

Gibsons Recycler Unveils Styrofoam Machine



How often have you stood over your blue bin wondering what to do with the plastic foam from an unpacked box? Gibsons Recycling Depot has the answer in the form of a hot new machine to compact and recycle the material.

"Our constituents deserve zero waste," said depot owner Buddy Boyd to several politicians from all levels of local and provincial government at the unveiling of the new machine. "The Sunshine Coast is ready for sustainability right now."

Boyd and his partner Barb Hetherington purchased the RecycleTech Corp. XT200 model that retails for around \$34,000 U.S. It runs off electricity to mulch chunks of expanded polystyrene (often called by its trademark name Styrofoam) with the use of a heated coil and auger system.

Boyd held up a smooth, round ball of foam the size of a softball that resulted from 100 compacted egg cartons. "We're the first in B.C.," Boyd said about owning the machine. He said they are now retailers for the compactor in Canada and have had good response from other small communities in the province.

Hetherington spoke about the material's future use. "It's a marketable commodity," Hetherington said, "and is completely recyclable." She said the foam is sold back to an American contractor and is reused to make high-end crown molding, photo frames and bike helmet insulation among other things.

There are six commercial freight bins full of polystyrene sitting on site just waiting for someone to feed it into the machine. It came out a side hole like hot taffy where Boyd stepped on it in a bin with his boots to compact it further until it cooled.

With their Earth Day flag blowing in the wind high above a bin of polystyrene, Boyd and Hetherington's enthusiasm for recycling was evident. "Our resources are precious and we shouldn't be consuming them at the rate that we are," she said.

In the meantime, Gibsons Recycling is open for the business of reducing and reusing Styrofoam products at their depot on Venture Way in Gibsons BC.

Source: Coast Reporter

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