



ITWS selects Aquablast as tyre recycling partner

Committed to the sustainable re-use and recycling of their tyres, solid tyre specialist International Tyre and Wheel Solutions Ltd (ITWS) has partnered Suffolk -based surface preparation and material separation firm, Aquablast Ltd, to devise an ethical disposal solution for the range of SG Revolution super cushion solid tyres.

Thanks to the design of the SG Revolution tyres the majority of the rubber will be used during the course of the tyres' working life on machines in the waste and recycling sectors. However, mindful of the valuable resource in end of life tyres, ITWS was keen to find a supplier who could put the final shreds of material to use in a new application.

Enter Aquablast. In experiments conducted on a range of tyre sizes the company's ultra high pressure water jet technology (UHP) was found to be effective at separating the rubber compound from the metallic content. Aquablast has pioneered the use of UHP water with a patent-pending process for cutting and crumbing large OTR (Off the Road) tyres.

Water jets at an astonishing 55,000 psi operating pressure rotate in high-speed arrays producing clean, wire-free rubber crumb. The powdered product requires no further size reduction or grinding and has a wide range of applications in re-manufacturing or as filler in adhesives and sealants.

The process separates the rubber from steel re-enforcing wire and recovers metal shards embedded in tyres used, for example, in scrap yards. Clean steel is sold as scrap.

Aquablast operate from a fully licensed Waste Transfer Station at Beccles, Suffolk, and, critically, offer a full audit trail including a Recycling Certificate allowing end users to demonstrate the eco-compliant disposal route they have followed. Aquablast does not accept truck and car tyres specializing only in certain categories of large OTR tyres and rubber crawler tracks.

Donald Blair, Aquablast MD, said "Although, of course, car and truck tyres, including general waste rubber and EPDM, are banned from entering landfill, OTR tyres larger than 1.4m and rubber crawler tracks are still exempted under the 2006 EC Landfill Directive. This was because no effective recycling technology existed before our process evolved. Now disposers have the opportunity to follow a sustainable recycling route and avoid Landfill Tax at £56 per tone."

ITWS – ever serious about its environmental credentials - delivers the worn tyres and pays Aquablast to undertake the stripping process before leaving them free to sell on the recovered

materials. The company is keen for other small tyre distributors to follow its proactive recycling stance.

Les Williams, of ITWS, held on to all scrap tyre stocks whilst the company was searching for an ethical disposal solution. Not prepared to dump tyres in to a hole in the ground, he is delighted to have been able to work with Aquablast to find a green solution.

“We strongly disagree with taking tyres to landfill; not only does this create a significant environmental threat, it just isn’t necessary in this day and age. We, along with our clients, are overjoyed that we have found another sustainable method of disposal. If a small business like ours can find a responsible solution, then I am sure that other players in the market can too and I would urge them to follow our lead. We must get to the stage where every single tyre is disposed of ethically”.