

A CUSTOMER'S SUCCESS STORY

Volvo Construction Equipment

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Jay Alexander



SAVED BY THE GRAPPLE.

Sure, you'd be fascinated by what people throw away—stuffed deer heads, bowling balls, more than you can imagine. Tons of junk. But what's more amazing is what happens to some of the stuff most people think of as garbage. The folks at Wayne Township Landfill use Volvo to give everything a second look. And they've turned a landfill into a mega-player profit center and local tourist attraction. Even the goats are eating better these days.

North America's landfill administrators sure could learn a lot from four guys in Wayne Township, a team of comfortable Volvos and a herd of goats.

The idea of pulling clean recyclables out of the main stream of garbage dumped at the 310-acre McElhattan, Pennsylvania, site occurred to Wayne Township Landfill General Manager Jay Alexander about six years ago. But it wasn't until they started crunching the numbers that they decided to stop crushing nearly 54 tons of recyclables a month.

"A landfill is nothing more than a stockpile for material we haven't figured out how to economically recycle," Alexander said. "But that's what we are doing now with this Volvo EC140C excavator and the numbers we're achieving are significant. We first looked at it strictly from an economic point of view. The benefit to the environment just came right along with it."



Max Persun, Jay Alexander and Henry Sorgen organized a polite takeover of recyclable materials at Wayne Township Landfill for profit and preservation.



From left, Max Persun and Jay Alexander join Lee Linberg as he readies the grapple for another "green" day.

There's tons of fun

Talk about going green: with the landfill's recent purchase of the Volvo EC140C excavator, equipped with a grapple and a magnet, operator Lee Linberg recovers 40 tons of wood, 12 tons of metal, and two tons of cardboard monthly. All of the materials are processed, recycled and then sold in individual markets, when the time is right.

Opened in 1973 by the Clinton County Solid Waste Authority, the landfill now receives an average of 12,500 tons of waste per month, arriving in 75 to 125 trucks a day, mainly from the surrounding 50-mile vicinity. The landfill generates only 48% of its income from waste disposal. Sales of mulch, recycling, tub grinding (turning wood to landscape mulch), methane gas, hauling and the authority's bond investments make up the rest.

While many landfills, including Wayne Township, have dedicated recycling operations, most don't retrieve reusable scrap from garbage dropped by trucks at the main face of a landfill.

Alexander, who has been the landfill's GM since 1997, said that over the years he watched too

many good materials go to waste. "You see all that material go in and you just don't have the time or resources to recover it. We thought about it and realized the recovery project would be a no-brainer. We said, 'Let's roll the dice and see what happens.'"

Four & a fab idea

Alexander called on landfill Recycling Coordinator & Engineer Michael Crist, Operations Supervisor Max Persun, and heavy equipment dealer Henry Sorgen of Highway Equipment & Supply Co., of Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

The branch's Regional Manager for over four years, Sorgen said Wayne Township Landfill's idea was "groundbreaking" in the industry and fit right in with one of Volvo Construction Equipment's core values—environmental care, which includes improving recycling rates. "After we started, it was just amazing. I thought other landfills should do this too."

The team brainstormed a plan of "how to recover, weigh, sort and sell" that had to be presented to the Clinton County Solid Waste Authority's Board of Directors. The plan needed executive approval

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Operator Norris Hauser hauls bundled cardboard with the L30 compact wheel loader.

because it included dedicating one person to the job as well as the purchase of a new machine. Alexander said that while the board wanted to see solid numbers up front, the plan was approved when the board was informed that the man and machine power would pay for itself in a year or two from the profits in recycling.

But it was the partnership between the landfill and Highway Equipment & Supply Co. that really made the program work. "We've had a long relationship with Highway Equipment and Volvo has truly been a partner in our success," Alexander explained.

Magnet and steel

"We sat down with Henry Sorgen and asked for suggestions and he came back with the excavator, grapple and a magnet and made it happen. With



The EC360B excavator covers the trash that cannot be used.

Highway Equipment, we say what we want to do and they recommend the right machine," Alexander added.

Right now, the wood is processed with a Volvo L150E wheel loader and becomes salable landscape mulch, the four types of metal (prepared, unprepared, cast and stainless) are recycled and then processed using a Volvo L30 compact wheel loader, and the cardboard is recycled, baled, stored and sold.

Divided by Route 220, 60 acres of the landfill are closed so they can be mined out and reused later. The 33 active acres of landfill on the other side of the 220 are where Lee Linberg sorts recyclables into three separate buckets, each day.

Get your goat on

As Linberg's Volvo EC140C excavator crawls over the landfill, there are 35 goats, whose parents were donated to the site's clean acres eight years ago by a local resident, going about their daily duties of "vegetation control and public relations."

"There is a lot of traffic on the 220 as people travel between New York and Virginia," Alexander said. "Living here, the goats make the public comfortable that this is a safe environment."

The landfill is a partner in the community, financially supporting local fire companies, students, charities,

baseball fields, a summer camp, concerts and more. In addition to sponsoring many recycling efforts and environmental education, the landfill also donates landscaping mulch to residents, dirt to the ball fields, clay to the Clinton County Speedway, and sand for the 4-H Fairgrounds Arena. Jay Alexander also hosts increasingly popular public tours at the site.

Volvo plays a big role as well. Alexander said his employees are fans of the Volvo construction product. The landfill uses two A35C articulated haulers, an EC360B excavator and an EC360C excavator with a stump splitter and thumb for site work. From operating costs to performance and comfort, "Volvo is top of the line," he said.

"Everyone here picks a Volvo over everything else. I've seen guys walk a quarter mile past a Cat to get to a Volvo. They're more comfortable and they run smoother and everyone knows it—the machines live up to the standards we set for them. We see the difference day in and day out."

Alexander has three children with his wife, Juli. When they're not following Pittsburgh Steelers football and NASCAR, playing baseball, basketball or hunting, they are among the youngest to see the good things a landfill can accomplish. Cody, 16, Cole, 14, and Caylyn, 12, all help with the fuel truck, weeding, mowing, and, of course, giving hay to the herd of goats.



Children from local elementary schools tour the landfill and love to meet these other local "kids."

Long live ... everything

The more numbers the landfill crunches, the better it performs. The team has gone so far as to compare the Volvo EC360 excavator with the Caterpillar 330 excavator head-to-head and found that the Volvo burned 4.3 less gallons of fuel per hour than the Cat. That's efficient and good for the environment!

There's definitely something different going on at Wayne Township—tons are leaving the landfill, rather than staying. It's time for everyone to take notice. Just follow the goats.