

Evergreen Recycling: On Top of the Heap

Inspiration sometimes comes in the oddest moments; and watching a crew load construction waste into a beat-up pickup truck may very well satisfy the criterion for an oddly timed muse. But that mental snapshot was all it took for Rob Dorinson to launch one of the most important and recognized green businesses in the Las Vegas valley, Evergreen Recycling.

It was 1996 and Dorinson, a contractor at the time, was building a custom home for a client. He called a trash hauling company to bring out a bin for the construction waste on his site, and when it came time for the waste to be hauled off, three men arrived and began sorting the material into separate bins: plastics, wood, drywall, etc., before trucking it away. Dorinson soon bought the waste hauling company's business assets and later named it Evergreen Recycling.

Since that time, Dorinson has proudly climbed to the top of the trash heap, and despite some serious hurdles — Dorinson is still as focused as ever on saving the planet one landfill-diverted construction bin at a time. “I was fortunate enough to find a purpose in life ... and I'm more excited about the future now than I've ever been,” said Dorinson. Evergreen diverts from the valley's landfill between 80 and 90 percent of the 120,000 tons of waste it processes annually, and the Evergreen president always couches those numbers with: “The goal is 100 percent diversion.”

Dorinson quickly learned that growing a business in an emerging industry meant stepping into a leadership role. He has been referred to as the de facto spokesman for the recycling industry and was a founding member of the local chapter of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design in 2003. In 2007, he was also the chief presenter for the Southern Nevada Recycling Advisory Committee. In 2009, Dorinson was named the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2009 Nevada Small Business Person of the Year.

Today, through Dorinson's leadership, Evergreen has branched out beyond construction cleanup and into commercial recycling. In addition, it is home to the state's first materials recovery facility, a 50,000-square-foot sorting site built with the help of a \$2 million SBA-guaranteed 504 loan, which has been featured in numerous industry trade journals. Dorinson is also working with the state of Nevada on potentially creating a woody biomass processing center, where wood can be sorted and processed for various repurposing, such as compost or biomass fuel.

From its modest beginnings over 10 years ago, Evergreen Recycling has grown into a well established business with over 70 employees and \$12 million annually in revenues. For his dedicated efforts and business successes, Dorinson was named SBA's 2009 Small Business Person of the Year for Nevada, but he doesn't plan to rest on his laurels.

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“It's about taking green to the next level,” he offered.

We think that's something Dorinson already may have accomplished.