

WATER DIVERSION: Nonwoven Textiles from Scrap

Leigh Fibers President Donald Bockoven will likely smile if you tell him his company is doing a “shoddy job” with regards to the American automotive industry.

That’s because Leigh Fibers, a textile waste recycler, helps divert nearly 160 million pounds of global textile waste from landfills each year. The company converts scrap from textile manufacturers into fiber that can be used to manufacture a variety of products that make vehicles lighter and safer and their passenger cabins, quieter. One of these products is known in the industry as “shoddy.”

“We’ve turned the waste textile manufacturers would have to pay to send to a landfill into something valuable, and depending on its worth, we pay them for it,” Bockoven said, noting this saves the textile industry between \$6.4 to \$9.6 million annually in global disposal fees. “By creating a revenue stream from their waste, we can help them reinvest in their companies and reduce landfill waste at the same time.”

In addition to purchasing textile waste products, Leigh Fibers also helps textile companies and others become “zero waste” operations by devising plans to keep waste streams separate, thus maximizing the value of the waste streams for reuse or recycling.

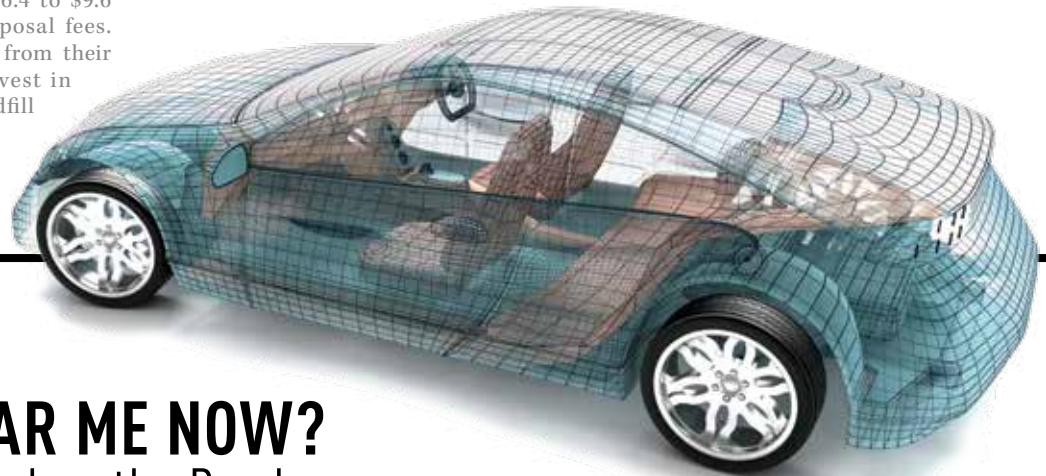
The company’s QuietLeigh™ and SafeLeigh® lines of product use a proprietary blend of reclaimed fiber engineered to meet fire resistance and sound-deadening specifications for vehicle insulation materials. Automotive manufacturers in the U.S. purchase the fiber and mold it into a variety of insulating parts such as acoustic panels for vehicle floors, doors and wheel wells, and as backing for headliners and floor carpets.

“We contribute to a smaller greenhouse gas footprint by saving material that otherwise would have to be made new,” Bockoven

said. “And the end product makes vehicles lighter, so they’re more fuel-efficient, all while meeting strict safety standards.”

We’ve turned the waste textile manufacturers would have to pay to send to a landfill into something valuable.

Donald Bockoven
President, Leigh Fibers Inc.



CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW? Staying Connected on the Road

Using a hands-free cell phone via Bluetooth means parents can keep pace with their family’s busy schedule, and businesspeople can make the most of travel time.

Those conversations wouldn’t be possible without a quiet passenger cabin. American textile industry innovations make automobile passenger cabins quieter, so Americans can safely stay connected on the road.

Spartanburg, South Carolina-based Milliken & Company combines material science with engineering to create nonwoven textile acoustic panels found in vehicle doors, trunks, floors and wheel wells. The panels result in quieter passenger cabins and lighter vehicles.

“People traditionally think of textiles as inexpensive materials that are coverings,” said Milliken spokeswoman Barbara Haaksma. “We make textiles that play a role in automotive

innovation, including improved performance, aesthetics and interior air quality.”

Milliken’s acoustic panels have proven to be 27 to 45 percent lighter than previous panels, contributing to improved fuel economy. Additionally, the company engineers panels used in underbody areas to absorb less moisture and dry more quickly, so rain and ice buildup don’t add weight on rainy or snowy days.

“We’re investing in acoustics, including in-house testing capabilities, to push performance further,” said Brandon Roberts, business strategy director with Milliken & Company. “As we make acoustic panels more sound-absorbent, lighter and weather-resistant, automakers have more opportunities to expand their use beyond premium vehicles, and that means improved safety for everyone on the road.”

We make textiles that play a role in automotive innovation, including improved performance, aesthetics and interior air quality.

Barbara Haaksma
Spokeswoman, Milliken & Company