

Take control, cut your costs Waste disposal

2007-03-29

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About 10 to 20 percent of the particleboard or MDF used in manufacturing ends up in the waste stream. Analyzing proper and cost-efficient disposal of this material opens a number of questions. The waste from boards can be grouped as follows as a percentage of the total volume of material:

- Chips from saw and router cut (2 percent - 5 percent)
- Trim off-cut (edge of raw board), 2 percent - 3 percent
- Off-cuts (depending on cutting pattern), 5 percent - 10 percent
- Scrap (loss during production process), 0.5 percent - 3 percent
- Obsolescence (left-over and obsolete parts, 0.25 percent - 1 percent)

Sawdust is collected by the dust-collector system. However, the disposal of the solid waste very much depends on the equipment employed. For example, panel saws are available with automatic links to hoggers or grinders. There are, however, a large number of panel saws installed where the operators have to put the off-cuts manually into waste bins. These waste bins — often self-dumpers — are then emptied by forklift into large waste containers.

The potential saving on labour in this example often would not provide sufficient return-on-investment to justify purchasing a hogger. In this case, we need to look a little deeper. Even though each province has different regulations, the basic rule is that you are responsible for properly disposing of your waste, i.e., where it ends up and what damage it can potentially cause. This is called the Chain of Custody.



Depending on what your waste consists of, there are different options — and different costs. For example, clean, solid-wood shavings are not considered waste, and in most cases you can sell them. Particleboard and MDF are not as easy to dispose of. If the waste is mixed with melamine, laminate and PVC edging, it becomes even more complicated.

It cannot be stressed enough that you need to know what you are disposing of, and where the waste ends up!

It is the responsibility of the waste producer to assure proper disposal. All parties involved need to have the proper certificates (CFA, Certificate of Approval) stating that they are approved to transport, store and/or recycle the waste.

Waste can be used in various ways.

On top of the list is probably solid-wood waste, which can actually create revenue. One way to make money, for example, is to make artificial fire logs.



In some areas, particleboard waste can cost over \$1,500 a container for disposal, while

On the other hand, at the bottom of the list is sending the waste to the landfill. This is the most expensive and least desirable option, but there are many options in between. Using particleboard waste for heating is very efficient, but is often held up by the type of burners required for burning the glue and the other chemicals contained in the particleboard.

Other common uses of particleboard waste are as animal bedding or as mix for landscaping. With all these options, solid, board-sized waste provides disposal problems and, consequently, higher cost.

If all wood waste is chopped by a grinder/hogger, the disposal cost is reduced drastically. The achievable savings often justify the investment in a hogger.

Investigating and analyzing the waste stream to its final stage is not necessarily adding cost to your operation. It can save or even make you money.

in the same jurisdiction sawdust can be hauled off for \$200. By adding a grinder attached to the dust-collection system, a savings of over \$1,000 per container is possible.

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