

Mr. Christopher Harris
Post Office Box 417
Hardwick, Georgia 31034

Dear Mr. Harris:

This letter is in response to your July 17, 2000 request for information regarding sources of scrap tires and programs the government might have to reuse and recycle scrap tires. Senator Max Cleland forwarded your request to the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive and they forwarded your letter to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for response.

The EPA promotes resource conservation through source reduction (waste prevention), reuse, and recycling. In the case of tires, resource conservation includes purchasing tires designed to last for longer mileage; several tire manufacturers have developed long-lived tires that are designed to last for 50,000 - 75,000 miles and more. We also encourage the retreading of worn tires, and the recycling of tires into new products. Incineration of scrap tires for energy recovery, is also an important option.

We do not, however, have specific information on where the Federal government sends their scrap tires. In the United States, it has been estimated that approximately 270 million scrap tires are generated per year. In 1998, 42 percent were used for fuel, 16 percent were recycled, and 3 percent were exported. The remaining 34 percent were landfilled.

Incidentally, EPA does not require municipal solid waste, such as scrap tires, to be recycled. However, since 1988, EPA has been promoting government purchasing of retreaded automobile and truck tires. All Federal, state and local agencies purchasing more than \$10,000 worth of tires using appropriated federal funds must give preference to retreads. As a result of our efforts, the U.S. Postal Service and other agencies with large fleets have begun tire retreading programs. This has saved them money as well as conserved resources. EPA also has been promoting government purchasing of products containing rubber recovered from tires, including playground surfaces, running tracks, floor tires, patio blocks, traffic control devices, garden and soaker hoses, and lawn and

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garden edging materials. In fact, the running track at the White House contains recovered rubber.

The Federal government is committed to purchasing recycled-content products in order to promote more markets for recovered materials, such as scrap tires. Through the Comprehensive Procurement Guideline program, EPA requires agencies to buy recycled-content products designated by EPA, and issues guidelines for the Federal procurement of products containing recovered materials. In addition, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13101 in September 1998, which called for an increase in the federal government=s use of recycled-content and other environmentally preferable products. To date, EPA has identified several dozen of these items, many of them containing scrap rubber, and recommended their purchase by government agencies. More information on EPA=s guidelines program is available in the enclosed fact sheets and on our website at www.epa.gov/cpg.

In addition, many States have affirmative procurement policies or laws to promote the purchase of recycled-content products. For more information about state efforts to buy recycled-content products, your constituent may wish to access the website established by the National Association of State Purchasing Officials (NASPO) at www.naspo.org. This website includes a list of State Purchasing Directors and a vendor=s guide to doing business with state organizations. The Scrap Tire Management Council, a trade organization,(202-408-7783)also has publications and information on products made from scrap tires.

Scrap tires can also be used in civil engineering applications. For example, state and local road departments are presently using shredded or chipped scrap tires as fill in embankments, for drainage, and mixed with asphalt cement for road paving.

For further information, you may wish to consult Mr. Denny Jackson, of the State of Georgia=s scrap tire program, at 404-362-4500. Mr. Jackson can provide you with sources of large numbers of tires that may be available for recycling. Finally, I am enclosing a publication, *Writing Business Plans for Recycling Enterprises: Plastics, Glass, or Rubber*, that may be useful also.

I appreciate your interest in recycled products, and I hope this information is helpful to you in developing your business.

Sincerely,

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Elizabeth A. Cotsworth, Director
Office of Solid Waste

cc: Honorable Max Cleland
United States Senate
Enclosures

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