



# GreenClips

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN IN THE NEWS

## ONE MORE TIME AROUND FOR PVC ROOFING MEMBRANE?

**R**ecycling of used PVC roofing membranes may be less of an issue than with other roofing materials because vinyl is designed specifically not to degrade, often lasting 15 to 20 years or more. Nevertheless, PVC can be recycled. While the longevity of the membranes does not make many available for post-consumer recycling, manufacturers of PVC practice post-industrial in-house recycling. A successful post consumer vinyl recycling program must find a cost-effective way to collect, separate, and transport clean PVC for recycling, as demonstrated by the European Single-Ply Waterproofing Association. In 1994, Arbeitsgemeinschaft für PVC-Dachbahnenrecycling formed a company to recycle discarded vinyl roofing products. Members pledge to recycle at least 50 percent of vinyl waste and transport it to the recycling plant. Germany has fully implemented this system, which is expected to be adopted by the rest of the European Union shortly. Thinking about the long-term, should a viable recycling program for commercial roofing ever be designed in the U.S., a single-ply membrane's ability to be stripped off, rolled up, and shipped to the reclamation plant makes it a far more amenable product for such a process. This is especially true for mechanically fastened PVC, as it allows the roof membrane to be cut into strips and rolled up for easy handling.

*The Construction Specifier, May 05, p 65, by Gerald Capocci and Mike Hubbard.*