

RECOVINYL

news

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WELCOME to issue 24 of the Recovynyl Newsletter. Catch up with Axion's new PVC Flooring Recycling trial, find out how Axion's new Site Waste Management Plan service could be an opportunity for you and read about flooring company Altro and its plans to recycle safety flooring.

PVC Flooring Recycling trial collections begin.

Axion's new WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) funded trial to prove the recyclability of PVC flooring has got off to a great start with material now being collected from many sites across the UK. As Jane Gardner, Axion's Project Leader for the scheme comments: "We are now collecting post-use material from over forty three different projects including construction and demolition projects as well as collecting directly from flooring contractors and distributors."

Jane is anticipating accumulating large volumes of uplifted flooring from many of these projects. As she comments: "We have collected several tonnes of material already and the potential yield at some of these sites is impressive. For example, post-use uplifted flooring is being collected from a whole ward refurbishment at Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge, the demolition of a major retail site in Wembley High Road, London and the refurbishment of a large department store. Off-cuts are being collected from flooring installations at 9 new stores – part of the expansion of a well known major retailer."

Construction and demolition companies have shown a keen interest in the scheme. As Jane explains: "We have had a particularly good response from construction companies who are members of the Considerate Construction Scheme and this has resulted in several new collection sites for the collection of uplifted flooring. Companies such as General Demolition and Wates Retail (part of the Wates Group) have been very co-operative, as have Morgan Ashurst who are carrying out the Addenbrookes Hospital ward refurbishment."

The material is collected either in bulk bags, drop-front refurbished wheelie bins or skips, depending on the most appropriate collection option for the site.

Overall, the project is aiming to collect at least 30 tonnes of material by the end of March 2008, in order to demonstrate that recycling PVC flooring is economically viable. Jane is confident that this target will be exceeded. As she comments: "We have found that there is a lot of material out there to be collected. This is already a key result of this trial. Production trials to recycle the material will begin in February."

Collected material will be used in recycling trials by Polyflor, Altro and Tarkett Marley, 3 of the UK's leading flooring manufacturers and incorporated into both new flooring and other long-life applications outside the flooring sector.

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Interested in working with construction companies?

From April 2008, Site Waste Management Plans are to become a statutory requirement for all construction projects over £250,000. Companies will be required to provide detailed plans on how they will manage their waste and will be encouraged to recycle. Axion have launched a new service writing Site Waste Management Plans on behalf of construction companies, completing the whole process from the initial draft through to implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

Site Waste Management Plans will create an opportunity for Recovynyl recyclers. Companies will be required to separate their waste from large construction and demolition projects under the new regulations and Axion expects that significant quantities of PVC products could be collected from these sites.

Anyone who is interested in finding out more about Site Waste Management Plans or who would like to make contact with contractors who are working on this type of project can contact Roger Morton Tel: 0161 426 7731 email: rmorton@axionrecycling.com

Altro Flooring Ltd

Taking part in Axion's new Recycled Flooring scheme is Altro Ltd, a UK-based flooring company supplying its products worldwide from its manufacturing base in Letchworth Garden City. The company is renowned for the invention of safety flooring and its introduction to the UK market over 50 years ago. Since then it has become market leader, its name synonymous with safety flooring.

Altro safety flooring helps reduce accidents with its "all the way through" slip resistance. It is used widely in public sector applications such as hospitals and schools, in retailing and in transport. It is a product with social benefits, contributing substantially to the reduction of accidents. Tough aggregates like silicon carbide and aluminium trioxide are added during the manufacture process to give safety flooring its non-slip properties and for this reason it is often perceived as a product that is difficult or even impossible to recycle. Ian Wright, Marketing Director for Altro, comments



"Some of the documents you read about recycling imply that safety flooring cannot be recycled. At Altro we believe it can be done and we have developed a process to allow us to do this. We are investing in the necessary technology and have begun collecting waste material, ready for recycling when the process becomes fully operational. The material we recycle will be used in the manufacture of new safety flooring and will enable us to achieve complete 'closed loop' recycling."

Ian Wright sees participation in Axion's new Recycled Flooring Scheme as supporting the process Altro has begun. He comments: "The recycling trial is a fabulous opportunity for us. It has accelerated our ability to be able to pick up material from contractors and has helped us establish the process. With Axion's help we have been able to organise the type of collection arrangements and internal procedures required. Axion has taken part in our discussions with customers, developing the process which we had started and which we intend to roll out generally to the market. We have a network of installers of our products and in parallel to this scheme we are putting together proposals to collect our material back for recycling."

Ian is confident that it is possible to set up a successful flooring recycling scheme. As he comments: "In Scandinavia and Germany, Altro already takes part in schemes where vinyl flooring, including safety flooring, is collected and recycled. In fact we provide funding to the German AgPR scheme which has been working in his area for more than 10 years."

Early this year, Altro will begin using recycle in new products. As Ian explains: "In principle, we could recycle 100% of our safety flooring depending on collection networks and contamination issues. It is our intention to include a significant proportion of recycled content in our safety flooring from early 2008. The safety flooring

market is well established in the UK but is an emerging market in many other parts of the world. This is a great time to introduce products with recycled content to these developing markets."

Altro is working towards raising and achieving its own environmental standards and has laid out goals in its 'Six Steps to Sustainability' strategy. The strategy includes its plans for recycling alongside other commitments to expand its ongoing sustainability programme. Sustainability is not a new thing for Altro, having been engaged in energy and water saving projects for many years. For example, last year the company saved over 1000 tonnes of CO₂ and water consumption has been reduced by 99% in the past 10 years. As Ian comments:



"We believe our ability to recycle safety flooring is a real breakthrough and a major step in our ongoing commitment to sustainability strategy and reducing our carbon footprint"

The Altro group has an annual turnover in excess of £100 million and manufactures and distributes flooring and walling products, smooth vinyl floors, resin floors as well as safety flooring together with accessories. It has wholly owned subsidiaries in North America, Australia, Spain and Scandinavia and a network of agents and distributors in over 70 countries worldwide - all of whom are supplied from the UK.

The company has won a number of awards. Over the past few years, it has moved its position upwards in the Times list of the 'Top 100 Companies to Work For' - one of the few manufacturing companies to be listed. The company aims to improve its ranking this year.

Altro has won awards for its new design safety flooring ranges, Suprema and Timbersafe. The Suprema range has won the BREEAM class 'A' environmental rating, based on a number of factors contributing towards sustainability. Altro was runner up in the National Business Awards in the Innovation category in 2006 and in 2007 it was awarded Cranfield University's Innovation Design Excellence Award for its Timbersafe product and won the Hertfordshire Business Award for the most successful business (250+ employees).



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