

Studebaker Plant 8: green redevelopment in South Bend

A former Studebaker facility has been redeveloped into a new transfer/recycling station in South Bend, referred to as Green Tech Recycling (Green Tech). This is a great example of how thinking green for the environment can bring cost savings, new jobs, and community enrichment.

After a long industrial past, the former Studebaker Plant 8 facility sat vacant for 12 years. Mother Earth LLC (Mother Earth) then acquired the property in 2005 and invested \$4 million for its demolition, remediation, and redevelopment. The Indiana Brownfields Program provided \$45,123 in assessment and remediation grants to Saint Joseph County for the project, and the City of South Bend provided \$67,000 in funding from a brownfield assessment grant that it received from the U.S. EPA.

Green Tech demolished 665,000 square feet of the former Studebaker building. The remaining 85,000-square foot building is being reused for offices, a maintenance garage, and a green industry incubator. Concrete and steel material from the demolition was reused as construction materials for the new facilities. Green building materials in the form of recycled plastic were purchased and used as decking, signs, and simulated wood flooring. Additional green building technology for the building and property include: low volatile emission interior paint, tinted windows for energy reduction, skylights and high efficiency lighting to reduce energy consumption, an electric car for site tours, a possible green roof, and collection of stormwater for washing fleet trucks.

Green Tech currently has six employees with plans to increase to 24 employees when the facility is fully operational. In March 2008, Green Tech started operations by accepting wood debris for shredding as mulch, with a grand opening scheduled for July 4, 2008. In the future, Green Tech will recycle computers, plastic, metal, brick, concrete, asphalt, and other demolition debris. Combining a transfer station and recycling facility at one location, Green Tech will be the only large-scale transfer/recycling facility of its kind in Indiana .

In addition to being a transfer/recycling facility, Green Tech's property will include a green technology incubator, a natural area with trails and wildlife feeding stations, and an environmental education center for school children. Green Tech has already hosted South Bend high school students and German foreign exchange students for presentations and hands-on environmental studies demonstrations. Green Tech is also in discussions with the Girls Scouts of Singing Sands in South Bend to sponsor a Brownfields Badge for the local troop.

For more information about this project, please contact Bill Wieringa at (317) 234-4860 or wwieringa@ifa.IN.gov.

What makes the Studebaker Plant 8 demolition “Green”?

Money earned by recycling of the building materials paid for eight months of the \$1.4 million demolition activities at the former Studebaker facility with only 1% (550 tons at a cost of \$10,000) of the demolished materials from the 750,000-square foot building going to a landfill for disposal. The following items were recycled/reused to create the new Green Tech facility:

- Concrete and bricks - crushed and used as foundation base under the construction of the new building and roadways.
- Wood - mulched and donated for nearby landscaping and sold the remainder for reuse.
- Fluorescent lights and ballasts - removed and packaged for bulb recycling.
- Cement blocks - packaged on skids and used on Green Tech buildings and sold the remainder for reuse.
- Bricks - a local brick company purchased a semi-load, and the remainder was sold for reuse.
- Iron and steel - harvested many tons and shipped to the steel mills in City of Gary.
- Metal siding - removed and saved on pallets for use on Green Tech buildings.
- Signage - reused for a nearby baseball field.
- Gate - reused for a nearby baseball field handicap parking.
- Pea gravel - removed from the roof and used around drainage pipes.
- Metal roof - hauled eight semi-trucks to the steel mills in the City of Gary for recycling.
- Wiring, fire suppression, piping - hauled to Gary steel mills.

This demolition and deconstruction project is unique in that materials were not only scrapped for the steel mills, but the building materials were reused for the new facility. This reuse of materials is the most cost effective recycling because no transportation or manufacturing costs are incurred.

The former Studebaker Plant 8 facility was transformed into a new transfer station/recycling center in South Bend.

