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Manufacturing a greener world

Intec receives the Environmental Solution Award for its electroplating industry waste recycling, and Enware and Papyrus each take a highly commended.

Emily Mobbs writes.

Intec says its operations last year recycled over 200 tonnes of highly toxic heavy metal sludge and solid wastes from the plating industry. In addition, more than 99% of the contained heavy metals were converted into useable products, generating no solid waste for landfill disposal.

Saving the environment is a hot topic, so it is no surprise the competition for this year's Environmental Solution of the Year Award was tough, but in the end it was Intec's electroplating industry waste recycling project that won over the judges.

Throughout 2009, the company used its Tasmanian technical facility to recycle heavy metals contained in previously intractable industrial waste sludge and residue.

According to award judges, the environmental solution is a critical link demonstrated between the environment and business success.

"This process has a significant reduction in the amount of heavy metals being put into landfill. This is a much-needed process in the management of industrial sledges," Endeavour Awards judges said.

According to Intec, its operations last year recycled over 200 tonnes of highly toxic heavy metal sludge and solid wastes from the plating industry. In addition, more than 99% of the contained heavy metals were converted into useable products, generating no solid waste for

landfill disposal.

Intec senior research metallurgist and project manager, Dr Andrew Tong, was on-hand to accept the award on behalf of the company.

"As an inventor, it is fantastic to be rewarded for developing and commercialising an idea," Tong told *Manufacturers' Monthly*.

According to Intec corporate development manager, Dave Sammut, winning the award supports the recognition of Intec's technology, domestically and internationally.

"Intec is using Australia as a proving ground for its technologies and we are ultimately looking at new applications for the Australian market as well as looking to expand that application as a technology export," Sammut said.

The Intec process technology for waste recycling is widely applicable and several projects are currently under development through a joint-venture in China.

Starting at 50,000 tonnes per annum and growing to as much as one million, these projects represent both a significant environmental benefit and an important export opportunity for a

small Australian technology firm.

Highly Commended

Enware received a highly commended in the Environmental Solution of the Year category for its commitment to water conservation. The company's new water recycling plant, which is integrated into its manufacturing facility in Caringbah New South Wales, has proven in its first year of operation to save more than 1.3 million litres of water.

Equally as important, the recycling of water obviates the need to dispose of polluted water into the environment by way of drains or expensive transport, storage and processing.

According to the company, all sectors of the community are coming to see water use as one of the biggest environmental issues of the 21st century.

"Enware is playing its part as a responsible corporate citizen, both with the ranges of water conservation products we produce, and now with the water conservation practices built in to our own production processes," the company said.

"We see this as a win-win equation, for our business, Australian manufacturing and

for the community we serve.”

Highly Commended

Founded in 2004, South Australia-based Papyrus Australia has developed a world-first technology that utilises fibre from the waste trunk of the banana palm tree to produce paper and timber products under the brand Beleaf.

The environmentally-friendly project is said to potentially save

about 12 million hectares of natural or purpose-planted forests every year from destruction.

It is this investment in the environment which saw Papyrus Australia take home a highly commended gong at this year’s *Manufacturers’ Monthly Endeavour Awards*.

According to the company, the technology takes an otherwise unused waste material to produce high-value paper, card-

board, veneer and fibreboard products. The trunk of the banana palm has been identified as an ideal source of fibre because it is a renewable and abundant source with no other viable use.

In addition, the manufacturing process does not consume any water or chemicals, requires less energy and produces no chemical effluent.

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Intec senior research metallurgist & project manager, Dr Andrew Tong (left), accepts the award from Johanne Fourie of sponsor, Atlas Copco.



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Seeley heats-up consumer category

Seeley wins the Australian Consumer/Trade Product of the Year Award with highly commended awards going to Austofix and Papyrus, reports **Emily Mobbs**.

Made from titanium alloy for maximum biocompatibility and strength, Austofix's Volar Radius Plate is designed to maintain volar tilt, radial inclination and radial height.

Seeley claims its Braemar TH 5 Star Ducted Gas Heating system represents a revolution in modern ducted gas heating; and it was evident that this year's Endeavour Award judges agreed, naming the system Australian Consumer/Trade Product of the Year.

Commenting on their decision, the judges said the ratings gained by the Braemar TH 5 Star Ducted Gas Heating system are of a high standard and the company has introduced new developments to the ducted gas heating market.

Seeley received the award at a dinner ceremony at Sydney's Doltone House on 12 May. The company was recognised and rewarded in front of 260 manufacturing industry decision-makers who had gathered on the evening to celebrate advancements in local manufacturing processes and technology.

Seeley's winning Ecostar product is a system for whole-of house heating that features: interchangeable panels; two-piece construction that will fit through a manhole; a control system that allows zonal temperature control; and a 5.6-star energy efficiency rating.

According to Seeley, the innovation of the TH 5 star product has improved the star rating of

the unit from 5.4 stars (previous TG model) to 6.5 stars. The system is said to exceed any other 5-star ducted gas heater on the market by 0.1 stars.

The company's chairman, Frank Seeley, accepted the award on the night saying "this is not only an honour, it's fantastic".

Seeley told *Manufacturers' Monthly*: "We've always been very big on awards, but getting awards is not something you become used to and this particular one will definitely serve as a further endorsement for the product."

He adds the company is constantly striving to provide more energy efficient systems.

"When we entered the industry 38 years ago we were the underdog and we had to come up with something that was different than what the industry was offering," he said.

"We gradually became dominant in the energy efficiency heat industry and we've taken the same philosophy with us over the years."

Seeley says the Braemar TH 5 Star Ducted Gas Heating system has received considerable consumer approval. The Braemar Ecostar TH range also won the Greenplumbers Energy Efficient Product of the Year Award 2008.

Highly Commended

Austofix designs, manufactures and markets highly specialised orthopaedic implants that are used to fix and stabilise bone fractures.

The company's Volar Radius Plate (VRP), which was awarded highly commended in the 2010 Endeavour Awards, is a fixed-angle locking plate for the treatment of unstable distal radius fractures involving instability, comminution and osteoporosis.

The Australian-made locking plate was designed in conjunction with surgeons to offer a simple and effective treatment solution.

Made from titanium alloy for maximum biocompatibility and strength, the plate is designed to maintain volar tilt, radial inclination and radial height.

According to the company, surgical treatment of distal radius fractures – and plating in particular – ensures more consistent correction of displacement and maintenance of reduction than conservative methods such as cast immobilisation or splinting.

Following the release of the VRP, the company has increased its turnover by more than double and secured distributors in Greece, Turkey and South Africa.

Highly Commended

Papyrus Australia has been awarded a highly commended for developing a world-first technology said to provide both timber and paper industries with a low cost and environmentally sustainable solution.

The process uses fibre from the waste trunk of the banana palm to produce paper and timber products under the brand Beleaf. The technology is

said to take an otherwise unused waste material to produce high-value paper, cardboard, veneer and fibreboard products.

After 15 years of intensive research and development, the trunk of the banana palm was identified as an ideal source of fibre because it is a renewable and abundant source.

In 2009, the company set up its first process plant in far north Queensland and began producing commercial quantities of the

veneer. Since then, it has received orders throughout Europe and is in the process of establishing a second manufacturing plant in Brisbane.

Papyrus Australia also took away a highly commended award in the Environmental Solution of the Year category at the 7th Annual Endeavour Awards ceremony.

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A proud Frank Seeley, chairman of Seeley International, delivers his acceptance speech for the Consumer/Trade Product of the Year category.