk Baler Corp. to process at a capacity of 20,000 tons per month, the MRF is presently operating at about 50 tons per hour, or an average of 600-700 tons processed per day.

The plant is equipped with a Bollegraaf single-stream processing system, which includes six Lubo single-stream StarScreens, a Lubo screen for old corrugated containers, a Lubo glass breaker, a glass cleanup system, seven Titech optical sorters (three for fiber cleaning and four for commingled container sorting) and two Bollegraaf balers (one for fiber and one for containers). The system has a fully-automated commingled container sort line, in which polyethylene terephthalate, high-density polyethylene (HDPE), HDPE-color and HDPE-natural are all optically sorted twice. Once "other" plastics are captured, the residue from the end of the system can then be manually sorted after an additional optical unit re-circulates any missed plastics (Nos. 1-7).

Speaking of plastics, plastic bag contamination is the biggest issue being dealt with at the San Antonio Greenstar MRF, as the single-use products are everywhere, by volume, and are very difficult to handle. Another issue of note concerns the ever-changing stream entering the facility, as less and less old newspaper is being witnessed in the incoming stream.

A staff of 100 – working under two shifts – are employed at the Greenstar North America MRF. In addition to the Cornerway Boulevard facility, Greenstar also operates a second San Antonio MRF. The 75,000-square-foot Aniol Street facility, located off Interstate 35, processes around 3,000 tons per month.

A tour of the Greenstar North America Cornerway Boulevard MRF will coincide with *Resource Recycling's* inaugural Resource Recycling Conference, to be held October 26-27, 2010 in San Antonio. For more information on the RR Conference, contact Cara Bergeson, conference manager, at (503) 233-1305, ext. 117 or cara@resource-recycling.com.

*Know of a North American MRF that you feel *Resource Recycling* readers should know about? If so, e-mail your recommendation, with hi-resolution pictures, to justin@resource-recycling.com, and your facility may just be highlighted in a future "MRF of the Month" column.



Technical Specifications*

Greenstar North America Recycling Facility

Location:

San Antonio, Texas

Start-up date:

March 2009

Number of processing lines:

One infeed that splits into two parallel lines

Throughput:

Designed to process up to 20,000 tons per month (currently processing about 15,000 tons per month)

Approximate tons of material processed (2009):

Fiber: 50 percent

Commingled containers: 35 percent

Residual: 15 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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