

U.S. textile companies go green

A wealth of environmental success stories can be found in the U.S. textile industry, ranging from new products to improved manufacturing processes.

The following case studies provide a glimpse at the U.S. textile industry's environmental philosophy—turning green is the only way to operate.

Reacting to public demand for environmentally sound products, one company is using recycled materials to make polyester carpet fiber. The fiber contains 93 percent recycled content, of which 31 percent is post-consumer soda bottles. Processors collect the bottles that are made up from polyethylene terephthalate, known as PET, and grind them up. The ground material is then processed into chips or pellets which are used to extrude fiber. The polymer used to make the soda bottle is a much higher grade than is typically used in the manufacturing of virgin fiber. Because it has to meet FDA requirements for use in the food industry, the raw material is extremely pure and therefore lends itself nicely to recycling.

A recycling system that uses discarded vinyl-backed carpeting to produce a broad range of usable products, such as park benches, bird houses and picnic tables, was recently introduced at one textile company. Instead of sending material to a landfill, this system uses it to create products that companies can use with no further depletion of natural resources.

Recently, a textile company has introduced a new line of towels, sheets, bath rugs and blankets made of organically grown, colored cotton. The company does not use bleach, dyes or resins to manufacture the natural bed and bath products. And the consumers get a product that is good for the environment.

Fabric printing in most companies is now done with water-based dyes instead of solvent-based. Environmentally, water-based dyes lower air emissions, use less water in clean-up and are more easily treated by a wastewater treatment facility. Operational costs are also lower.

ANVIL

From 1 C

During 1959, Craftspun Yarns began operations at the site where Anvil is located. Prior to that, the plant was known as the Cora Mill. Older residents still refer to the facility as the Cora Mill.

In 1961, BVD bought Craftspun Yarns and initiated a period of modernization and additions which included the purchase of new spinning equipment in 1962.

They built a spanking new spinning facility the same year, and, in September of 1963, the first part of the finishing area was completed. That department was expanded in the ensuing years, and the result is a busy, quality-oriented operation with an ever-widening customer base.

The changeover from a manual to an automated plant, begun a few years back, is almost completed.

Anvil Knitwear's products enjoy a reputation of quality and durability.

Woven polypropylene and polyethylene bags that cover rolls of fabric are recycled to reduce trips to landfills.

One textile company got local schools involved in recycling more than 350 telephone books and allowed students to understand the impact recycling has on the environment.

One U.S. textile company is one of a few in the world that is recovering and reusing indigo dyes. This process not only recycles the dyestuffs but improves waste treatment plant operation. It saves

cones to be packed in boxes.

An innovative heat pump heat recovery system was installed in a dyeing and finishing plant, to reclaim heat from wastewater and reduce wastewater discharge temperature. This system won a national award and is a "first" in the industry.

Denim is being recycled to make new denim and paper products, such as stationery and shopping bags.

One textile company built and operates then water treatment processes for the community where it is located. Its



money and reduces pollution at the same time.

A national plastic recycling program has been set up to help several textile customers recycle plastic cones, spools and poly bags. In addition, cardboard cones have been replaced by recyclable plastic cones that also enable more

wastewater treatment facility has enough capacity to handle the entire community's needs.

As textile companies continue to find new ways to "reduce, reuse and recycle," they will further enhance their role as industry leaders in the "green" movement.

RUPPE

From 1 C

computerized Lonatis - Bravos and Juniors - and there are 56 more on order," Ruppe said.

"The Lonatis cost \$30,000 apiece. They've been on the market for just one year," Ruppe said. "We're at the top. We've got the latest equipment so far developed!"

Lonatis are completely electronic knitting machines imported from Italy, that Ruppe Hosiery strategically employs in order to increase production from 40,000 to 50,000 dozen per week.

"People in this business are going to have to go with the new technology to keep up with the times otherwise they're not going to be around," Ruppe said. "We have a good head-start on the game," he said.


"The original machines in the 60's produced 5 dozen; these produce 14 dozen in the same period of time with half the labor," he said.

Ruppe quickly dispels fears about machines taking over the jobs of the people of Kings Mountain. "With this type of machine, you have to have operators. So no employee will be let go. We're just going to use these machines to increase what we're


selling and produce more jobs."

Tony Ruppe's focus on progress is not limited to Ruppe Hosiery. "We're definitely interested in seeing Kings Mountain grow. There

is not enough new industry coming into town to support the community," he said. "We'd like to see our industry grow as well as others'. It would make it better for all of us."



*Spinners of Quality Yarns For
Tufted Carpet, Upholstery & Apparel*



Artee INDUSTRIES, INC.

PO BOX 1509 • SHELBY, NC • 482-3826

TEXTILE WEEK

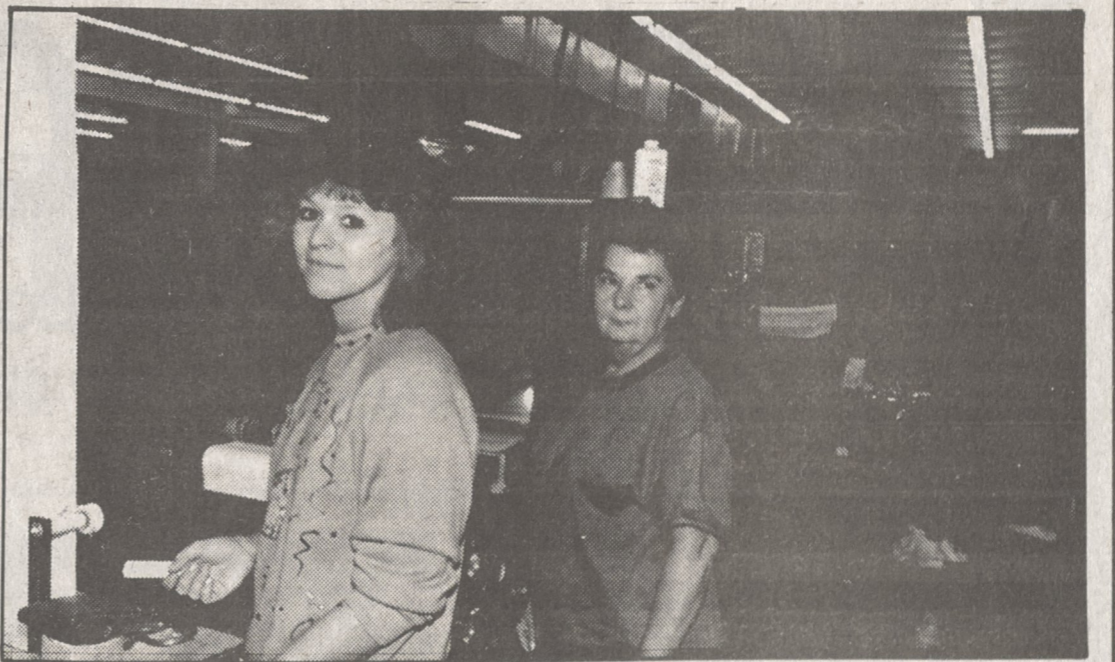
We Are Proud To Be A Part Of The
TEXTILE INDUSTRY
in
KINGS MOUNTAIN



Jackie Roberts, creeling yarn at the Anvil Knitwear facility in Kings Mountain. Anvil employs 345 people at Kings Mountain who are working a 3-shift, 5-day work week. Anvil has another plant in Swannanoa and several cut and sew operations in the two Carolinas.



Jerry Williams operates the control panel on one of the Anvil Knitwear dyeing machines. Anvil is in the process of converting over to total automation. Their dyeing machines are computer-controlled, and are high-efficiency equipment. The coloring process is an integral part of Anvil's operation.



Melissa Sanders and Margaret Robles operating a cutting machine at Anvil Knits. Anvil is in the process of relocating some of their machinery to utilize space that is now being used for storage. Their in-house expansion should be finished by the end of the year.

ANVIL KNITWEAR, INC.

304 Linwood Drive

Kings Mountain, North Carolina

739-5463