

Metal Shredding: An Environmentally Responsible Choice for Whatcom County

Metal shredders and associated separation equipment play a crucial role in modern recycling. These machines process and reclaim materials from post-consumer items such as end-of-life vehicles and used household appliances.

LOCAL

ABC Recycling's proposed facility on Marine Drive would process post-consumer items from our local community, which includes Skagit and Whatcom Counties, and British Columbia, with contributions from local businesses like Z Recyclers, Northwest Recycling, Lautenbach Recycling, Skagit River Steel & Recycling, and Scrap-It. Previously, these businesses would truck their post-consumer items to south King County or British Columbia for processing, resulting in a higher carbon footprint. By establishing a local facility, ABC aims to significantly reduce this environmental impact, ensuring that post-consumer items are processed nearby.

ABC Recycling, a family-owned company located just forty miles north of Bellingham in Burnaby, BC, boasts a strong track record in safety and environmental protection. ABC holds Green Marine certification and were honored with Canada's 2023 Best Managed Companies award.





SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE

Metal shredders have a history dating back to the 1970s; since then they have evolved to become a secure and responsible addition to our community.

In 2021, the EPA released an alert regarding metal shredders. This alert emphasized that emission rates are generally lower when the shredder is enclosed, and further reductions are achieved when contaminants are removed before shredding, a process known as "depolluting."

ABC's proposed shredder will indeed be enclosed within a sound-attenuating structure, and all purchased post-consumer items will be depolluted and inspected prior to shredding. Additionally, ABC's shredder would be subject to air quality permit requirements established by regulatory authorities and monitored for compliance.

Critics have erroneously claimed that ABC's facility will handle "medical waste and radioactive material." This is false. The facility will implement a rigorous Inbound Source Control Program to check all purchased items for radioactivity and exclusively shred depolluted post-consumer items such as used appliances and end-of-life vehicles.

CONFRONT THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Metal recycling is essential to confronting the climate crisis. By recovering ferrous metals using modern metal shredding techniques, we can significantly reduce the carbon footprint compared to mining new raw materials. Each shipment from the Bellingham Shipping Terminal loaded by ABC Recycling results in a remarkable reduction of 24,250 metric tons of carbon emissions[1].

End-of-life vehicles are the largest source of iron and steel scrap in the United States, providing over 13 million tons of these materials each year. Recycling steel from automobiles is estimated to save enough energy to power 18 million homes every year[2]. Furthermore, recycling a single car with a metal shredder conserves more than 2,500 lbs. of iron ore, 1,400 lbs. of coal, and 120 lbs. of limestone[3] that would otherwise have to be exhaustively extracted from the earth.

[1] Bureau of International Recyclers <https://www.bir.org/publications/facts-figures/item/report-on-the-environmental-benefits-of-recycling-2016-edition>

[2] United States Geological Survey, Iron and Steel Scrap
<https://pubs.usgs.gov/periodicals/mcs2021/mcs2021-iron-steel-scrap.pdf>

[3] Institute of Scrap Metal Recycling Industries, <https://www.isri.org/recycled-commodities/ferrous>