

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (website news)

National Environmental Performance Track (Two BFS plants recognized)



Left to right: David Carroll, vice president for environment at Lafarge North America Inc. and chairman of the board of WHC; Sean Fisher, senior environmental engineer, Warren County, Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC; Phil McCowan, environmental manager, Oklahoma City Plant, Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC; and Kevin Easley of Performance Track. Photo (c) 2005 Lynda Richardson/Wildlife Exposed.

On November 15, 2005, EPA and the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) recognized two Bridgestone-Firestone facilities that participate in both Performance Track and WHC for their exceptional environmental management and habitat preservation efforts. The special commendation ceremony took place at WHC's 17th Annual Symposium, held in Baltimore, Maryland.

Performance Track and WHC recognized Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire's Oklahoma City and Warren County plants for setting challenging environmental goals, demonstrating a strong commitment to public outreach, and successfully implementing ambitious habitat restoration and improvement projects.

During its first three years in Performance Track, Bridgestone's Oklahoma City Plant reported the following reductions:

- hazardous waste per ton of tires produced by 21%;
- rubber and wire waste per tire produced by 11%; and
- oil waste by 22%

The plant also worked closely with vendors to essentially eliminate the use of wooden pallets in favor of pallets made from longer-lasting materials. The facility recently renewed its membership in Performance Track for a second three-year term, and in 2004 it surpassed its environmental improvement goal of achieving a 9% efficiency improvement in the generation of hazardous wastes associated with cement and solvent uses.

The facility is on pace for securing formal WHC certification of an 80-acre Corporate Lands for Learning Site by the end of 2006. The plant has been engaged in outreach efforts involving schools, and community groups (including a Boy Scout Troop) are now using the habitat as a meeting place and project area for learning and development.

Bridgestone's Warren County Plant achieved the following environmental results during its first three years in Performance Track:

- reduced air toxics emissions from specific processes by 96%
- reduced solvent-related VOC emissions per unit of production by 6%; and
- reduced waste to landfill per ton of product by 4%.

In 2004, the Warren County plant set out to reduce non-hazardous waste rubber and wire scrap by 4% by the end of 2006. The facility shattered this Performance Track goal in just one year, reducing these wastes by 6%. By 2006, the Warren County Plant plans to eliminate the use of two hazardous materials: ethylene glycol ether and thiram. The facility made significant progress toward this goal in 2004.

The Warren County Plant has formally committed to protecting 100 acres of land by removing non-native plant species from the plant location and replacing them with native plant species to promote wildlife diversity. Planned activities include installing and monitoring nesting boxes to increase native bird populations.

"Working in partnership, WHC and Performance Track are creating opportunities for public and private facilities to reduce their impact on the environment, protect human health and safety, and preserve wildlife habitat," said Dan Fiorino, director of Performance Track. "We believe these two facilities deserve special recognition for both setting and achieving challenging environmental goals as Performance Track members. In addition, their ambitious habitat restoration and land improvement projects can serve as models for current and future organizations that work closely with Performance Track and WHC to achieve exemplary environmental results and enhance wildlife habitat in their communities."

In addition to these two exemplary facilities, Bridgestone owns and operates a number of other sites and facilities that are participating in Performance Track, successfully managing additional WHC-certified properties, or both. For example, the Bridgestone/Firestone facility in Graniteville, South Carolina, was a recipient of a 2004 Performance Track Environmental Performance Award.