

Fiber consumers to increase recycled appetite

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by [Colin Staub](#)

A Pacific Northwest paper mill will significantly increase its OCC consumption, and a 100 percent recycled fiber end user is building a new manufacturing facility for paper packaging products.

The latest announcements, from Port Townsend Paper Co. and Pratt Industries, add to the trend of U.S. manufacturers increasing recovered fiber consumption capacity. These developments have been closely watched by recycling stakeholders across the country, as municipal programs and MRFs struggle to find markets for certain recycled fiber grades.



Ramping up OCC intake

A longtime paper mill in Washington state will nearly double its OCC consumption.

Port Townsend Paper will complete an \$11 million capacity expansion, bringing in new equipment and making some mechanical changes, the Port Townsend Leader newspaper [reported](#) last week.

The mill consumed 147,000 tons of OCC in 2018. That equated to about 400 tons per day, and the company anticipates increasing that figure to about 750 tons per day, according to the newspaper.

The mill has been operating since 1928, producing kraft paper. An advanced OCC recycling operation was installed in 1996, according to [a rundown of the company's history](#), and the company notes today the mill recycles "one-third of all the cardboard in Washington state."

All told, the mill produces 325,000 tons of kraft paper per year, according to its website.

Pratt plans new converting operation

Meanwhile, across the country, Pratt Industries announced it will build a 160,000-square-foot manufacturing facility consuming recycled paper to create packaging and shipping materials.

Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam's office [announced](#) the new facility in a release last week. Pratt, which uses 100 percent recycled fiber in its manufacturing process, is developing the new facility in Botetourt County, Va.

The plant will be sited in a currently unfinished building in a business complex called the Botetourt Center at Greenfield, according to a local economic development coalition [news release](#). The building currently totals 100,000 square feet and will be expanded to meet Pratt's needs. Construction on the \$20 million facility is slated to begin immediately.

The facility will create 50 jobs and is Pratt's second manufacturing site in Virginia.

Additional details, including facility capacity and completion date, have not been released. Company spokesman Michael O'Regan declined to comment.

Pratt is involved in all stages of paper recycling: The company's recycling subsidiary, Pratt Recycling, collects recyclables and sorts them at 16 facilities in eight states. Additionally, the company consumes recycled paper at its mills in Conyers, Ga., New York City, Shreveport, La. and Valparaiso, Ind.

Company mills produce recycled materials that go into Pratt's converting and manufacturing operations, such as the in-development Virginia facility.

Pratt is also [currently constructing](#) a fifth mill, located in Wapakoneta, Ohio. That plant will consume mixed paper, OCC and double-lined kraft paper.

Capacity upticks

The two latest announcements join a handful of recycled paper consumers planning capacity increases. Recent developments include the following:

- McKinley Paper in Port Angeles, Wash. [is reopening](#) a shuttered newsprint facility to produce containerboard from recycled feedstock.
- Nine Dragons [will add](#) recycled pulp production lines at two virgin fiber mills it purchased last year, in Biron, Wis. and Rumford, Maine.
- Nine Dragons separately [purchased](#) a recycled paper mill in Fairmont, W.Va. and has described plans to ramp up recycled material production.
- Green Bay Packaging [is building](#) a new 100 percent recycled paper mill, consuming OCC and mixed paper. The facility has a projected production capacity of 685,000 tons per year and will replace the company's existing 240,000-tons-per-year operation.
- Cascades [acquired](#) an idled Virginia newsprint mill and plans to convert the facility to produce containerboard. The feedstock will be primarily OCC but will also utilize some mixed paper, company leaders have said.

Additional confirmed and potential recycled feedstock capacity expansions [were noted](#) in a report issued last fall by the Northeast Recycling Council (NERC).

Last year, Resource Recycling [published a map](#) showing Chinese investments in U.S. mills consuming recovered fiber.

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India to end plastic scrap imports

This story has been updated. The Indian government says it will ban scrap plastic imports, a move that threatens to further disrupt the U.S. recycling industry by closing a growing market.

Nespresso to fund NYC aluminum pod recovery

A coffee capsule company will spend more than \$1 million to allow for curbside recycling of its single-use packaging in New York City.

Walmart commits to incorporate more recycled plastic

The world's largest retailer has announced a handful of new plastics recycling and waste reduction commitments.

Our top stories from February 2019

Stories touching on OCC markets, a mixed-plastic outlet, paper mill fire, hauler earnings and packaging stewardship drew readers' attention last month.

California carpet plan (finally) approved

Regulators have given final approval to a carpet stewardship roadmap in California, marking a milestone in an ongoing, years-long dispute with the carpet industry.

California bill pushes cities to return to dual-stream

This story has been corrected. Some recycling stakeholders have argued for more source separation to bolster material quality. Now, a lawmaker in the country's largest state is joining the call.

Additional haulers report 2018 recycling gains

Casella Waste Systems and Advanced Disposal Services, two of the larger garbage and recycling companies in North America, experienced tumbling recycling revenues last year.

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