

# COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE UPDATE

## New Recycling Center Reduces Construction Debris in Landfills

### ENERGY: Waste Management Unveils Automated Sorting Line

By MOLLY PAPPAS

Waste Management's new Construction and Demolition Recycling Center in El Cajon was unveiled amid mounting consumer and government interest in protecting the environment.

The C&D recycling center's green program aims to reduce building materials waste in landfills, and promote reuse and recycling. The facility will convert 130,000 tons of commercial construction waste per year.

"It has been estimated that construction and demolition accounts for more than 22 percent of the overall waste stream in California, 35 percent of the waste at Miramar Landfill, and it is estimated at more than 100,000 tons annually for the unincorporated areas of the county and over 1 million tons countywide," said Waste Management San Diego's Community and Municipal Relations Manager Les Hart.

C&D recycling is a growing industry and in high demand. According to the Construction Materials Recycling Association, about 350 million tons of construction and demolition waste is produced in the United States annually. Municipal solid waste accounts for approximately 255 tons of this waste alone.

Connecticut-based Lubo USA, with an office in Los

Angeles, built the recycling facility for Waste Management and construction took about nine months. Houston-based Waste Management provides waste management services, including collection, transfer, recycling and disposal services.

#### Speedy Sorting

The \$7 million sorting line, which was funded by Waste Management of San Diego, helped create an additional 30 jobs in the local work force. The line helps process up to 35 tons per hour of waste material and an estimated 25 tons per hour of dry recyclables. The facility's advanced technology enables 50 times the amount of waste to be converted compared to a manual sorting line.

"We expanded the current building and added the state-of-the-art Lubo equipment, which includes Titech optical sorting capabilities for the processing of dry recyclables such as aluminum cans, glass and newspapers from commercial trash loads," said Hart.

Dry recyclables are not the only materials processed at the facility, however. Sheet rock, concrete, wood and metal, among others, are processed and then sold for a variety of uses. Sheet rock may be converted to soil amendment, metal converted to steel products and wood can be reclaimed for landscape cover.

The Environmental Protection Agency has reported that 42 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions are influenced by materials management policies. And even though consumer recycling in 2006 has contributed to



Photo courtesy of Waste Management

Recyclable and building materials that can be converted into reusable products are processed at Waste Management's Construction and Demolition Recycling Center.

a reduction in 183 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e, the planet could still benefit from reduction in packaging. The EPA's Opportunities to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions Through Materials and Land Management Practices report says even a 50 percent packaging reduction could provide a 40-105 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e emission benefit a year, and recycling all C&D materials could present a 150 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e benefit.

"The new facility plays an important role in reducing San Diego's landfill deposits and carbon emissions footprint," said Hart.