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OHIO COMPANY USES YESTERDAY'S VINYL SCRAP TO MAKE TODAY'S PACKAGING PRODUCTS

PORT CLINTON, OHIO, December 6, 1993 -- Yesterday's vinyl scrap is now being used to package and ship metal coils, bulk paper products, appliances and computers. At the same time, it's outperforming the virgin materials it replaced, says an Ohio manufacturer, who is on the vanguard of making accessory shipping and packaging products from recycled vinyl.

More and more companies are concerned about "buying recycled," including the components they use to ship products. REPLASTEC, Inc., a custom-extruder in Port Clinton, Ohio, has honed in on that need by producing separators, edge protectors, top frames, corner posts, nail fins and drain troughs from a combination of post-consumer and post-industrial vinyl scrap.

According to Roger Bleim, president of the company, "These recycled vinyl products are replacing materials like wood, steel, fiberglass and even virgin plastic because they are less costly and can outperform the competitive materials. There's even the option to return the products to REPLASTEC for another round of recycling."

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The company's major product is its separators, which are used to ship processed metals such as aluminum, copper, or steel coils. The separators allow spacing for forklift transportation, help minimize friction and compression between the coils, and also help eliminate moisture on the product.

REPLASTEC also manufactures channels, or dunnage racks as they're called in the automotive industry, that keep parts separated as they are transported from the manufacturing area to the assembly area. The company's third product line includes angles, or edge protectors. Used on the corners of stacks of paper or around the edges of appliances, angles provide rigidity and stackability during shipment and inventory.

Two additional products serving the construction industry include nail fins and drain troughs. Nail fins are used to hold a window or door in place within a wood frame during installation. They are covered by the window or door trim and are never seen by anyone other than the installer. Drain troughs are permanent, partially exposed fixtures that run the perimeter of a basement or foundation, and help remove water from damp basements or during waterproofing.

Bleim notes that his products require function, not aesthetics. "We looked for strength, extrudability and availability of a material and chose PVC," he says. "Even if there is slight contamination, such as ink, pigments, paper or foil labels, it's acceptable for our products."

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Bleim, who began his career in the flat-rolled steel industry, and his partner, Thomas E. Fought, started their business on September 1, 1991, and just 75 days later, were producing shippable products. Since then, the company has tripled its equipment and now runs four extruder lines and two coextrusion lines. Operations consume 200,000 pounds of recycled vinyl monthly. Bleim commented that manufacturers have recycled regrind back into the same product for years and years, but "to regrind and make something new and fresh" was REPLASTEC's goal.

REPLASTEC is one of 58 companies featured in the Vinyl Institute's *Directory of Companies Manufacturing Products From Recycled Vinyl*. The Vinyl Institute is the national trade association representing the leading manufacturers of vinyl (PVC, or polyvinyl chloride), vinyl feedstocks, additives, and film and sheet products.

Robert H. Burnett, executive director of the Vinyl Institute, notes that companies like Replastec provide evidence that vinyl is being recycled. "By using post-industrial and post-consumer vinyl in its products, Replastec, as well as the other companies listed in the directory, are helping to strengthen the supply-demand balance that's critical to the recycling industry."

For a free copy of the *Directory of Companies Manufacturing Products From Recycled Vinyl*, call the Vinyl Environmental Resource Center at 1-800-969-VINYL (8469), or write the Resource Center, One Cascade Plaza, 19th Floor, Akron, OH 44308.

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