

# Utility Contractor Broadens Capabilities with Recycling Center

When Precon Construction Co., Inc., of Chesapeake, Va., won the bid for the Sandbridge Sewer Rehabilitation Project at Virginia Beach, Va., in the spring of 1997, the company realized its usual practice of removing old asphalt pavement and hauling it to be dumped or crushed by another contractor was not really feasible.

For one thing, the site was very remote, accessed only by a single two-lane road that wound and snaked for several miles from the main highway. In addition, the project would take place at the height of the tourist season, so the beach traffic was sure to slow operations even further.



*"The Pioneer 4030 Recycler is a more efficient and economical way to recycle and reuse waste material - and we don't have to pay anyone to do it for us."  
— Leigh Dennis, Precon*

Established in 1985, Precon Construction Co. was founded by President Preston Fussell, and currently employs more than 100 people. An underground utility company, Precon engages in new construction of sewer, water and storm drain utilities. The company also bids against competitive companies to remove old sewer, storm and water pipes and then replace them. A large number of the projects Precon handles deal with pipes that run directly down the center of a road, so it has always faced the problem of what to do with the asphalt or concrete it removes from those roads.

"We looked at the project and decided the cost of transporting old material to be dumped, plus the cost of the new material, bringing it in and the time it would take to transport everything could be balanced against the cost of crushing the stripped asphalt onsite. We could then lay the recycled asphalt down as base material under the proposed new asphalt patch," explains Leigh Dennis, equipment manager for Precon. He adds that there were other administrative considerations, because Virginia Beach City ordinances mandate that material recycled from a site and reused on that site requires no permits, fees or other restrictions. This was an added bonus.

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"We decided the Sandbridge location was perfect for onsite crushing, but we didn't want to pay a contractor to handle it for us," Dennis says.

Instead, the company approached a Pioneer aggregate equipment dealer in the area called L.B. Smith. Dennis says he knew the company by reputation, and he asked them to help.

"L.B. Smith took us up to Pennsylvania where Kolberg-Pioneer Territory Manager Dave McCracken showed us a Pioneer 4030 Recycler operating for a contractor in Pittsburgh who crushed stone and clay waste from the steel mills in the area," Dennis says. "We had looked at two other machines, but we were really impressed with the 4030 Recycler, and that was what we chose. We placed the

order, took delivery in June 1997 and started right into the project."

The Pioneer 4030 Recycler is a horizontal shaft impact crusher with a 40" x 27.5" impactor, developed especially for recycling applications. With a 12'9" travel height and a tandem axle, the 4030 is portable without permits in the continental United States and Hawaii. It can be set up, ready to crush, in under two hours. Because of its low feed height - just 9' - the 4030 does not need a ramp to load the hopper. In addition, it has the highest discharge height in the industry - 11' - allowing for stockpiling directly under the discharge conveyor. The 4030 Recycler is ideal for tight workspaces, with an operating length of just 44'. Other unique features of the 4030 include hydraulic adjustment for upper and lower aprons and an upper cover that opens past center for easy access to the impactor.

Dennis admits that, like any piece of equipment, there was a learning curve involved with using the crusher at the project site. But he adds the curve was very slight.

At the Sandbridge job site, Precon pre-screened the milled asphalt or



*The 4030 Recycler is ideal for tight workspaces. A low material feed height, combined with the on-plant product conveyor enables fast set-up and tear-down times.*

concrete to eliminate fines before crushing. After the material was crushed, Precon ran it through a Kolberg Model 241 Screening Plant. Using the 4030, Precon makes 21A spec stone to use as its base material. It can also make #3 stone to be used as entrance stone at project sites.

"We can crush and screen to Virginia spec, and one nice thing we discovered is that when we're using recycled asphalt as base in our trenches, it packs so tight it's like laying fresh asphalt pavement as a base," Dennis notes.

"But the best thing that has happened to us since we purchased the 4030 is the fact that we've been able to branch out," he adds enthusiastically. "It's allowed us to broaden our outlook."

In the past year, in addition to its underground utility work, Precon has been able to offer clearing, grading and recycling services to its customers. The company's new base of operations covers better than 100 acres, allowing customers to dump old asphalt and concrete for Precon to crush and reuse in its projects. The company also subcontracts the crusher with an operator, crushing onsite for customers." knew we would have this added capability with the 4030," Dennis says. "And that factored heavily into our decision to purchase the crusher.

"Before we purchased the 4030, we broke up the old concrete or asphalt and hauled it away; we had to pay to dump it in a landfill or crush it in someone else's recycling operation, then we had to buy more certified mix," Dennis notes. "But the 4030 takes care of all that for us. It's a more efficient and economical way to recycle and reuse waste material - and we don't have to pay anyone. Even better, people come to us and pay us to crush material for them," he adds.