

Recycler making major push into product arena

By Mike McNulty

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FRAMINGHAM, Mass.--Diversified recycler and product maker Conigliaro Industries Inc. has become an expert at utilizing its resources.

The 12-year-old company recycles all types of rubber, urethane, plastic, paper, metal, glass and wood, and for the last 10 years has used some of them to establish a line of products while continuing to build its recycling business. The firm has begun to expand and push that line in earnest and will make its first major thrust into the recycled product market in 2003, according to President Gregory Conigliaro. He said the firm hired three people to help pull in new business.

Conigliaro labeled his company as "a hauling, processing, commodity house and manufacturer." And while the firm's recycling operation accounts for about 75 percent of sales, the president's goal is to build Conigliaro Industries' manufacturing and product base to at least half the overall business as the recycling operation continues to expand.

Conigliaro Industries currently produces used foam insulation; industrial grade hole patch, called Boston's Best Patch, made of recycled materials that usually include rubber and/or urethane; Tumbled Glass Aggregate, recycled pure glass that's turned into, among other things, landscape mulch; PolyCorn, loose-fill packaging, made from recycled foam; mulch, manufactured from recycled wooden pallets and crates; and Plas-Crete blocks, made from mixed plastic aggregate, including rubber, urethane, cement, sand and water.

"We're primarily a New England company, but we ship nationwide," Conigliaro said. For instance, it recycles insulation material--foam board sheets of roofing insulation, some of which is elastomer-based--and turns it into usable foam and ships it to companies across the U.S. The firm annually processes about 250 loads of insulation, with each load consisting of 120 cubic yards.

Spurred by inroads made during the last several months, the firm will place greater focus on Plas-Crete blocks for the military and other market segments, Conigliaro said. Each block requires about 250 pounds of material.



Plas-Crete blocks made by Conigliaro Industries are used as force protection at the Massachusetts National Guard Headquarters in Milford, Mass.

The blocks, patch and other products were invented and developed by Greg's father, Tony Conigliaro, who now serves as vice president of engineering after retiring as a mechanical and industrial design engineer a few years ago.

The blocks can be used by the military in place of a variety of barriers, including sandbags; soil berms; and bin revetments made from 55-gallon drums, timbers, tires and wood/metal prefabricated kits.

"The military end of our business is starting to grow now, and we'll concentrate on that," he said. Plas-Crete blocks, weighing about 1,850 pounds each, are strong, heavy and thick enough to serve as protection, but light enough to assemble quickly.

A crew of two can place the blocks at a rate of 25 per hour using block-inset hooks, a chain and either a Bobcat, forklift or backhoe, according to the company.

The blocks protect resources by deflecting near-miss bomb and projectile blasts, weapons' fire, and shrapnel, the firm said. The product also is ideal for use by businesses as retaining walls; material bins; and for rapid, low-cost construction applications, the company said.



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