



Veridian Vinyl Recycling Program
FINAL REPORT
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The vinyl siding recycling program conducted in 2005 by Veridian Homes and WasteCap Wisconsin in the Madison area was a qualified success.

It was a success in that 44,440 pounds of vinyl siding scrap was recycled from the construction of 235 new homes. Based on that, Veridian Homes and the recycler, Recycle America Alliance, have decided to continue the program in 2006.

The program was a "qualified" success as WasteCap had targeted to recycle more than 100,000 pounds of vinyl siding scrap from more than 500 homes, and had anticipated that the program would become self-supporting in 2005 – meaning that the income from the sale of the vinyl scrap material would pay for the costs of collection and transportation of the material. Neither of these goals were achieved, however over the course of the pilot program we learned that these targets were probably unrealistic.

The initial concept for the Veridian Homes vinyl siding scrap recycling program was to establish a central recycling site for each development and require siding contractors to collect vinyl scrap at each home site (located in the development) and deliver it to the central recycling location. This concept differed from the program used in the Bielinski Homes vinyl recycling program in the Milwaukee area whereby the vinyl scrap was picked up at each home site by Prairie Tree Landscaping, the recycling and trash services provider, who separated the vinyl from other materials and transported it to vinyl recycling containers placed in the development.

During the implementation phase of the Veridian program, however, the company made several decisions which changed how the program would operate. First, they decided that the central vinyl recycling site should occupy a single building lot. Then it was decided that the central recycling site would accommodate not only vinyl recycling but also should provide for concrete recycling. Discussions with the siding contractors revealed that the siding scrap would probably be transported in cardboard boxes, so a cardboard recycling dumpster would also need to be placed on the recycling site. To inhibit contamination of the recycling containers by unauthorized persons, Veridian decided that the central recycling site should be fenced and gated. All these requirements, meant that it would take some time and expense to set-up the central recycling sites, and that meant that the vinyl recycling program was not appropriate in all Veridian development neighborhoods.

Many mature developments had only a few lots available. Sacrificing one of those lots to collect material from the few homes left to be built didn't make economic sense. So the vinyl recycling sites were established in only the most active Veridian developments.

This process of designing the recycling sites, arranging for their construction, deciding which developments would receive them, and determining which specific lot in a development would become the recycling site took longer than anticipated. The first two recycling sites were not established until the end of March. Three more sites were added in June and another in August. The last two sites were not established until October and November 2005.

The result of this process were increased costs (each recycling site cost an average of \$1,435 to construct), limited number of homes involved in the vinyl recycling program, and a significantly reduced amount of material collected. On the plus side, however, the thought and effort put into these “designing” the central recycling sites virtually eliminated problems with dumpster contamination, sent a message to the siding contractors that Veridian was making a serious effort recycle this material, increased contractor participation, and through the good signage developed by the Veridian marketing department-- provided positive public relations.



Contractor Education and Monitoring

Another significant success of the Veridian vinyl recycling program was worker/contractor education and monitoring. When the program was initiated in April 2005 WasteCap developed a short educational flyer that explained the Veridian vinyl siding recycling program, its goals, how to recycle the material and what happens to the material when it is recycled. The flyer was provided to each of Veridian’s siding contractors at the regular Even Flow meetings in August. The contractors, in turn, explained the program to their workers. Veridian says that contractor participation and buy-in for the vinyl recycling program has been excellent.

The vinyl recycling sites are monitored regularly by construction managers and assistant construction managers to insure against contamination of the materials and determine when containers need to be emptied.

Conclusion

While the 2005 Veridian vinyl siding recycling program did not achieve all the goals that were hoped for, it did establish a vinyl siding market in the Madison area where none had existed before. It also provides a firm foundation for vinyl recycling that will continue in 2006 and will be expanded to include other sources of material.

WasteCap is hopeful that the continuation and expansion of the Veridian vinyl recycling program in 2006 will soon lead to a permanent and self sustaining vinyl recycling market in the Madison area.