

Maple Landmark

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Release at Will

Solving Wood Waste

Maple Landmark's Creative Reuse Program Helps Vermont Community Year-Round

MIDDLEBURY, Vt. – Have you ever tried to squeeze the last drop of toothpaste from the tube? What if that tube could be repurposed once it's empty? That same mentality is how Maple Landmark, an American wood products manufacturer in Middlebury, Vt., approaches their wood recycling program. Despite efficient and creative product design to achieve maximum yield out of each board, there are always leftover scraps. What can be done with this wood waste? Well, it turns out – a lot!

Ever heard the expression about the square peg in a round hole? Maple Landmark faces that problem literally but in reverse. Boards are square; Chinese checkers boards are round. The corners of each board become scrap wood at a size that cannot be practically reused in a commercially viable manner. The scrap, however, is not unusable. Rather, the pieces accumulate with other offcuts in large bins which are placed outside. At their leisure, community members stop and load up their cars, trucks, and vans with this otherwise-useless material to burn in the campfires by summer, and wood stoves by winter. The best part? It's completely free! To many community members, this is a valuable resource to keep energy bills lower during the oft-frigid Vermont winters.

The often-forgotten second byproduct of woodworking is sawdust. In home woodshops, these shavings and powder typically meet their end in the trash bin. Thanks to another Vermont industry, Maple Landmark provides an answer for this one, too! Through an extensive network of pipes connecting all sawdust-producing machines, the dust collection system vacuums up all the dust and deposits it in a trailer behind the shop. Ultimately, over the course of a month, the equivalent of one full tractor-trailer load of sawdust is amassed. Each weekend, a local farmer hauls the trailer away, returning it empty in time for Monday's production. What does he do with the sawdust, you might ask? It becomes a soft bedding for his livestock. Talk about dual-purpose!

The renewable properties of wood (both in byproducts and original sourcing) were attractive for Maple Landmark owner Michael Rainville when initially choosing a medium. Equally as attractive was the local availability. Nearly all of the lumber used in Maple Landmark's products is sourced from Vermont mills. "We are extremely lucky to be located where we are and have ample access to hard maple for our toys and other wood products," recounted Rainville, "We're proud to support Vermont's working landscape and the foresters, loggers, and mills who keep us stocked with lumber."

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Maple Landmark's local purchasing facilitates a tight supply chain in which nearly all raw materials are sourced less than 150 miles away. In a world that values reduced emissions and going green, the elimination of transportation time is yet another way that Maple Landmark supports sustainability. An additional advantage of local sourcing is the elimination of international trade pressures such as tariffs. "When you make products domestically with domestic materials, tariffs begin to matter significantly less," explains Rainville. Ultimately to Rainville, though, it's all about trying to do business the right and honest way. "We enjoy helping our neighbors and the planet," he says with a smile, "our community and Mother Nature have given us so much, it's only fair to do what we can in return."

About Maple Landmark

Maple Landmark is a wooden products manufacturer located in Middlebury, Vermont. Since 1979, the 40 woodworkers at Maple Landmark have been crafting a wide array of award-winning toys, games, and gifts from local and sustainable wood. Maple Landmark uses a variety of manufacturing systems, innovative product design, and modern technology integrated with classic woodworking to remain competitive in a crowded industry that faces significant international trade pressures. Distributing products across the United States and sometimes internationally, Maple Landmark is recognized as a standard for quality wooden products in an increasingly tech-driven world.

For more information on Maple Landmark, please visit the website at www.maplelandmark.com.

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