

TENNESSEE GREEN STAR PARTNERSHIP MEMBER HIGHLIGHT



TPI Corporation - Gray, TN



TPI
CORPORATION
America's Comfort Conditioning Company

By: Vaughn Cassidy

TPI Corporation manufactures innovative, industry leading products for the electric heating, fan and ventilation, industrial lighting, commercial controls, and industrial oven markets. The company also manufactures a range of items from small space heaters to a variety of dock lighting products. The Corporation is a family-owned company located in Gray, TN, which is a community within Johnson City. The company has been in business for nearly 70 years and currently employs approximately 500 individuals. TPI Corporation and its subsidiary Fostoria Process Equipment are nationally recognized leaders in heating and ventilation equipment. Their products are found throughout the country and globally.

“During 2019, our recycling program diverted 706 tons of materials from the landfill, including 578 tons of steel and 128 tons of other metals in addition to iron and copper,” said Anthony Ford, TPI Shop Manager. Many companies have a strong commitment to recycling, but not every company commits to the use of recycled materials. One gets a sense of this commitment when visiting TPI, where unique wood pallets derived from damaged and recovered wood waste are present throughout the facility. “We buy numerous heat-pressed molded wood pallets from LitCo International in Ohio. They are stronger and more resilient than traditional pallets and are not nailed together as they are pressed in a mold,” said Russ Fig, Environmental Health and Safety Director for TPI Corporation.

Because TPI purchases so many materials to custom build their products, the company uses a large number of traditional pallets, as well. “A few years ago we invested almost \$240,000 in a RotoChipper to process all of our traditional pallets. Last year, over 10 tons of mulch was generated from processing damaged pallets through the RotoChipper. Staples and nails are collected through a powerful magnet at the end of the feed belt. The RotoChipper and process to create mulch from waste pallets was nominated for a 2017 Governor’s Environmental Stewardship Award,” said Larry Harkleroad, Maintenance Manager.

FEATURED THIS MONTH:

- Established in 1994
- Employs more than 500
- Member since 2004

INTERESTING FACTS

- 70 years in business
- One of our oldest Green Star Partners
- 2 employees with 45 years of employment



Safety Team, L to R, Anthony Ford, Judy Stanley, Debbie McDaniel, Standing L to R, Larry Harkleroad, James Stanley, Russ Fig

Not Pictured: Alishia Silvers, HR Director

TPI Corporation donates mulch to the city and county, as well as, local farmers. “Employees, of course, can take all they want. TPI Corporation does our best to be a good neighbor and a good corporate citizen. This mulch is a small part of that effort,” said James Stanley, the Assembly Operations Manager.

“A facility that has been in one location for as long as TPI Corporation ends up replacing virtually everything. Efficiency has been a major investment for TPI in recent years. In 2016, over \$250,000 was invested in installing a white, energy efficient, roof as sections needed to be replaced. In late 2017, TPI replaced two cooling units that resulted in a significant reduction in city water consumption by 28 % annually. Additionally, as more traditional light fixtures are nearing the end of their useful life, LED lighting is being installed,” said Larry Harkleroad.

TPI Corporation is strongly committed to encouraging employees to be a good community neighbor. The company has developed a unique method to assist others in the community. Debbie McDaniel, the facility nurse and Director of Medical Services, stated “We have a BINGO game we play daily. Employees can buy as many tickets as they wish and we call out two numbers daily until someone wins.” Recent BINGO prizes have included televisions, air fryers, gift cards and pressure washers. Alishia Silvers, HR Director noted, “The benefit is the BINGO money generated from January to June, is donated to six animal shelters in the area. We give pallets of cat and dog food to each shelter. The last half of the year, we use generated BINGO money to purchase and donate requested items to the local Senior Citizen Centers.”

As a Tennessee Green Star Partner, TPI Corporation has been invited to participate in the Tennessee Materials Marketplace. The [Tennessee Materials Marketplace](#) is a collaboration between industries, facilitated by an interactive online materials exchange, to recycle, repurpose, and return material discards back to Tennessee’s economy.



“TPI Corporation is constantly researching ways to further our commitment to be an environmentally friendly neighbor for the community and State of Tennessee while striving to assist those in need in our area. These endeavors are tremendously rewarding to both the corporate owners and the employees.”

Kay Hale, VP of Administration

The [Tennessee Green Star Partnership](#) is a voluntary environmental leadership program designed to recognize industries in the state that are committed to sustainable practices. If you are interested in joining TPI Corporation and other sustainable industries in Tennessee by becoming a member, please contact us.