

EUROPEAN

PLASTIC

PRODUCT MANUFACTURER

YOUR HOT RUNNER MOULD IS JUST A FEW **CLICKS** AWAY



A NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR OLD WASTE

LAUNCHED IN JANUARY AS AN AMBITIOUS JOINT PROJECT BETWEEN SOME OF THE MAJOR HOUSEHOLD NAMES IN THE PLASTICS INDUSTRY, THE ALLIANCE TO END PLASTIC WASTE HAS COME AS A WELCOME DEVELOPMENT FOR THE US-BASED PLASTICS PIPE INSTITUTE, INC. (PPI), WHICH BELIEVES THE INITIATIVE WILL HELP SOLVE SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS ASIDE FROM THAT OF PLASTIC WASTE.

Here PPI President Tony Radoszewski shares his thoughts on what the alliance can do not just for the planet, but for the communities and businesses upon it, as well as for the vital infrastructures connecting them. Of the companies involved in the formation of the alliance, 12 are PPI members, and they have taken what Radoszewski describes as a “quantum leap”.

“With the formation of the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, the industry is driving forward a major initiative that has set realistic and obtainable goals. The PPI’s membership also sees another benefit, which is an increase in the supply of recycled high-density polyethylene (HDPE) resin. One of our members reports using more than 400 million pounds a year of recycled material.”

GOING UNDERGROUND

Primarily used for underground storm water infrastructure management and agricultural drainage projects, some HDPE pipe can be made using more than 40 per cent recycled HDPE resin that was originally used in more common applications.

“For decades, our members have been capturing the value of discarded plastics by using it to make plastic pipe,” Radoszewski adds. “Plastic milk bottles and detergent bottles have been recycled and incorporated into agricultural drainage pipes since the 1980s. Today, we are working with research firms and the American Association of Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) to



produce storm water drainage pipe incorporating post-consumer recycled plastic for use in highway culverts.

“Our industry currently processes 25 per cent of all post-consumer HDPE bottles – mainly from liquid detergent products – and converts them into products used in underground infrastructure. These bottles and containers that originally had a 60-day shelf life are now converted into a product with a 100-year service life.”

ONE PLAYER’S PROBLEM IS ANOTHER’S OPPORTUNITY

The question of whether there is enough to meet demand, however, remains, and while this continues to be a problem for pipe manufacturers, it presents an opportunity to bring the goals set out by the Alliance to End Plastic Waste to the next level. Furthermore, it answers the question of what to do with that surplus waste due to the success of the alliance and its projects.

“Think about it,” Radoszewski continues. “To make one standard 20-foot length of 48-inch diameter HDPE pipe containing 40 per cent recycled HDPE resin, between 1,600 and 2,200 discarded bottles would

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be required. Most storm water drainage projects using this type of pipe run in the thousands of feet, sometimes even miles of pipe. This is how the plastic pipe industry uses an enormous number of post-consumer plastic bottles and puts what was formerly a solid waste issue to good use.

“Additional infrastructure is necessary worldwide to improve and increase the collection and supply of recycled plastics. Both of these issues combine to bring a holistic approach that leads to a sustainable solution. We believe that is the prime directive of the alliance.”

Radoszewski and his fellow PPI members are enthused by the alliance and the intrinsic partnerships with innovative, market-leading organisations; he is optimistic that the project will take sustainability to the next level by including old waste in a new lease of life, and in a way that can still be of true service to communities.

