

PALLETtalk

The Newsletter of the National Wooden Pallet & Container Association

WHERE ARE USED PALLETS GOING?

NEW STUDY TO CONNECT LANDFILLS & PALLET RECYCLING

What's happening across the U.S. with landfills and used pallets? Are landfills still accepting wood pallets? And, if so, how many? Have the number of pallets being landfilled increased or decreased? Are separated pallets being recycled at the landfills, or are they simply buried? What are the tipping fees? Are tipping fees lower if pallets are separated prior to delivery to landfills? If landfills are using grinders to reduce the pallets and remove metal, are they using and/or selling the resulting fiber? Are landfill operators aware of potential wood fiber markets?

Phil Araman from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Research Station in Blacksburg, VA has teamed up with Dr. Bob Bush of the Center for Forest Products Marketing at VA Tech to conduct a nation-wide study to answer these and other questions. This study will help determine the extent of pallet recycling and disposal at landfills.

The landfill disposal and recycled pallet estimates garnered from this research will be combined with other recently collected data to improve our understanding of used pallet reuse and disposal. Araman and Bush have estimates of pallet recycling by the pallet repair and recycling community from two surveys recently completed by VA Tech. They believe that many more pallets are being recycled into useful products and that this study will provide a more complete picture of

pallet recycling. Preliminary results should be available by this fall.

These studies are all part of NWPCA's Pallet Recycling Research Initiative. Araman and Bush are working with NWPCA's Research Steering Committee to help plan and evaluate their research. Additional research will include studies on:

- Performance tests of repaired pallets (see *PALLETtalk* 12/15/94)
- Repairs with metal connector plates (see *PALLETtalk* 5/15/94)
- Survey of the number of pallets recycled in 1992 and 1993 (see *Pallets*

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- User's perceptions of repaired pallets
(see *PALLETtalk 1/15/95*)
- Ultrasound scanning of pallet parts
- ECO products (flooring, millwork, etc.
from used pallets)
- Evaluation of remanufactured and/or
new used pallets

Research planned for the near future,
includes:

- Creating a PDS for repaired pallets
- Research on new repair techniques
- Block pallet repairs
- Automatic scanning systems for used
and new pallet parts
- Continued research on end plates

As results of the landfill study and any of
the other pallet research projects under-
way at either VA Tech or the USFS
become available, NWPCA will publish
the results in this newsletter.

For more information on any of the stud-
ies, please call U.S. Forest Service
Research at VA Tech in Blacksburg, VA,
at 703/231-4016.

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