



PRESS RELEASE

Recycled goods save resources

*Innovative salvaging procedure for contaminated plastics developed /
the business group's know-how applied /
an answer to steadily dwindling resources*

<Bremen / Hamburg, 03/03/2009> Zech Umwelt GmbH has developed an innovative cleaning procedure for contaminated plastics. This procedure completely separates HDPE plastics from clinging residues such as oils by means of an intensive cold wash. This makes it possible to produce high-quality grist for material recycling out of what previously would have been largely unused waste.

Short-lived, but used everywhere: plastic packaging. German households now routinely recycle yoghurt pots, etc., & Co in the context of the Dual (Recycling) System. But what about packaging, i.e. wrappings with hard-to-clean residues stuck to them?

Zech Umwelt GmbH has credentials in ground, water and air cleaning as well as in material flow management. To open up new possibilities with ecologically friendly and economic solutions – such is the motto of the company that, to name an example, maintains the densest network of soil purification plants in Germany. An economically challenging environment notwithstanding, Zech Umwelt GmbH continues to pursue its pattern of growth.

An innovative treatment procedure developed in-house makes it possible to salvage almost 100% of contaminated packaging such as for example cans or canisters made from HDPE plastic. In the past, this kind of packaging was largely disposed of by thermal means. The goal the company set for itself was to save resources and to make the flow of waste useful again for making new products. The grist obtained is used to make new products of a similar composition and other materials. The procedure is capable of processing a broad spectrum of contaminants (AVV [German Waste Directory Ordinance] 150 110) from oils and acids to industrial cleaning agents and enzymes.

After being scanned optically, the emptied containers are deposited at the new Gladbeck facility in North Rhine – Westphalia and are separated first of all from all metallic components. Preliminary grinding and mechanical pre-cleaning removes any remaining clinging product residues. The centrepiece of the procedure is the subsequent wet grinding with its multi-stage, intensive cold washing. The procedure uses only water without any kind of cleaning additives such as surfactants. This approach distinguishes itself from existing procedures through less strain on the environment, lower energy consumption, and lower costs. After the final drying stage, the end result is high-quality grist.

Regular controls at different sample points of the process ensure the necessary quality for further processing. The grist, consisting of particles of less than ten millimetres and having a residue humidity of less than two percent is packaged in what are known as Big Bags.

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