

Beyond the Private Sector

Guess Who's Going \$Green?

By Michael Galiazzo

The green revolution is playing out in a variety of settings. At work, at home and at school, people are on the road to going green. Going green is big news for the media, provides endless projects for school-children and has become a priority for policymakers. It is a recurring theme for conference presentations, TV programs and newspapers. The web connects people worldwide who discuss and debate going green, and who buy a variety of green products online.

What may be surprising to many is that manufacturing is part of the green movement. Yes, manufacturers are Going \$Green. They are implementing policies and practices that both improve profitability and lessen the negative impact on the earth. Going \$Green means "good for the company and better for the earth."

Companies are implementing green processes and approaches as well as making greener products. Innovation and technology create materials and coatings that are increasingly more earth friendly. Lean manufacturing, a hallmark of improved manufacturing efficiency, is becoming lean for green, with an emphasis on reducing environmental wastes. There is a wide variety of ways companies are engaged in going green, and they are helping each other get there by sharing best practices. The picture of Maryland manufacturing today is much different than just a few years ago, and Going \$Green is part of the new formula for success.

Let me explain a little about manufacturing in Maryland. You may recall the smokestack industry of old. Well the smokestacks of the past are gone, but the industry itself is not. It has transformed itself to compete successfully in a challenging global economy.

Manufacturing in Maryland is high tech, research and development driven, innovative, fast paced, and competes in an international network through global supply chains. Even companies that don't have overseas operations find that they are impacted by the global economy.

Today's economic playing field is vastly different from only a decade ago. Companies are driven increasingly by technology, innovation, collaboration and cost saving approaches. Sustainability is part of today's model for manufacturing success and Maryland companies are embracing a variety of ways to achieve green results.

GM Powertrain Baltimore in White Marsh is landfill free and produces a hybrid transmission that significantly increases fuel efficiency. Marlin Steel Wire Products in Baltimore City uses 100% recycled materials. Lion Brothers in Owings Mills adopted global compliance standards in the garment and textile industry. Phillips Foods is focused on greening its global supply chain, and hundreds of Maryland printing companies embrace new, environmentally friendly certification standards. These companies and many others are finding cost effective ways to move toward increased sustainability.

New light bulbs and light sensors dramatically reduce energy use. Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems implemented the Environmental Protection Agency's Green Lights program and other energy saving efforts, saving the company more than \$800,000 annually. Energy audits and pollution prevention are routine in manufacturing companies across the state. The Maryland Department of the Environment has a list on its web site of Maryland companies that have been recognized for pollution prevention measures. It also can point you to important

resources. Companies are applying lean for green to find ways to reduce wastes more efficiently.

As every consumer knows, there is an explosion in new products and new product design that is more earth friendly. Materials used are increasingly more green. Our research universities are finding more earth friendly ways to produce, package and transport goods. Companies are looking at carbon footprints and applying strategies to be more socially responsible.

The approaches for Going \$Green are quite different and there is a need to learn from each other as we continue down the road to Going \$Green. In the fall of 2007, the Regional Manufacturing Institute (RMI) of Maryland held a conference called Going \$Green with Maryland Manufacturing, followed by a town hall meeting to discuss the topic with companies. From the discussions, we learned that Maryland manufacturers are Going \$Green for several key reasons, among them: reduced costs, social responsibility, increased product sales and demands on suppliers from large corporations to increase green efforts. Simply put, if suppliers don't go green, they will lose business.

Original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) like Baxter International, General Motors Corporation, Northrop Grumman, Steelcase and Johnson Controls have initiated substantive sustainability programs. These programs assist suppliers to meet new sustainability standards and expectations. In this way, manufacturers are driving the movement without government regulation and in ways that move the entire supply chain in the right direction.

On June 3, 2008, RMI, along with the Maryland-Asia Environmental Partnership and the Green Suppliers Network, a U.S. Environmental Agency and National Insti-

tute of Standards and Technology, is hosting a conference on Greening the Supply Chain to showcase successful supply chain initiatives and to discuss how Maryland is poised to sell green technologies, knowledge and services in Asian markets.

Sen. Ben Cardin will open the program with his talk on "Kermit Was Wrong. It IS Easy Being Green." Anirban Basu, Maryland's best known and respected economist, will discuss "Maryland and the Global Economy." Peter Gourlay, president of the Maryland-Asia Environmental Partnership, will talk about "The Global Sustainability Movement and Its Impact on Business."

Gourlay has been laying the groundwork for Maryland-Asia partnerships, given the massive water, energy and pollution issues in the region. As the needs continue to grow, Maryland's innovative manufacturing leaders can play a role in providing efficient process and product solutions to Asia.

The Regional Manufacturing Institute of Maryland will continue to play a leadership role in promoting green manufacturing and to build entrepreneurial collaborative partnerships with education and government. We must think and act differently to achieve different results that are mutually beneficial and that provide economic and environmental health.

The next time someone talks about going green, I hope you will mention the role that manufacturing plays in green product development and in implementing improved and socially responsible strategies.

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From pg. 1

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