

NEWS ALERT

Cortec's plastic wraps don't last - and that's a good thing!



Cortec® Corporation is a pioneer of environmentally friendly, corrosion protection Vapor phase Corrosion Inhibitors (VpCI™) & Migratory Corrosion Inhibitors (MCI®) technologies for the Packaging, Metalworking, Construction, Electronics, Water Treatment, Oil & Gas and other industries. Headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, Cortec® manufactures over 400 products distributed worldwide. ISO 9001 & ISO 14001:2004 Certified.



Company's plastic wraps don't last - and that's a good thing

Wednesday, March 7, 2007 9:39 AM CST.

by Mike Morgan
Staff Writer

WHITE BEAR TOWNSHIP - Today's consumers encounter nearly as much plastic as product when purchasing goods.

The plastic waste that results can take centuries to decompose, or create problems for recyclers.

Cortec Corporation is hoping to cut down on all the waste by making its biodegradable plastic material widely available.

Bob Boyle, the company's sales manager, said Cortec first developed the technology to make protective wraps for storing U.S. military vehicles. Such wraps are needed to keep equipment clean and free of rust. The military wanted bags that would breakdown after being buried.

Today, the company makes hundreds of products that use the environmentally-friendly technology.

They make material that can be used in packaging a variety of products, including frozen pizzas, Boyle said. Employees hope Cortec's biodegradable plastic garbage bags soon will replace conventional bags, especially bags used for yard waste.

Because yard waste can't be disposed of with regular trash, it must be separated and recycled.

People generally put it into garbage bags, but that's a big problem for recycling because the plastic doesn't break down like the material inside.

Cortec's bags do, and are stronger than regular plastic, Boyle said. They are made from a polyester blend material that contains corn-based chemicals. Conventional bags are derived from oil products.

The same microorganisms that consume yard waste break down Cortec's bags in a few weeks, while regular plastic takes years, Boyle said.

In Canada, Cortec's bags are widely available and sold at big chain stores like Wal-Mart.

There, laws require people to use biodegradable bags, so stores are willing to stock them because they know there is a market, Boyle said. Here, retailers are reluctant to stock them because they don't know if they would sell.

That soon may change.

Rep. Paul Gardner (DFL-Lino Lakes) recently introduced a bill in the State Legislature that would ban non bio-degradable plastic garbage bags from being used to recycle lawn waste and other separated organic material in the Twin Cities area.

"The biggest contaminant in compost in the U.S. is plastic from yard waste bags. This reduces the value of the finished compost and increases costs for waste haulers, and therefore their customers," according to Gardner.

Cortec currently works with the Minnesota Pollution control Agency and some municipalities to distribute its bags, but consumers can't yet get them at stores.

It hopes to have them available to everyday consumers soon, which will make it easier to compost and benefit the environment.

"That's always our goal," Boyle said.

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Cortec Corporation

The White Bear Township business makes a variety of compostable plastic materials, including garbage bags for lawn waste. For more information, call 651-429-1100.