



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

nerej

Recycling of demolition debris

July 28, 2009 - Green Buildings

Here in Massachusetts, many construction & demolition materials have been banned from disposal including asphalt, brick, concrete, metal and wood. New materials such as gypsum wallboard and asphalt shingles are being looked at now and wallboard is in the process of going through approvals to be added to the ban list. When a material like wallboard gets mixed in with damp soil conditions below grade and is mixed with other organic matter, a chemical reaction takes place due to the lack of oxygen and hydrogen sulfide gas is created. Hydrogen sulfide gas is a very expensive problem to deal with and many landfills are closed due to these issues.

The state of Massachusetts with few landfills remaining active and open, is putting its foot forward and working to control and mandate recycling wherever possible. So, as of May 1, 2009 wallboard recycling was made mandatory on all state projects here in Mass. Regardless of whether or not a project is aiming for LEED points, the material must be recycled.

The only wallboard recycler in MA is Gypsum Recycling America, located in Cambridge. Georgia Pacific in Newington, NH also offers a take back program and also charges a fee for clean, source separated new construction wallboard scrap but they do not offer container or pickup service. Gypsum Recycling America (GRA) offers rolloff container service to all points of Mass.

The market for new construction wallboard waste can easily be accepted and recycled by GRA and Georgia Pacific and with limited landfill space remaining open to it, the state is pushing to ban it from disposal with an intended date of 1st quarter 2010.

GRA is active within many environmental business groups including the EBC, USGBC, CMRA, AIA, Green Round Table, AGC and BAGB. GRA is an active participant in construction & demolition workgroups hosted by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and is working closely with Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) in making wallboard recycling a reality on state funded projects here in the bay-state.

Patrick Manning is with Gypsum Recycling America, Holbrook, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540