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Michigan State University Incoming Students Go ‘Spartan’ Green On Move-In Day

Local company Dart Container Corporation provides on-site collection of polystyrene packaging foam for recycling as students move into the dorms

LANSING, Mich. (August 27, 2009) – Like many campuses across the U.S., Michigan State University’s (MSU) Office of Campus Sustainability is helping the school set a new standard in reducing its environmental footprint by partnering with a local company to recycle leave-behind foam on move-in day . On Sunday, Aug. 30, Mason-based Dart Container Corporation will be on campus to recycle polystyrene foam (commonly used in electronics packaging) as incoming students move into the dorms to begin the school year.

For a second year, Dart Container Corporation, employing nearly 1,100 people in the area, has provided on-site trailers to collect polystyrene packaging. The packaging then is transferred to Dart’s plant in Mason, where they recycle polystyrene foam products at no cost to the public. In the recycling process, foam is ground up, melted, converted to plastic resin pellets, and sold for reuse as an ingredient in non-food service products, including picture frames or decorative moulding.

"We’re thrilled to once again partner successfully with Dart," said Diane Barker of MSU’s Office of Campus Sustainability. "Their involvement helps our campus foster a collaborative learning culture and together, heightens community awareness for the impact we make on the environment."

With thousands of students expected, move-in will take place from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Trailers collecting polystyrene foam will be located between the Surplus Store and Printing Services (off of Harrison on the Service Drive). Other recycling locations will be made available to accommodate items such as moving boxes and carpet tubes. Last year, Dart filled two 53-foot trailers with the student’s leftover foam, an estimated 6,000 cubic feet or 2,500 pounds.

"This is something we look forward to doing every year," said Dart’s Cheryl Dykhuis, creator of MSU’s ‘Pitch In, Help Out, Recycle’ foam recycling program. "As a company, Dart is dedicated to positively supporting our community and raising awareness that foam recycling in Michigan is possible and practical."

Dart’s products are made of foam polystyrene, a versatile plastic that includes cups, clamshells, plates, cutlery and more. Often improperly called "styrofoam," these products are recyclable and reusable. Foam products generate less waste in their production than paper alternatives, are stable and safe in landfills, and burn cleanly in modern municipal energy-from-waste facilities.

The company is driving recycling efforts from its manufacturing facilities in Mason to more than 30 counties in the state. In 2008, Dart recycled 200 tons of postconsumer foam in its Mason facility.

About Dart Container Corporation

Established in 1937, Dart Container Corporation sets the industry standard of excellence by efficiently providing high quality, affordable foodservice packaging solutions, exceptionally reliable service and responsible environmental stewardship. Dart is making a concerted effort to increase foam recycling opportunities throughout the country and strives to produce high-quality, cost-effective products in a manner sensitive to environmental concerns. Dart is headquartered in Mason, Mich. For more information, visit www.dart.biz or call (800) 248-5960.