

Texas Tire Pile Going Down

The cleanup of millions of discarded tires on the site of what used to be Gibson Recycling is about 70 percent finished project manager Scott Merrick said. He also said the company has been told it will receive an extension of the cleanup contract from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to continue the work.

According to the \$5 million contract, Merrick Construction is supposed to recycle at least 60 percent of the tires on the property. Merrick said an extension of the project should bring a completion date of May 2007.

"The original requirement was to recycle 166,000 tons. But we are endeavoring to do considerably more ... which in turn means we will bury less rubber than anticipated," Merrick said. Merrick said the project is expensive and more time-consuming than originally thought.

"The tire piles were mixed with a lot of dirt so we've had to clean the rubber first," he said. In the multi-stage process, the rubber chips are introduced to an auger feed system, fitted with a water bath which removes most of the dirt. The tire chips then go under a spraying system which rinses the chips off. The tire chips are then screened and sized and the oversized chips are shredded to a smaller size. Magnets are used to help remove the wire from the size-reduced chips which are then loaded into trucks and shipped to fuel customers and other markets.

"I guess the other big factor that we're concerned about is the demand for rubber," Merrick said. "We're shipping quite a bit out but our customers can't take as much as fast as we would like to see them take it." ♦

Tire Blocks

The Tire Block Co., Metamora, Michigan manufactures tire block mounting steps from scrap tire materials for use in horse arenas and other applications. The tire blocks vary in height from below six inches to above 10 inches with most approximately 8 inches high. Customers can also specify the height of the blocks depending on whether smaller or larger steps are



required in the mounting block. A typical 8 inch tire block weighs about 100 pounds, according to the manufacturer.

When the tire blocks are stacked, the sheer weight of the units keeps them in place. When stacking the blocks higher than 24 inches, additional stability can be achieved by driving a two inch pipe through the center of the block into the ground below or driving large staples/rods directly through the blocks.

The blocks can be mounted from either side and have ample room on the block for instructor assistance, according to the manufacturer. The blocks can be easily moved by simply tipping the block to its edge and rolling.

Tire blocks have been submitted to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for approval as a beneficial tire use. Visit www.TireBlock.com ♦

Washington DOE

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Funds to clean up tire piles will come from a fee authorized by the Legislature of \$1 per new tire sold in the state. That fee took effect in July, according to the DOE release. The tire fee will be in place for five years. In the report, investigators said they found the largest number of sites in King County, which had nine total. Five sites were found in Benton County and four in Franklin County.

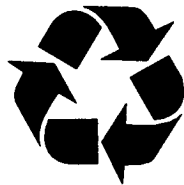
According to the report, the Goldendale tire pile accounts for two-thirds of the scrap tires found at all the sites and will account for more than half the estimated cleanup cost. The tires at the site originated from various tire pile cleanups conducted throughout the state in the 1990s, the report said. The full Ecology report can be found online at: www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0507043.html

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