

EMULSION FORUM



News

New Asphalt Test Mill Installed

A state-of-the-art asphalt test mill has been installed in Norjohn's plant in Burlington, Ontario. The mill allows the company to formulate and test small batches of asphalt emulsions prior to manufacturing them on a large scale for industry use.

Synthetic Waxes Under Development for Gypsum

As an alternative to using crude mineral-based waxes, Norjohn has been working with the Chemical Engineering Department at McMaster University to further refine its existing synthetic wax emulsions to provide moisture resistance to gypsum wallboard.

"While we're still buying some synthetic waxes, the advantage now is that we can tailor the chemistry of waxes to meet the requirements of the gypsum industry," says Technical Services and Innovation Group director Larry Sinnige. "This allows the industry to provide an optimum level of water resistance without affecting the process to manufacture wallboard."

As the technology has advanced, Norjohn has been offering the synthetic waxes to customers and the feedback has been very positive, Larry says. He adds that with the increased interest in these products, Norjohn has been working to scale up production in its plant.



Norjohn Recognized at Environmental Awards

Norjohn has been recognized in the small business category during this year's Minister's Awards for Environmental Excellence from Ontario's Minister of the Environment, John Wilkinson.

The company was recognized as a result of its work to eliminate the use of formaldehyde in its products.

Norjohn began working to reduce the use of formaldehyde in its wax emulsion products in 2006.

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New European Partnership Formed

Norjohn has formed a partnership with a company in the Netherlands to develop a trackless, asphalt-based tack coat for use in North America. Latexfalt, is a leading edge producer of the bio-based technology in Europe. The trackless tack coat sets up quicker than traditional tack coats, and doesn't stick to road surfacing equipment and tires, says Norjohn director Larry Sinnige.

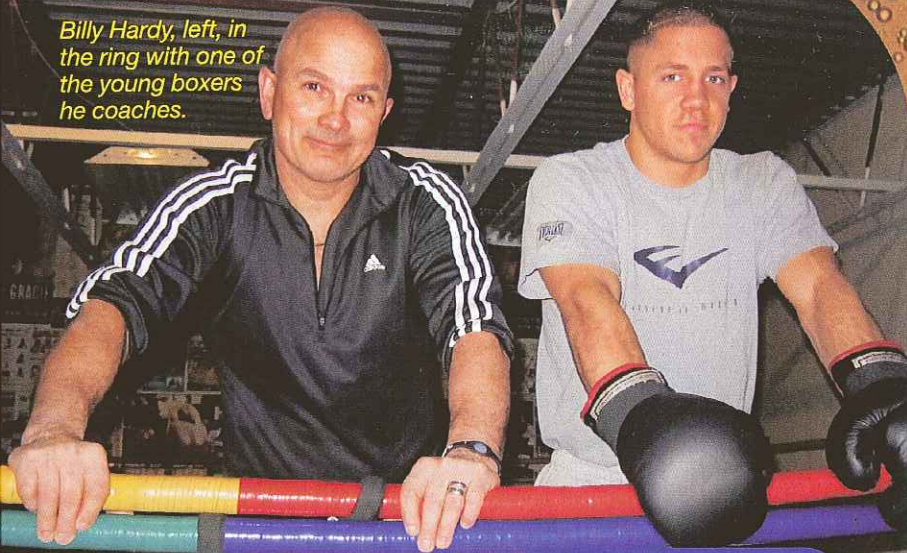
"We will be working on formulations modified for our northern climate over the winter, and begin testing them in the spring," he says.

Larry explains that in some ways, Europe is more advanced than North America in that Europeans place more focus on cold mix asphalt for environmental reasons. He says Latexfalt is looking to expand its influence on this side of the Atlantic so a partnership with Norjohn makes sense.

Latexfalt also manufactures coloured emulsions used to create coloured pavements for such applications as bicycle and walking paths.

"We can learn from them," Larry says, adding that there are some niche markets the two companies can work together to serve.

Billy Hardy, left, in the ring with one of the young boxers he coaches.



Employee Profile

Billy Hardy
Maintenance
Coordinator

Boxing is a Passion for Billy Hardy

The year 1982 is significant for Billy Hardy for a couple of reasons. It's the year he began his employment with Walker Industries and also the year he became a referee with the Ontario (Amateur) Boxing Association (OBA).

Boxing is a passion for Billy, and one that is shared by his entire family. He began boxing as an amateur at age 11, and during his youth had what he calls "a pretty good career" in bouts across the province. He now sits on the OBA's Board of Directors and is the organization's director of officials. A few times a week, he coaches young boxers at Boone's City Boxing Club in Niagara Falls. His wife Shawn is a boxing judge and their two daughters, Chelsea and Krista, go for regular workouts in the boxing ring.

Billy insists that the amateur boxing world "is totally different from what you see on TV. We make sure the kids don't get hurt." The young boxers he trains come from all walks of life. "Being involved in boxing keeps kids off the street," he says.

As for his work life, Billy began his career at Walker as a general labourer at Woodington Systems, the company's division that handles the transportation and disposal of liquid and hazardous wastes. Eleven years ago, he joined Norjohn Limited, where he is maintenance coordinator, which involves repairing and maintaining equipment in the plant.

"I love it," Billy says of his job. "The company has been very good to me. They're good people to work for."

"I'll probably retire from here," he adds. "I'm certainly not looking for anything else."

Work Underway to Reduce Air Emissions

Norjohn has submitted a comprehensive Certificate of Approval (C of A) application for air emissions to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) to replace its current certificate. This includes preparing an Emissions Summary and Dispersion Model Report, which is a computer model of theoretical maximum emission scenarios for air and noise.

"The comprehensive C of A will allow us to make small changes to the plant's operations or equipment without having to go through the process of a full C of A each time, provided the change does not increase emissions," says Scott Hurley, environmental specialist for Norjohn Limited. "We are continuously improving our operations to be well below the ceiling limits established by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment," Scott says.

The work on the comprehensive C of A involves the modeling of maximum air and noise emissions with consultants hired for their expertise. The document will include such items as the hours of operation for the plant, production capacity, the substances being emitted in the air, and an air model showing that emissions will be below MOE thresholds.

Norjohn Recognized at Environmental Awards - continued

Formaldehyde, considered to be carcinogenic, had been used as a biocide in wax emulsions by the fiberglass and fibreboard industries.

In 2007 the company used nearly 6,000 kilograms of the chemical in its products. By 2009 Norjohn completely eliminated the use of formaldehyde.

Norjohn created a vegetable oil-based product to work as a dust suppressant for the fiberglass industry and a wax emulsion formulated from bio-based oils to provide water resistance for manufacturers of engineered wood products.

"We wanted to completely eliminate the use of formaldehyde by altering the chemistry of our products," says Norjohn's vice-president Archie Reynolds. "We now hold several patents for our eco-friendly products."

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