

## Environmentally Driven



The green movement in the kitchen industry began in earnest in the early part of the past decade, mostly as an attempt by various manufacturers to create some marketable differences between themselves and their competition. This type of thing happens all the time and its kind of sad that actual green or environmentally friendly issues were hijacked for this cause.

Our dedication to the environment is probably very similar to yours. We try to be “thrifty” with our purchases, use every bit of what we buy, and dispose of the remains in the best way possible.

My grandfather started Haas Cabinet in 1939. He had a family to raise during the Great Depression. He, like many others, was forced to be thrifty with resources and wisely use the products available.

One of the reasons so many cabinet and furniture manufacturers began in the Ohio Valley is the abundance of American hardwood lumber- trees like oaks and maples. Harvesting trees from the local area reduced the waste and cost associated with transportation. This same philosophy holds true today. It just doesn't make sense, in an effort to be green to purchase and ship product from around the world, especially when there is an abundance of usable, renewable products in your own back yard. Over 90% of the hardwoods used to manufacture Haas products is sourced and processed locally.

We purchase products from firms which practice responsible forest management – firms like Koetter Woodworking. Good forest management means selectively processing trees as they mature, not clear-cutting the entire forest, and replanting 2 or 3 trees for every one harvested. This ensures sustainability of this important natural resource. Can you really be sure that firms that process and cut trees in foreign countries care like your own neighbors do?

Once the wooden product is used in our manufacturing process, any unusable scrap pieces are ground into small pieces and recycled into bricks that can be used for fuel to generate heat. We don't throw the wood into a landfill: ... and haven't done this for decades because it simply doesn't make sense.

Over 15 years ago, Haas Cabinets was one of the first firms to adapt to a new finish technology - Ultra Violet-cured finishing. This technology allows us to use a finish material that is substantially lower in VOC emissions than typical varnishes and lacquers. This finish material is also 100% formaldehyde free. This technology further continues my grandfather's theme of being thrifty by enabling us to capture about 75% of the overspray (the finish that does not land on the wood). The overspray is filtered, blended with new product, and then sprayed onto the product. This not only reduces our overall finish costs, it also removes a huge source of contamination from the environment by minimizing waste.

While Haas Cabinet does not manufacture any plywood or particleboard panels, we do specify and require the panels to meet CARB II emissions standards. This tough standard mandates the use of no added formaldehyde glues. We also purchase these panels domestically; keeping the transportation costs low and providing American jobs.

A word about particleboard. You can have the cabinet ends and bottoms made of this material- or we can make it out of plywood- but isn't particleboard the ultimate recycled product?

Small pieces (off fall) of panels are religiously recut into smaller and smaller cabinet pieces like toe supports and corner bracing; one more example of thriftiness and environmental awareness coinciding.

Excess cardboard and metal pieces are recycled. We have our heating systems controlled to only use fuel when we are working. We turn off lights when we are not in the room.

These practical and common sense practices make sense and have been a part of our operating philosophy for many years- well before it was “cool.” It's what helped lead to one of our tag lines “doing what we can for the environment”.