MRF of the Month

Cougle's Recycling Inc. MRF

Technical Specifications*

Cougle's Recycling Inc. MRF

Location:
Hamburg, Pennsylvania

Start-up date:
1992

Number of processing lines:
Four

Throughput:
Approximate tons per month: 8,200

Approximate tons of material processed in 2009: 98,400
Fiber: 78,000
Commingled: 20,400

Residue rate:
Two percent

Sandwiched between Pennsylvania Route 61 and the Schuylkill River, in the small Berks County borough of Hamburg, sits the 110,000-square-foot MRF operated by 60-year-old Cougle's Recycling Inc. (CRI), a third-generation, family-owned recycling business.

A dual-stream processing facility, CRI's Hamburg MRF handles recyclables on behalf of commercial businesses and households located in the tri-state area, consisting of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey and Delaware. According to Tiffany Macaulay, a CRI public relations and marketing representative, about 70 percent of the material entering the Hamburg MRF is commercially generated, with residential making up the balance.

The facility operates four processing lines, producing an average monthly throughput of 8,200 tons – 6,500 tons of that being paper and corrugated materials and commingled material accounting for the remaining 1,700 tons.

The CRI MRF processed approximately 98,400 tons of recyclables in 2009, with nearly 80 percent (78,000 tons) of that being fiber-related material. And, with all the material the MRF handles, the Hamburg operation is only producing a low two-percent residue rate, which can be credited to the fact that CRI has an end-use for almost every item that comes through its doors.

For example, a large majority of the glass material handled by CRI is reprocessed into new glass products. Glass materials unable to be color separated are used to produce a glass aggregate. In addition, the company's food waste composting program converts industrially-generated organic material – removed from the facility's waste stream – into nutrient-rich soil, while its alternative fuels program allows Cougle's to collect, process and convert formerly obsolete, non-recyclable plastic items into energy to help power local businesses. CRI's plastics reprocessing program is conducted in an 85,000-square-foot facility located just northwest of Hamburg, in Auburn, Pennsylvania.

The Hamburg MRF utilizes a Machinex processing system – comprising of three paper sorting lines, a commingled system, with MSS Optical sortation, and a Hazmag crushing plant for production of glass aggregate – and four American Baler units (8543, TREX, 6940 two-ram for plastics and a TRIM unit for the confidential destruction area.) The company's National Association for Information Destruction-compliant document destruction area, on the other hand, employs the use of a Vecoplan shredder, Getecha granulator and a Hustler Conveyor Co. conveyor, outfitted with sort stations and magnetic removal.

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Currently, CRI operates a rolling fleet of 36 power units, in conjunction with hundreds of trailers, rear, front-load and roll-off containers. The company also provides free-of-charge recycling audits, to evaluate current materials processing and offer advice for possible savings.

The Cougle's Recycling Hamburg MRF employs approximately 100, 35 of which are sorters, and the facility is open six days a week: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Thursday; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays; and 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Saturdays.

*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.