

REPURPOSED MATERIALS, INC.

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Aggregate Supplies, Barriers/Rails/Guards, Cable Pulling Tools, Damage Prevention, Engineering, Geotextiles, Heavy Hauling, Manhole Rehab., Retaining Walls, Saws/Grinders/Blades

If you've watched the trucks hauling debris away from a construction site, you have some idea how much construction and demolition (C&D) debris is produced. But you might not have considered just how immense is the quantity of debris produced on a nationwide scale.

The EPA estimates that as much as 600 million tons of C&D debris are generated in the United States annually. Piled a foot deep, the waste would spread out for 215,000 acres, covering a space the size of New York City, with plenty to spare.

Every aspect of construction, repair and demolition, including what goes underground, produces some waste. Every participant can contribute to making such projects more environmentally friendly. And you don't have to undertake big measures to make a contribution to landfill diversion.

The ingenuity of a "repurposing" leader is helping construction professionals save money while also preventing unnecessary waste.

A company called repurposedMATERIALS is helping industries across the nation reduce their environmental impact by finding a second life for a surprising number of items. Here are few of repurposedMATERIALS' creative applications of used materials:

- worn out mining conveyor belts are repurposed as a protective curtain during demolition blasting, or for matting over grass or pavement when moving tracked vehicles
- retired advertising billboard vinyl is used as waterproof tarps to cover building materials on a job site or to cover structures when they are opened up to the weather during a remodel
- old highway guardrail posts are repurposed as cribbing by house-moving companies and as shoring materials by excavation contractors

"We all have a part to play in protecting our environment," said repurposedMATERIALS owner Damon Carson. "It makes sense environmentally and economically. Giving materials a second life keeps them out of the landfill, which can come with surprising cost savings."

Rather than advocate for recycling, which uses energy, is expensive and inefficient, repurposedMATERIALS believes the optimal method of landfill diversion is not recycling. It's "repurposing."

"If something is obsolete to the primary user, that doesn't mean it doesn't have value somewhere," Carson said. "If you find yourself saying 'I can't use this. What am I going to do with it?' that's where we come in."

Repurposing is at the intersection of affordability and sustainability. For the one getting rid of waste, there may be a savings over paying to dispose of the material. And for the one utilizing repurposed material over a primary-purpose product, there is typically a savings of 50 to 75%.

Carson challenges those in every industry to consider if there are "repurpose-able" options for their obsolete materials before simply banishing them to the landfill. He can also help them find ways to utilize repurposed materials themselves.

"We adhere to the belief 'It is not a waste until it is wasted,'" Carson said. "Before you buy something new, ask yourself 'What repurposed solution might there be that I haven't thought of?'"

For advice on repurposing materials, contact Carson by telephone at 720-615-0281
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