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Verpol Facility
P.O. Box 10
Whipple Hollow Road
Florence, VT 05744



people at Omya

91 Years of Service



Also retiring (missing from photo) is Paul Kahler with 14 years of service

For a combined 91 years, we have enjoyed the service of three people: Harold “Peanut” Reed has worked with Omya Inc. for 45 years, Doug Bradley has worked with Omya Inc. for 29 years, and Ann Lurvey-Scholtz has worked with Omya Inc. for 17 years. We’ve been pleased to have these fine colleagues spend these many years with Omya – and in

Vermont – and will be sorry to see them retire.

Peanut began his career in 1970 with the White Pigment Corporation before moving to the Omya West Plant, where he has worked as a Lead Operator and Mill Operator. He enjoys the variety of opportunities his work provides.

Peanut is grateful for the attitudes and personable behaviors of all Omya employees; he likes that no matter what a person’s position they will stop to talk with you. He appreciates how managers through the years have taken the time to explain the processes, why they might make changes, or how different aspects worked. Peanut enjoys how his fellow employees have also become his friends, and he enjoys getting up to start each day in the Omya environment.

His advice to the next generation of Omya employees? “Know what you want to do – Omya offers opportunity for those employees who wish to step up. Enjoy the tuition reimbursement and put in a good honest day of work – you will be rewarded.”

Peanut and his wife, Evelyn, look forward to traveling some to see family in Maine, Arkansas and Kentucky. Spending time with his grandchildren and taking rides with his wife in their convertible will certainly be a great part of retirement.

Doug started with Omya after working for Vermont Railway. In over 29 years with Omya he has held ten different positions in maintenance, production, logistics and management – and has enjoyed all of them. He likes the varied work and the security that a job with Omya has supplied he and his family.

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Local Contractors...

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We also rely on partnerships like that with the Vermont Railway (VTR) to ensure on time delivery of our products to our customers. VTR has transported our slurry and dry products to destinations throughout the U.S. and Canada since Omya operations began in the 1970s (and long before that for the Vermont Marble Company). Without efficient and reliable rail service, Omya’s Vermont operations would be logistically unsustainable since a large majority of our customers are a significant distance from our Florence facility.

While Omya values the approximately 140 people located at our Florence facility, we must remind ourselves sometimes that it is Omya staff coupled with an additional 50 or more local contractors, suppliers and consultants who collectively make our Vermont Omya operation the success it has become.

Inside Plant...

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The Verpol West plant has a total of 10 substations: 1 main industrial substation and 10 unit substations. Each of these substations has three main functions – switching, transforming voltage and controlling voltage – and are made up of transformers, load-tap changers, switchgears, circuit breakers, disconnecting switches, relays, batteries and battery chargers, surge arresters, instrument transformers, metering and sometimes capacitors.

During this shutdown, substation maintenance annually involves visual inspection, cleaning, lubricating, functional tests and various electrical testing. As a result, this year’s preventative maintenance helped to identify and remedy a number of potential problems which may have otherwise caused unsafe conditions, interrupted the safe reliable delivery of electrical power and caused an involuntary shutdown. We are most proud of the fact that the entire operation was conducted safely with no injuries!

Thank you to all who helped make this another successful plant-wide shutdown.



Local Contractors – Important to the success of Omya Operations in Vermont

Omya operations in Vermont not only rely on the efforts of our valued employees but are also supplemented by numerous external contractors, suppliers and consultants. Often, Omya requires additional resources to support both our day-to-day activities and our long-term process improvement initiatives. While Omya is a worldwide leader in the mineral processing arena, we require assistance in areas outside of our expertise – like quarrying, transportation, construction, engineering and design, among others. Omya works hard to build lasting relationships with reputable experts that can provide a high level of service as efficiently as possible. In many cases, Omya has developed these relationships with companies owned and operated right here in Vermont.

Take, for instance, the Omya quarries – where we have developed partnerships with two Vermont-based contractors who perform the blasting, crushing and screening of the feed stone for our processing facility. The Shelburne Limestone Corporation (SLC) has operated the Omya Middlebury Quarry for over 30 years while Florence Crushed Stone (FCS) has operated the Omya Hogback Quarry for the last 20 years. Additionally, Casella Construction Inc. of Mendon, Vermont transports the feed stone from each quarry to the Omya facility via their fleet of new natural gas-fired haul trucks. All three of these family-owned companies are well-respected within their specific industries, provide benefits to the community (beyond their services to Omya – e.g. aggregates, agricultural products and public infrastructure projects) and share our values with regards to safety and the environment.

At our processing facility in Florence, we have a long standing relationship with three other Vermont-based companies. Markowski Excavating Inc., Querrey Industrial Services and CDP Electric Inc. These companies have been by our side providing their expertise as we have expanded our operations and implemented technology improvements over time. Omya also has strong affiliations with several local suppliers, engineers and consultants who provide specialized services specific to equipment/instrumentation support, system design and regulatory permitting. Omya’s longtime relationships with these companies has allowed us to sustain our competitive edge and strengthen our position in Vermont.

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Inside the Annual Verpol Plant Shutdown



The Omya Verpol plant typically has a planned, plant-wide, 12 hour shutdown every year as required by our internal electrical standards to maintain electrical equipment in the substations. This shutdown, which promotes safe and reliable operation of electrical equipment and delivery of dependable power, is spearheaded by Verpol’s electrical specialist Evan Truchon.

On May 12th, 2015, the Verpol plant went flat (total blackout) from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m. for substation maintenance – and this 16-hour period requires a full year of planning and coordination to be adequately prepared for the shutdown. Meals are provided for all employees and contractors and portable toilets are brought on site.

Before the procedure each year a courtesy call is made to Green Mountain Power to inform them about the shutdown. Omya maintenance technicians (arriving by 5 a.m.) perform supervisory roles on that day and this year, as many as 55 contractors from 7 different companies helped in various capacities to make the substation maintenance a success. One hundred percent of the contractors are from the New England area with fifty percent of these contractors from right here in Vermont.

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what's new

It’s been another successful year at Omya in Florence – and it’s hard to believe that winter is once again upon us. This year has seen very few changes at Omya and for the most part we have tried to maintain momentum from a very good 2014.



One area which we are very proud is our safety record. In true Omya fashion, we have been successful in maintaining a very safe workplace, providing our employees with the training and equipment they need to do their job safely. After a few incidents of hand injuries in 2014, we instituted a mandatory glove policy. We also embarked on a program to elevate the safety culture at Verpol. This together with our new glove policy, has helped us eliminate hand injuries propelling us to a much safer 2015. We also know that safety is ultimately an individual and personal choice and our employees have stepped up, accepted and embraced this fact. Everyone is striving to consider safety before any task is performed and, although we cannot guarantee that we will not have any injuries in the future, we are trying our best to avoid them. The results for 2015 have been very rewarding and we will continue on this path to maintain and strengthen the momentum we’ve built in the area of safety.

If you look around Vermont you may notice solar panel installations tucked into various corners and set up along some major traffic routes. Omya, being a large property owner, is not immune from solicitations for solar projects and has entertained numerous proposals to install solar panels on some of our properties. Thus far we have not seen any proposal which meets our criteria for economics or aesthetics. One limitation we have is the long distance to the closest substation, making net metering projects difficult. There is a definite interest to have some of our energy be renewable and we continue to be open to opportunities.

One item that we have improved upon in 2015 is the number of “lost trucks” we see coming in from Whipple Hollow or West Creek roads. New traffic signs in Proctor (see page 2) and increased police patrols – along with stiff fines to violators – have started to make a difference. The numbers are down by about 50% from last year. This is promising and it appears that we have made some real progress in this regard.

I would like to thank all stake holders, especially those in the immediate community around our plant, for their support and cooperation in 2015. We have had a few complaints in 2015 associated with noise. We have addressed these concerns by updating our PM system to better service our air handling systems. We truly believe that it is a partnership between Omya and the surrounding community so please feel free to use the toll free number to let us know how we are doing. We respond to all calls and will work with you to make sure we can address the issue at hand. I hope you enjoy the rest of this newsletter.

Best Regards,

Wayne Wilmans
wayne.wilmans@omya.com

recent & upcoming events

February 11

Community Issue Team Meeting

May 6

Omya Employee Green Up Day

May 7

Town of Pittsford Green Up Day*

May 16-19

Biannual Water Monitoring Event (includes quarterly surface water monitoring)

*Omya is a sponsor of this event

Omya Gives Back

At Omya we feel it's our civic responsibility and privilege to support local efforts which benefit our community and neighbors. In the past six months, we have made donations to the following organizations and community groups:

Civic Fundraisers

Adaptive Martial Arts
Addison County Benefit Pull
Brandon Chamber of Commerce
Brandon Compass Music & Art Center

Youth Fundraisers

Brandon Recreation Department
Rutland Recreation Department
Lego Robotics
Leicester Central School
Middlebury Elementary School
Mill River Union High School
Mount Saint Joseph Academy
Otter Valley Raft Race
Otter Valley Union High School
Otter Valley Football
Proctor High School
Rutland Bandits
Rutland Recreation Department
Rutland Recreation Football
Rutland Rugby
Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sport
Vermont State Fair – Bike Give A Way
Wallingford Winter Sports Program

Parent Teacher Organization- Association (PTO-PTA)

Neshobe Playgroup
Otter Valley Booster Club
Quarry Hill School
West Rutland Booster Club

Fundraiser Walks & Runs

Alzheimer's Association – Memory Walk
Prevent Child Abuse
Ripton Ridge Run
Susan G. Komen
The Three Day Stampede < continued on page 3>

91 Years...

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Doug has lived in Vermont his entire life and is thankful for his colleagues at Omya and the respect they've always granted one another. As he puts it, "The days can be long so enjoy the people you work with!"

Doug will be retiring in January 2016. He and his wife Caroline are very active outdoors, working in their garden, hunting, cutting firewood and enjoying motorcycle rides. They look forward to traveling and making memorable moments with their two daughters and their families.

Ann began with Omya at the corporate offices in Proctor in the Human Resource Department. She started as a temporary employee and was hired on full-time. While every day is unique, Ann has enjoyed her work providing assistance to Omya co-workers over the years. She has also appreciated traveling to other US plants and interacting with so many fellow Omya colleagues. Ann even met her husband, Jim Scholtz, while they were both employed as Omya staff.

Though many of Ann's colleagues were relocated to Ohio in 2008/09, she stayed in Vermont and has continued to enjoy her position as Human Resources Specialist for the Verpol facility. She hopes Omya employees realize how fortunate they are for the retirement benefits the company offers. When she came to Omya 17 years ago she had little saved for retirement, but now, thanks to the retirement benefits, she is looking forward to the years ahead – and many years of spending time with her husband, children, and grandchildren.

We want to once again congratulate Peanut, Doug and Ann on their collective 91 years of service with Omya.

Verpol Automation by the Numbers



Would you believe that there are over 75 miles of fiber optics in the Verpol Florence plant? End to end these fibers would stretch from Pittsford to beyond Burlington. Or did you know that the plant utilizes over 40,000 inputs and outputs from field instruments and devices to provide real time information and precise control at all times?

Omya's Vermont plant may just surprise you. The Verpol plant is one of Omya's most automated plants worldwide, with its advanced systems allowing Omya to stay competitive by producing high-quality and low-cost products.

Omya's Florence Plant employs state-of-the-art technologies across all processes. These automation systems start, run and shutdown processes in timed sequences and modulate flow control valves and variable speed motors with mathematical algorithms to provide consistent and predictable flowrates, temperatures and pressures.

The advanced, highly automated processes are what allow a single Verpol operator to simultaneously run over 50 separate complex processes. To operate multiple complex processes, a mill operator at Omya has access to over 380 graphical process screens and hundreds of historical trends and alarms screens.

The operator's HMI, or Human Machine Interface, provides process graphics from which operators can start or stop systems, monitor processes, change product recipes and adjust operational parameters.

The HMI systems read data from and write data to the plant PLCs (Programmable Logic Controllers). The PLCs provide the control by reading data from process inputs, solving logic programs and writing to outputs that open or close valves and adjust flowrates, temperatures or speeds. PLC programs optimize process parameters to ensure consistent high-quality production. Over 3500 field instruments are employed to monitor process data, such as speed, flowrates, pressures and temperatures.

Verpol's automation and HMI systems are supported by 20 high performance servers, which support 60 Automation computers and HMI workstations distributed throughout the plant for localized control. Fiber optics provide a communications backbone for high speed, noise-immune communications.

The Verpol Florence plant's complexity requires a significant number of drawings and documentation – and Verpol has highly skilled draft designers that manage over 12,000 AutoCAD drawings files. Tim Brough leads this expert design team with over 30 years designing for Omya's regional and international plants, and the team's daily design requirements range from rendering 3D structural and general arrangement drawings to creating electrical and control documentation.

The Verpol automation systems are robust and reliable, however, it doesn't stop there. Verpol is continuously assessing and deploying new technology to further improve process interfaces, control and reliability. By working closely with Omya's Region Americas automation team and Omya's Global automation competency center in Reinach, Switzerland, Verpol automation continues to advance standards and refine production controls.

Why not come see it for yourself? The Omya Florence Automation and design team enjoys their role in this important plant and we invite you to learn more and come take a tour!

Improved Truck Signage in Proctor

When driving through Proctor you may have noticed a few new signs. In an ongoing effort to focus on misdirected freight trucks, Omya has worked closely with the Town of Proctor on the installation of improved truck signage.

For years, navigating trucks to and from our Vermont facility has been challenging. Unfortunately it is GPS systems which are misguiding truck drivers and leading them in on the surrounding rural roads.

Over the years we have worked with the Vermont Travel Information Council to install additional "official business directional signs" in Center Rutland and West Rutland. We have, and continue to, contract with the Pittsford Police Department and the Rutland County Sheriff's Department to patrol the roads leading into the plant. We have provided verbal and written instructions in multiple languages, including directions and maps to freight carriers.

The goal of the new signage in Proctor is to alert trucks early on so they have an opportunity to turn around safely without causing damage before they are committed to a rural route. A total of seven new signs have been installed on Beaver Pond Road, at the Proctor five-way intersection, and VT Route 3 leading into Proctor.

Hogback Quarry Moves to State-of-the-Art Blasting



Quarries supplying crushed stone typically use blasting to break up solid bedrock into small pieces which can be dug with an excavator or front-end loader. A series of vertical holes forming a grid pattern are drilled through the bedrock, loaded with explosives and detonated to break up the solid rock. Blasting also has the side effect of producing ground vibrations within the surrounding bedrock — and if blasting is not done carefully, these ground vibrations can be felt by nearby residents. This is why the drill holes are never detonated simultaneously; instead, each drill hole is detonated a few tens of milliseconds apart from one another in what is called “delay blasting” (1 millisecond = 1/1000 of a second). Delay blasting breaks up the impact into a series of smaller impacts which significantly reduce the ground vibrations produced by the blast. Throughout the history of the Hogback Quarry, delay blasting has successfully minimized any ground vibrations felt by our neighbors. Ground vibrations measured at the closest residential properties during blasting at the Hogback Quarry are typically one half of the permitted limit of 0.50 inches per second (ips) set forth in by our Act 250 permit.

Delay blasting is commonly performed with non-electric (NONEL) plastic “wires” between and down drill holes and pyrotechnic-delay detonators at the bottom of the explosive column within each drill hole (known as the NONEL blasting system). Until this year the NONEL system was used to minimize ground vibrations from blasting at the Hogback Quarry and remains the most commonly used blasting system in crushed stone quarries today. However, due to market demands we have been tasked to reduce the amount of blasting plastic from the feed stone in order to prevent it from being ground down to micron sized particles that end up in our finished products.

We’ve been using a different blasting technology at the Middlebury Quarry for several years. This blasting technology incorporates the use of plastic-coated metal wire to connect to state-of-the-art programmable detonators at the bottom of each drill hole. The advantage of this blasting system to Omya is that the plastic-coated metal wire can be picked up by magnets from both the crushed stone circuits at the quarries and the grinding circuits within the Verpol plant.

The other advantage of this blasting technology is that each detonator is programmable, like a miniature computer, and is incredibly precise. This provides additional control on ground vibrations produced by the larger blasts at Omya’s Middlebury Quarry. Although ground vibrations associated with blasting at the Hogback Quarry have always been well controlled, this blasting technology offers a way for the Hogback Quarry to maintain low ground vibrations even during larger blasts.

This technology works by precisely timing each detonation within a blast. The older pyrotechnic-delay detonators offered the advantage of simply separating each detonation within a blast. The new, highly-precise programmable detonators offer the ability to time each detonation so that the vibration waves of one detonation cancel out the vibration waves of the next detonation and ultimately lower the overall ground vibration produced by the blast. This same technique is used today in noise-cancelling head phones where incoming sound waves are cancelled out by playing back within the head phones identical sound waves out-of-phase with the incoming sound waves.

This new blasting technology will provide more control on ground vibrations produced by blasts at the Hogback Quarry and also will help us remove much of the new blasting plastic with magnets from our calcium carbonate products – a win for both our neighbors and our customers!

Mixing It Up

Omya was pleased to host two Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce Member Mixers this year. The June mixer was held at the Omya Florence plant. Brandon’s Café Provence provided tasty hors d’oeuvres and desserts while guests enjoyed an evening of networking. Guests also had the opportunity to tour the Omya facility.



A well-attended fall mixer event was held in October at the Vermont Marble Museum. Guests were able to tour the museum and gift shop, enjoy live music and relish in delicious hors d’oeuvres provided by East Creek Catering.

contact us

Do you have a comment
or suggestion?
We want to know.

Call our Community Feedback Line at 802-770-7644 with any issues, comments or questions you may have – and we’ll listen.

The Omya Community Feedback Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also reach us through our website at www.OmyaInVermont.net. Simply click on “Contact Us” tab and select any one of the contacts listed or fill out the online comment form at the bottom of the page.

All calls and website inquiries will be returned by 5:00 p.m. on the next regular business day. We look forward to hearing from you.

Omya Academic Scholarship 2015

Omya is pleased to once again provide financial support for deserving students through our Omya Academic Scholarship Program. The program was designed to offer incentives for the development of Vermont’s future workforce and to encourage area students to pursue degrees in math and science. Students chosen for the scholarship awards demonstrate a commitment to learning, leadership and community involvement. This year’s recipients are:

Keana Ferguson - Winooski High School
Jamie Moore - South Burlington High School
Margaret Ann McCartney Smith - Otter Valley Union High School
Joshua Wasilewski - Mount Saint Joseph Academy
Megann Watkins - Middlebury Union High School

Omya Gives Back...

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Community Events

Festival on the Green
Make A Wish - Barrel Racing
Rutland County Humane Society
Rutland Young Professionals

Food Shelves

Brandon Food Shelf
Castleton Food Shelf

To make a donation request please contact us at 802-770-7500. You can also make requests through our website at www.OmyaInVermont.net or mail requests to the Omya Verpol Facility at P.O. Box 10, Whipple Hollow Road, Florence, VT 05744. The Donations Committee meets monthly to review requests.

Interested in a Tour?

You and your organization are cordially invited to visit our facility and see what we do. Schedule a private tour or come as a group (school groups fourth grade and higher are welcome).



See how our highly skilled employees use state-of-the-art processes to produce high-quality calcium carbonate products which are used in thousands of everyday products including diapers, paper, paint, plastics, duct tape, vinyl siding, carpet, PVC pipe and more!

The Verpol plant is the largest of the Omya operations in the United States and is the third largest Omya plant in the world. Here, Omya quarries marble which then is ground, milled, and purified to produce a finely ground calcium carbonate.

For further information, please contact Jill Blanchard at 802-770-7500 or leave a message on our Community Feedback Line at 802-770-7644

For more information about Omya’s North American and International Operations visit www.omya-na.com and www.OmyaInVermont.net.