



Sol Tick Improves Efficiency With New Baler and Screener

The year 2010 has seen big changes at Sol Tick in Decatur, the area's leader in full-service scrap recycling. The company has added a new screener and baler to improve efficiency and operations.

The first piece of new equipment was the company's screener, which was installed in late 2009 and became operational after the winter weather in April of this year. One of the biggest benefits of the new screener is its ability to retrieve and process material that was previously left in the ground. The new screener, which provides the ultimate in ability to retrieve previously unrecoverable materials, allows for the cleaning of material that ends up on the bottom of the pile. Material can now literally be pulled out of the ground for recycling. The screener separates iron, non-ferrous and stainless out of the dirt. The iron goes to the steel mill and the other material to the next phase of additional segregating.

David Hicks, Sol Tick's General Manager, explains how the new screener works. "The screener has a vibrating feed hopper that feeds a vibrating screen deck and a 4" screen and a 1/2" screen," he says. "The 1/2" material goes in one pile and is used for fill in the yard. The 1/2"-4" material is sent to the shredder in Danville where they recover steel and non-ferrous material. Material larger than 4 inches goes across a conveyer where employees pick off non-ferrous and any wood in the material. The ferrous material—called heavy melt—goes up a stacking conveyer which is shipped to steel mills."

The new screener means customers coming to the Decatur facility will experience better configuration when bringing materials and will also see a cleaner scrap yard. "The screener has allowed us to do a lot of housekeeping in the yard," says Hicks. "We changed the landscape around the scale – it's cleaner. We now have level, flat, open space so company and customer trucks can be staged more conveniently for unloading."



Above: Sol Tick Screener
Left: Sol Tick Baler



Customers are not the only ones to experience changes as a result of the new screener. There are six laborers who now pick material out of the scrap. Besides the benefit of additional work in a tough economy, the new picking station has an awning to protect employees from the sun and heat.

"The new screener can recover all metals out of the dirt," adds Hicks. "We are removing metals and material out of the ground from piles that have been sitting for 40 years. We now can sift through the dirt and remove material to be recycled."

In addition to the screener, a new baler arrived early last month and the commissioning phase began on September 23.

Hicks is quick to point out the significant advantage of the new baler. "The new baler allows for better cycle time. The old baler took 115 seconds to make a bale, and the new one operates at 74 seconds." Beyond the improved time efficiency, Hicks says another benefit is that the bale comes out looking better. He says they now have perfectly tight cubes permitting the bales to be stacked more easily. The tight cubes are also heavier and more compact, translating to improved efficiency for employees as they load rail cars.

Quality improvements may be some of the most significant changes the new baler brings. "The overall quality of the bale is improved, and we are able to bale things we couldn't before," he says. "The old baler couldn't handle over 1/4" material, and now we can bale thicker material. We shear material off and cut it into smaller pieces, which the old machine couldn't do." There are less maintenance issues so the "up time" for processing scrap is improved.

The upgrade to newer equipment allows Decatur to continue to be central Illinois' largest shear and baling operation, operating more efficiently while focusing on quality and re-use of material.

Mervis Industries Adds New Towing Business

Mervis Industries has added towing to the increasingly diverse list of divisions of the company. Advantage Towing and Wrecker Service is the newest member of the Mervis team.

Advantage Towing is located in Danville, Illinois, and offers full service towing and recovery services. The company operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. More than just a traditional towing service, the Advantage Towing team of recovery specialists can provide light duty local and long distance towing, but also features heavy duty recovery services. Advantage takes its service one step further by offering heavy duty equipment hauling from state to state.

Advantage Towing currently employs six people – four tow drivers and two dispatchers.

“We have great customer service,” says Erik O’Kane, manager of Advantage Towing. “We are fast, courteous – and offer reasonable rates. Plus we are fully licensed, insured and can handle the full line of towing needs – everything from low profile sports cars to semi tractors fully loaded. We tow them all.”

Fast Facts about Advantage Towing

- Towing Services/Commercial Shipping/Transport Services
- Open 24 Hours/7 Days a Week
- Local and Long Distance Towing
- Damage-free Wheel Lift Towing
- Flat Bed Service
- Jump Starts
- Pull Starts
- Accident and Recovery Work
- Opening Locked Cars/Trucks/Semi Tractors
- Equipment & Shed Hauling
- Tree Stump Removal



FAMILIAR FACE LEADS ADVANTAGE TOWING & WRECKER SERVICE

Erik O’Kane, a familiar face in the Mervis Industries family, is manager of the new Advantage Towing and Wrecker Service. Erik has been with Mervis since December 2007, starting as scale clerk at Cannon Street. Since then, he has worked in a variety of jobs at Mervis Metals, Advantage Recycling, and Mervis Iron and Metal. Erik appreciates the “family” atmosphere at Mervis. “They treat employees like family,” says O’Kane, “above and beyond any company I’ve ever worked for.”

Erik is the youngest of four children. He has two older sisters and an older brother. In his spare time, he enjoys spoiling his nieces and nephews, golfing, watching St. Louis and Danville Dans baseball, and Rams football. He also likes to “throw darts and fish a little.”

Mervis Employees Give Back!



The 2010 HALO Mervis Team was: Theresa Krause, Mike Scott, Marty Wells & Family, Candy Underhill, John Billings, Lee Frymire, Saundra & Austin Alcorn, Mike Goodyear, and Tom & Darlene Halloran.

Mervis Sponsors Thaddeus Rex’s Return to Danville

Singer/Songwriter Thaddeus Rex will perform two free concerts for Vermilion County Schools on Thursday, October 28 at the David S. Palmer Arena. Thaddeus Rex’s message is new and creative and shows that learning and loving to read is fun.

All elementary and pre-kindergarten students and teachers in the area are able to come to the show at no cost thanks to the sponsorship provided by Mervis Industries, Advantage Recycling and Advantage Towing.

Illini Castings Gears Up for Full Production in January

Illini Castings, LLC, one of the newest additions to Mervis Industries, plans to move from the current half production to full production after the first of the year, according to John Widmer, Illini Castings' president.

Illini Castings, LLC specializes in reconditioning railroad castings. Customers realize a cost savings by utilizing refurbished parts. An additional benefit is access to refurbished parts that are no longer in production. The company began operations in November of 2009.

"We are taking it slow with production," explains Widmer. "We are just getting the business off the ground."

The company currently employs 20 people. The company expects to increase to 40-50 employees in 2011.

By the end of October 2010, Illini Castings will have a new furnace that will directly benefit current and potential customers. "The new furnace is a part of our ramp up," says Widmer. "The furnace shipped in late September. We spent two to three weeks installing the unit and troubleshooting the production process."

Widmer says when the new furnace is operational the company



ILLINI CASTINGS, LLC

An Affiliate of Mervis Industries

will be poised for rapid growth. "Our biggest client contracts start in January. We anticipate doing more with our customers." Right now, the team at Illini Castings is doing the behind the scenes work—getting production and equipment running smoothly, calling on customers, and lining up new accounts—that will have them ready for 2011's full production schedule.

The next year will see slow but steady changes in the industry, predicts Widmer. He believes the railroad industry as a whole will start coming back, and that Illini Castings will reap the benefits of the rebound in the economy.

Illini Castings is located at 1940 E. Fairchild St. in Danville. They can be reached by calling 217-446-6365.

You Can Save a Life *by Scott Defenbaugh*

What would you do, how much would you pay to keep your life or the life of a family member or friend? Most of us would do everything in our power, give everything we have, or go deeply in debt to save our own life or that of a family member or friend. We have available a device that can save lives if used. This device has been available for many years and is widely known, but amazingly, some people choose not to use it.

What is this miracle device? A seat belt!

Seat belts have been installed in cars and trucks for years and have been proven time and time again to save lives, but there are people who still refuse to use them. People have various excuses for not using seat belts—none are valid!

EXCUSE: I don't wear safety belts anymore, now that I have a car equipped with air bags.

FACT: Air bags are designed to work TOGETHER with your safety belt to keep you in position in the event of a crash.

EXCUSE: I buckle up most of the time, but not if I am just going to the corner store a few blocks from my house.

FACT: Crashes occur most often within 25 miles of home.

EXCUSE: I don't wear safety belts because I feel that I would be trapped if the car caught fire or were to become submerged in a body of water.

FACT: Only about one in 200 traffic crashes involves fire or submersion. Using safety belts prevents occupants from being knocked unconscious or into other passengers, so that you can actually get out of the vehicle with the least amount of injury.

EXCUSE: Wearing a safety belt wrinkles my clothes.

FACT: After going through the windshield your body will be severely injured or you may die! The good news is after that you won't have to worry about your clothes.

EXCUSE: I want to be thrown clear of my car to get out of harm's way in the event of a crash.

FACT: Your chances of being killed are four times greater if you are thrown out of the vehicle.

EXCUSE: Seat belts are too uncomfortable.

FACT: In a car crash without your seat belt you could smash into the steering column, slam into the dashboard or crash through the windshield. All of these outcomes are very uncomfortable.

EXCUSE: I'll never have a crash. I'm a good driver.

FACT: Unfortunately, good drivers can be hit by bad drivers, intoxicated drivers, aggressive drivers or inattentive drivers. Few people intend to have crashes.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that seat belts save 9,500 lives in the United States each year. It is also estimated that an additional 9,000 lives would be saved and 160,000 nonfatal injuries would be prevented each year if seat belts were used.

So forget about excuses...

Buckle Up Every Time, Every Ride!



MERVIS INDUSTRIES

**3295 East Main Street
Post Office Box 827
Danville, IL 61834-0827**

Do energy drinks really give you more oomph? And are they healthy?

Reviewed by Michael W. Smith MD, Internist, WebMD Medical Expert, Chief Medical Editor, WebMD

Energy drinks are all the rage among athletes and young adults. Hundreds of varieties are currently available, including Rage, Pimp Juice, Red Bull, and Monster. These drinks claim to make you more alert or boost your sports performance—or both.

But here's the danger: Most energy drinks get their kick from stimulants, such as caffeine, guarana, ginseng, taurine, and ginkgo biloba. Some energy drinks have as much caffeine as five cups of coffee—or 10 times as much as a can of cola. Many also contain large amounts of sugar.

Granted, stimulants may make you feel great while working out (or just plain working). But consuming too much of these substances can cause sleep problems, nausea, vomiting, high blood pressure, anxiety, heart palpitations, and seizures. They also can alter your perception of fatigue and pain, which means you might push yourself past your natural limits.

The best energy drink may very well be water, since staying hydrated can help you think more clearly, exercise harder and stay healthier in the long run.



Photo credit: bit-tech.net