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Builders In A Bind C&D Debris

The building community may feel the crunch as Charleston County is put under pressure to come up with waste management solutions and C&D waste is on the chopping block. SC DHEC, who tracks waste streams throughout the state, notes, “C&D waste is a significant part of the total solid waste generated in South Carolina. In fact, the 3,645,414 tons of C&D debris generated in 2007 represented more than 21% of the total solid waste stream.” Moreover, the amount of C&D debris in the state has increased nearly 70% since 2003 and there is more growth to come.

With the Bees Ferry Landfill nearing capacity, this issue is brought to bear on the building community as a new permit is up for debate that would allow the increase of a high-rise pile of construction debris from 74 feet to 168 feet. The County Council is under pressure from the community to figure out alternatives to divert waste from the landfill and stem the need for increased height allowances. Regardless, this could be a loose-loose situation for builders. Even if the height allowance is approved to accommodate more C&D debris, the extended space may be reserved only for municipal haulers. Private haulers will no longer be allowed to dump C&D debris at Bees Ferry. Hearing this, private haulers are concerned over the cost increases this will have on their operations – Costs, they say, which will be felt all the way down the line to the contractor and home owner.

The building community needs another way to meet these challenges. Better options for disposing of C&D debris need to be offered. But we must note that any changes made need to feed into reform of the system as a whole. Contractors alone cannot bear the burden of changing site disposal practices. Building standards have to change, options for haulers have to improve, permitting processes need to be altered to encourage recycling or reuse rates, and market development for recyclable and reusable materials need to all happen in order to make a better more efficient and sustainable system.

The means to recycle, reuse or resell many of the materials produced on a C&D site exists. One resource to turn to now is The Sustainability Institute’s Green Building Directory. The Green Building Directory is an online database by which people can source green building materials and services for projects within the state of South Carolina. The database is populated by companies who sign-up and register all the green products and services they have available; and the site is searchable by company, product type, service, CIA division and LEED credit. The Green Building Directory will include an intense C&D waste diversion guide with information on resources for recycling, salvaging or reselling many C&D materials. The Green Building Directory will offer detailed company profiles and LEED credits achievable through onsite recycling or use of recycled materials. This guide is poised to be a leading resource for builders as they weather the changing tides within the industry.

If your company offers recycling or salvage of C&D waste, be sure to register on the Directory. Join the groups of other Companies expanding profits and offering effective solutions for C&D waste management. Or, if you would like to search for green building products or services please visit www.SCGreenBuildingDirectory.org.

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