Sonoco Opens New State-of-the-Art Recycling Facility in North Carolina

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Facility Capable of Processing 500 Million Pounds Annually from Raleigh and Surrounding Area

RALEIGH, N.C., Sept 25, 2006 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Sonoco (NYSE: SON) has begun commercial operation of a fully automated, state-of-the-art materials recovery facility (MRF) that recycles curbside-collected and dual-stream residential and commercial waste materials from the Raleigh and Wake County, N.C. area.

The 45,000 square foot recycling facility, operating under Sonoco's wholly owned subsidiary, Paper Stock Dealers, Inc., incorporates a computer-automated reclamation processing system that uses customized conveyors, an elliptical sorter, large storage hoppers and a fully automated horizontal baler to automatically separate, store, compact and bale reclaimed newsprint, old corrugated containers and other recycled paper and packaging, aluminum, steel, glass and plastic. Materials processed at the facility are then transported to domestic and international basic material manufacturers for producing recycled products.

"Sonoco has invested nearly $5 million in developing a fully automated materials recycling facility that the Raleigh area can be proud of," said Myles Cohen, vice president and general manager of Sonoco's Recovered Paper Division. "We have been operating Raleigh's MRF for the past 10 years, and the Company was recently awarded a new contract to continue reclaiming the community's curbside recyclables. This new facility is replacing two older, less sophisticated facilities that were unable to meet the growing residential and commercial reclamation needs of the Raleigh and Wake County area."

The new facility is situated on a 17-acre site in southeast Raleigh at 111 S. Rogers Lane, just off of Interstate 440. The new location provides easy access so that trucks carrying locally gathered recyclables can be unloaded at the same time that other trucks are loaded with processed materials.

"Our new facility is already improving the efficiency and productivity of Raleigh's curbside recycling program by significantly reducing the time it takes to off-load, process and move recycled materials in and out of the facility," said Marilyn Quattlebaum, director of operations for Sonoco's Recovered Paper Division. "We have the capacity to handle up to 500 million pounds annually of residential and commercial recyclable materials. Because of the speed of our automated processing system, we will be able to meet the long-term needs of the Raleigh area as well as be able to offer municipal and commercial reclamation services to communities in nearly a 150 square mile area."

In addition to providing material recovery services for the Raleigh area, Sonoco's Paper Stock Dealers is developing a community education and outreach program that is focused on teaching area students the importance of participating in the community's recycling efforts.

"We are in the process of building a classroom and demonstration displays at the facility to be used to teach our community's youth the importance of recycling at home and school," said Jim Foster, Raleigh MRF plant manager. "We will hire an educator to work with area schools to provide on-site recycling instruction as well as work with local community groups to improve recycling efforts throughout the Greater Raleigh area."

In addition to being a global packaging company, Sonoco is one of the largest recovered paper and recycling processors in the U.S., recovering more than three million tons of paper annually from 45 company-owed processing facilities in nine countries in North America, South America, Europe and Asia. Sonoco operates more than 30 recycling facilities in the U.S., including facilities serving nine North Carolina communities in Charlotte, Durham, Fayetteville, Gastonia, Greensboro, Greenville, Hickory, Raleigh, Richlands, Salisbury and Winston-Salem. Many of these facilities are operated under Sonoco's Paper Stock Dealers subsidiary.

About Sonoco

Sonoco, founded in 1899, is a $3.5 billion global manufacturer of consumer and industrial packaging products and provider of packaging services, with more than 300 operations in 35 countries serving customers in some 85 nations. For more information on Sonoco, visit our Web site at http://www.sonoco.com.

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