

"Green Up"

TRADITION CONTINUES AT OMYA



On May 1st, Omya employees will again hit the road in Pittsford and Proctor to pick up the trash that has accumulated over the winter months.

In what is an Omya tradition dating back to 1997, employees will be set free from their usual "daily grind" to be a part of what is an even bigger annual tradition across Vermont: "Green Up Day". Omya's Green Up Day takes place the day before the official statewide event that is always held on the first Saturday in May, and we welcome the opportunity to play our part in the greening of Vermont.

Omya's Green Up efforts in Pittsford typically cover the full lengths of Kendall Hill and Depot Hill Roads, and portions of West

Creek and Whipple Hollow Roads. In Proctor, the focus has been on the Beaver Pond area, Main Street, and Gorham Bridge, Florence, and West Proctor Roads. Multiple groups of two to four people fan out from different starting points along the various routes, using whatever canvassing strategies work best for them.

As a company, Omya always has been very supportive of this employee-originated initiative, providing participants with safety training, protective equipment, and plenty of cold water and juice for proper hydration. Over the years the company also has supplied every employee (including those who must remain behind at the plant to keep it running) with t-shirts commemorating the day. The past few t-shirts have sported the winning entry in a company-wide contest for the catchiest slogan. To complete the event, a sit-down lunch is served immediately following, affording the opportunity for plenty of post-event "trash talking". In fact, swapping humorous stories on the various treasures discovered is a popular part of the experience.

Every year brings new employee suggestions to spice things up. Like

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Lost Truck?

If you see a lost truck, it will be helpful for us to know the trucking company name, cab number (found on the cab and door of the truck), and the time and place of the observation. Please call Steve Clement, Omya's Transportation Supervisor, with this information at **(802) 770-7639**.

Middlebury Rail Spur

MANY BENEFITS TO MOVING MARBLE ORE BY RAIL

Over ten years ago, a permit condition imposed a limit on the number of truck trips that Omya could use to transport marble ore from its Middlebury Quarry to its processing facility in Florence. In October 1998, Omya entered into an agreement, or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), with a working group consisting of the Conservation Law Foundation, Vermont Railway Inc., and the Vermont Agencies of Transportation, Natural Resources, and Commerce and Community Development. The

purpose of this working group was to pursue viable alternatives to trucking, including rail options.

Moving ore by rail, as opposed to truck, is more fuel efficient, provides greater economic advantages and results in less wear and tear on Vermont's roads. The operation of the Middlebury Rail Spur would allow Omya to eliminate up to 70,000 truck trips annually from Route 7 and potentially afford other area businesses the opportunity to utilize rail transportation as well.

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what's new

Tailings Dewatering Facility Update

Our Tailings Dewatering Facility (TDF) is in the start-up phase with full operation expected by early fall.

The TDF is a highly automated system for "squeezing" 90 to 95 percent of the process water from our tailings byproduct. Our new dewatering facility will improve on-site material handling in the tailings management areas, further reduce environmental impacts, and help us develop new recycling applications for our tailings. The process water recovered from the tailings is re-used back into plant operations.

The TDF is an important part of our commitment to continually improve our environmental performance at our Florence plant. Once the facility is fully operational, we will host an open-house for community members. Stay tuned for future details.

Misdirected Trucks

TIME TO CALL IN LITTLE BO PEEP

TomTom, Garmin, Magellan, and Mio are the more recognizable brands of portable GPS systems. But what does this have to do with Omya, you ask? It appears that GPS systems increasingly are guiding truck drivers over Vermont's network of rural roads, but in a small number of cases these systems are not very effective at guiding the truck drivers to our facility. As such, our neighbors have experienced a few misdirected freight trucks in search of our plant.

We recognize the importance of this matter and we have been working with our neighbors to help freight trucks efficiently access our plant. Here are some of the actions we have taken together:

- Neighbors have been asked to call us in the event that they see a truck on a road where it should not be;
- We have improved direct communication with the trucking companies that frequent our facility;
- We have provided truck drivers with pre-printed directions to allow them to more effectively get to our plant on future trips;
- We have conducted discussions with neighboring towns to ensure adequate signage indicating "No Thru Trucks" on secondary roads.

The Community Issue Team (page 2 story) has made misdirected trucks a priority for our next meeting. We are hopeful that, through community collaboration, we can improve the situation and increase the efficiency of truck transportation. We also are researching the workings of the GPS network to perhaps offer suggestions to the system so that traffic flow would be improved.

Pierre Masuy, Plant Manager

upcoming events

April 30

Theatre WorksUSA Presents: Freedom Train at Paramount Center *

May 1

Omya employees’ Green Up Day *

May 2

Pittsford Town and Omya Team up for Green Up Day Event *

May 14

Omya Community Issue Team Meeting

May 26 - 29

Biannual Water Monitoring Event (incl. Quarterly Surface Water Monitoring)

July 18

Pittsford Day Celebration *

August 24

Quarterly Surface Water Monitoring Event

** Omya is a proud sponsor of this event*

OMYA GIVES BACK

RECENT DONATIONS TO ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

- College of St. Joseph - Capital Fund
- Omya Academic Scholarships - (4) \$2,500 and (3) \$1,000
- Lothrop School - Family Literacy Night
- Black Ice Hockey - Youth Hockey Team
- Downtown Rutland Partnership - Friday Night Live
- Addison County Readers - Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library
- Omya Crushers Softball Team – Fundraiser for Children with Cancer
- 4-H Program (UVM) - Science, Engineering and Technology (SET)
- Veterans of Foreign Wars - 46th Annual Loyalty Day Parade
- Susan G. Komen - Breast Cancer Walk for the Cure
- Pittsford Youth League - Majors & Mighty Mite Baseball
- Lakes Region Independent Ryder - Basket Raffle
- Lady Legends Basketball Team - AAU Basketball
- Vermont Thunderbirds - AAU Basketball
- Clarendon Elementary School - First Tee National School Program
- Pittsford Food Shelf - People Helping People
- Rutland Long Trail Festival - Education & Environmental Stewardship
- Blue Bulls Corporation - Charitable Golf Tournament Event
- RNESU 6th Grade Partnership - Lothrop School

Community Issue Teams

BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

The three Community Issue Teams (Plant, Trucks and Transportation, and Quarry) have merged into one “Community Issue Team.” The three teams, made up of local community members and Omya staff, were formed in 2007 in an effort to improve communication with our neighbors and to help us work together on issues of common interest.

At the end of 2008, an independent survey was conducted of all Issue Team members and Omya staff. The assessment deemed it best to merge the separate groups into one team to improve the process and more efficiently address local issues.

The members of all three former Community Issue Teams were invited to a dinner meeting at Omya’s Verpol plant on March 5, 2009 to discuss how the reconfigured Issue Team will move forward. The members agreed to attend three meetings over the next year to continue the process of identifying community concerns to work collaboratively toward solutions.

Community representatives on the combined Issue Team are: Ernest Brod, Sharon Carpenter, Peg Flory, Matt Harvey, John Haverstock, Jon Keith, John Lapre, Dave Markowski, Fred McAtee, Jack and Jane Orvis, Bev Peterson, and Umberto “Pat” Rosato. Representatives from Omya are: Pierre Masuy, Michael Laurent, Jim Morale and Mary-Kaye Zambon. David Thayer from CLF Ventures will facilitate the meetings.

We are looking forward to working with this dynamic team and offer sincere thanks to these community members for their continued involvement.

If you have any questions about the Community Issue Team, please contact Mary-Kaye Zambon at 776-8615, or any one of the members of the team. Meeting notes and agendas are posted on-line at www.OmyaInVermont.net, click “Community”, then “Issue Teams”.

RCO vs. Omya

2005 LAWSUIT CONTINUES ON

Residents Concerned about Omya (RCO), represented by Vermont Law School, initiated a lawsuit against Omya in federal court in 2005. The complaint alleged that Omya was engaged in unlawful open dumping of its mineral tailings under the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act at its Florence, Vermont facility, and that Omya’s actions presented “an imminent and substantial endangerment to health or the environment.”

In February 2008, an extensive independent \$2.5 million environmental assessment, known as the “Section 5 Study” generally concluded that Omya’s Florence operations do not pose a current threat to human health or the environment. The members of RCO were part of the Oversight Team that selected and directed the independent consultants throughout the entire Section 5 Study process.

The Section 5 Study was completed

Hogback Quarry Blast Viewing

5..4..3..2..1..

Quarry Community Issue Team members and neighbors viewed two blasting procedures at the Hogback Quarry last September. Omya brought in independent blasting expert, Cam Thomas from Thomas Engineering, Ltd., Ontario, Canada, to lead discussions and explain the process. The events were recorded and monitored using seismographs and two types of acoustic gauges. Mr. Thomas concluded that the blasting program at Hogback Quarry is well managed and documented. The levels of vibration and air blast are consistently within regulatory limits and are well below those which may be cause for concern.



independently of, but during the same timeframe as, the process of the lawsuit. That study concluded that low levels of AEEA (a constituent of Omya’s tailings) had been detected in groundwater and surface water on-site, and at one non-drinking surface water spring off-site. The report concluded also that the “measured AEEA levels in the [off-site] spring water are too small to threaten humans or wildlife.”

In July 2008, the United States District Court in Vermont ruled in Omya’s favor on the open dumping count. Noting the presence of AEEA, even at very low levels, the judge ruled in RCO’s favor on the endangerment count because of the very low threshold for finding liability. Against that finding, the judge stated that, “The Court is tasked with delivering equitable relief and it would be inappropriate to decide the appropriate relief without a

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Fall Water Monitoring – 2008



Omya conducts regular environmental monitoring of the surface water and groundwater at the Florence plant and in the surrounding vicinity. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC) requires quarterly sampling of on-site and off-site surface water and semi-annual sampling of on-site and off-site groundwater and drinking

water. During the recent monitoring event (Fall 2008) a total of 14 surface water samples were taken from nine on-site locations, two off-site locations and three locations from the Hogback Quarry north of the site. The groundwater monitoring includes samples from 26 monitoring wells and 5 off-site drinking water sources. Samples from those 45 locations are analyzed for a variety of constituents in accordance with VTDEC guidelines.

Results from the October 2008 monitoring event were consistent with previous monitoring results and in compliance with regulatory requirements. For more information about our water monitoring efforts and results visit: www.OmyaInVermont.net and click “Environment”.

Who Are They? Geosyntec Consultants

Geosyntec Consultants is a specialized consulting and engineering firm that was founded in 1983. The company works with private and public sector clients on projects involving the environment, natural resources, and civil infrastructure. Geosyntec has a staff of 600 engineers, scientists, and other technical and project staff located in more than 30 offices throughout the U.S., Canada, Malaysia, and the U.K.

In May 2006, Geosyntec was selected by the “Section 5” Oversight Team as a certified, independent, third-party research entity. The Section 5 Oversight Team was a multi-stakeholder steering committee made up of local residents, public policy

makers and community activists. Geosyntec performed an independent review of the environmental and human health impacts of calcium carbonate processing at Omya’s Florence, Vermont plant as required by the Vermont Legislature. The Section 5 Oversight Team directed the independent consultants throughout the entire Section 5 Study process.

Currently, Geosyntec conducts all surface water and groundwater monitoring required by the Interim Certification and manages the laboratory testing services for those samples. Monitoring reports provided by Geosyntec are available on our website at www.OmyaInVermont.net, under “Environment”.

Update – AEEA

As we have reported in previous newsletters, AEEA is a compound that is part of the chemistry we use during our mineral processing. AEEA is used by Omya’s supplier in the manufacture of the flotation reagent Omya uses. Since it was first detected in groundwater on-site in 2007, Omya has been working with experts and our supplier to reduce and eliminate AEEA from flotation reagent used at the plant. To date, the amount of AEEA in our present flotation reagent has been cut by more than half from original levels (2% to 0.6%). Currently, we are in the process of evaluating an improved flotation reagent formulation that does not contain any AEEA. We will report back on our progress on this important issue.

contact us

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

802-770-7644

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” and select any one of the contacts listed or fill out the on-line 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.

On Track to Full Certification

ON-SITE TAILINGS MANAGEMENT

In 2005, Omya applied for an Interim Certification from the Agency of Natural Resources. The Interim Certification, issued in October 2008, allows Omya a two-year period to continue managing its tailings on-site in accordance with Vermont’s solid waste management regulations. The Interim Certification has been appealed to the Vermont Environmental Court by Residents Concerned about Omya (RCO).

The Interim Certification was issued after the Section 5 Study was completed and presented to the Vermont State Legislature. “The certification is the result of a good deal of hard work, sound technical analyses, and rigorous public review,” states Mike Laurent, Omya’s Environmental Manager. “The Interim Certification gives us a limited time period to responsibly manage our tailings while we work to obtain a subsequent ‘full’ five-year certification from the State for a new lined facility.”

Omya will continue to manage its tailings in accordance with the Interim Certification during the appeal process. The Company is proceeding with its plans for full certification and intends to submit an application to the Agency of Natural Resources in mid- to late spring of 2009.

Omya and Town Team Up for Green Up

On Saturday May 2nd, Omya and the Town of Pittsford will be working together to make the town-wide Green Up Day another successful event with something a little extra. This year, residents will be able to drop their Green Up Day trash at the Town Office on Plains Road. That’s right – at the Town Office between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.! Omya will provide a dumpster, staff to assist, and a light lunch of hot dogs and chips from Keith’s Country Store between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Please take a moment to stop by to mingle with your neighbors and be sure to take home a reusable shopping bag. We hope to see you there!

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the ideas of a prize for the most interesting piece of trash, or hiding a large-denomination bill inside an old jar to (hopefully) be found and donated to a local charity. This year, in keeping with the mantra of “Reduce, Re-use, Recycle” (not to mention as a way to save money in these trying economic times), participating employees will be asked to wear one of their favorite Omya Green Up t-shirts from year’s past. So, if you see Omya employees out and about on Friday the first of May, please “give ‘em a brake,” slow down as you pass by, and maybe even give them a wave of encouragement.



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We encourage your questions and comments.
(802) 770-7644 or
OmyaInVermont.net – click “Contact”


Verpol Plant
Whipple Hollow Road
Florence, VT 05744

people at Omya

JIM MORALE

Jim originally hails from Barre, Vermont, but spent the early years of his engineering career in Colorado, where he earned his Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Colorado and then worked as a consulting mechanical engineer. Over 14 years ago, the Green Mountains called Jim home when Omya was seeking a mechanical engineer.

The enthusiasm Jim has for his work and his co-workers is obvious. “At Omya, we care deeply about each other’s safety and well-being, our communities, and the environment where we live, work and play,” he said. Jim thinks that our plant in Florence (Omya’s third largest operating facility) is an interesting and impressive place to work, and he regularly gives plant tours to customers, community members, school groups, and regulatory officials. In addition to the complex technical challenges of his position, Jim especially enjoys the diversity of people with whom he interacts and he has served on Omya’s Community Issues Team since its inception in 2007. Jim is a licensed Professional Engineer in both Vermont and Colorado.

Pittsford residents may be familiar with Jim from his active participation in the community where he lives with his wife, Patty, a business writer, and his three daughters: Anna, 15, Amy, 13, and Kristen, 11, all enrolled in local schools. Jim serves on Pittsford’s Zoning Board of Appeals, volunteers at community events, and is active in the St. Alphonsus Parish. In his spare time, Jim is an avid skier and a beekeeper, with several beehives on his Pittsford property where his bees produce local honey that is very much in demand. He also enjoys working on restoring his 200-year-old barn. Jim can be reached at Omya at 770-7569.



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As partners working to improve transportation, the MOU group studied the potential for a rail spur linking the Middlebury Quarry to the main Vermont Railway line. As part of the preliminary review process, in 2002 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers undertook a Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) analysis, which defines the current preferred rail spur alignment as the most promising alternative.

Following the LEDPA analysis, the Federal Highway Administration and the Vermont Agency of Transportation undertook a thorough environmental review of the proposed project. The Final Environmental Impact Statement was released for public comment in October 2008.

During a Middlebury Selectboard meeting in January 2009, community questions were raised and aspects of the proposed spur alignment were discussed. Representatives from the Agency of Transportation were on hand to answer questions and clarify statements found in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

The Record of Decision (RoD), to be issued by the Federal Highway Administration, is the next step for the Middlebury Rail Spur. Additional engineering design will commence once the RoD is issued in mid- to late spring.

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further hearing.”

A three-day evidentiary hearing concluded on March 25, 2009. Representatives of RCO had sought to have Omya dig up nearly 30 years worth of tailings and transport them off-site for disposal in distant lined landfills, even though in a recent article from the Rutland Herald, the RCO attorney “acknowledged that may not be either an environmentally or economically viable option.”* Both the Section 5 Study and Omya’s solid waste permit subsequently issued by the State support leaving the tailings on-site where they can be responsibly managed and monitored.

Findings of fact can be submitted to the court by the parties no later than April 17, after which the court will make the final determination on what, if any, remedy over and above current state regulation and other voluntary initiatives may be necessary.

* Judge hears testimony on Omya, *Rutland Herald*, March 28, 2009