Santa Crams NewWood Into Skater Stockings

Local News

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Satsop, WA - With help from an angel in New Jersey, Santa will be bringing skateboarders around the world improved skateboard ramps using a 100 percent recycled product – NewWood.

This recent development will not only bring Christmas cheer to the skateboarders receiving quarter pipe and half pipe ramps from OC Ramps in Orange County, Calif., but also to NewWood Manufacturing, located at Satsop Business Park in Elma, Wash. NewWood, which has been operating for a year producing a utility board created from post consumer wood waste and discarded plastic bags, transformed an idled factory in an economically challenged area into a business that employs 40 people with hopes of hiring more. “We’re excited,” said Lincoln Ferris, NewWood Manufacturing’s vice president for strategic development. “I think this is one in what will be a long stream of applications we never anticipated. It demonstrates that our product’s properties work for lots of people.” Tyler Large, founder and owner of OC Ramps, said he was amazed at the flexibility, durability, weather-resistance and low cost of NewWood, all which helped make it a perfect material for skateboard ramps, which get a lot of abuse and are out in the weather. “Right now we are starting off using NewWood for the surface of the ramps, but our ultimate goal would be to use it on all exposed surfaces,” he said. Currently a purchaser needs to ask specifically to have the NewWood surface put on the ramp, Large explained. The ramps, which are sold in easy-to-assemble kits, are on display now through Christmas Eve at a Costco in Orange County, and are available online – with free shipping – at www.ocramps.com.

But none of this would have happened if that angel in New Jersey with an extensive background in composites and recycled products hadn’t been surfing the internet one day and discovered NewWood. Stephan Lerman, owner and CEO of GreenTek, helped develop and bring Trex and EverGrain to the marketplace in the early ‘90s. He was so intrigued with NewWood Manufacturing’s unique technology that he flew across the country to tour the factory and then partnered with NewWood to represent, distribute and manufacture products made of NewWood. He made a cold call to OC Ramps and piqued owner Large’s interest enough to create a prototype ramp and conduct some tests of his own. “The reason we were interested in it,” Large said, “is that it is a green product, made of recycled wood and plastic, but also because of its longevity. It will outlast any type of material on the market. A pet peeve of skateboard ramp owners is the lack of longevity. The ramps are mostly too heavy to bring inside, so they’re out in the elements. With NewWood, the life of a ramp will be increased.

“We’ve done our own tests here,” he explained. “I was initially concerned with how well it truly holds up in the weather. So, for the past four months I’ve had a small piece of NewWood soaking in a bucket of water in my office. It hasn’t expanded. It hasn’t contracted. It hasn’t warped and it hasn’t bubbled. It is the same exact piece of material that we put in there four months ago,” Large said. “If that were plywood it would have been warped or expanded or bubbled after a week,” he said. “I think it’s pretty cool,” said Lerman of the marriage of NewWood to skateboard ramps. “The material works perfectly. Even the look is neat. I think it’s going to be a

success here in the United States and I think all over the world.” “We’ve been using another composite material on our ramps,” Large said. “It works well but is extremely expensive. Also, it’s very brittle and a nightmare to install and burns through our drill bits fast. With NewWood it installed incredibly easily, bent to the form of the ramps and didn’t go through my drill bits.” It’s those kinds of properties that NewWood’s Ferris says are getting attention in a variety of industries. NewWood will be demonstrating a variety of uses of its product at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show at Seattle Convention Center in February. Benches, planters and retaining walls for planting beds will be among the items included in the display garden. “Also, we just sent NewWood out for racking tests that measure its strength, and it had a much stronger internal bond than some of the competing engineered wood products,” said Ferris. “So, it’s on it way to getting a span rating for use in home construction and low-rise apartment buildings. We can see it being used in places that have hurricanes and earthquakes.” Lerman also sees possibilities in the furniture industry, as fencing, as underlayment, and in the marine industry. Even Large, the skateboard ramp expert, can see NewWood being used in another industry – snowboard ramps. “I think we’ll keep finding applications for this product and it will start to snowball,” Lerman said. “I think it’s going to be a huge success. It’s a great opportunity. It’s phenomenal. A panel product that is made of 100 percent recycled material with these attributes …This is a ground floor opportunity, the next Trex.”
For more information about NewWood Manufacturing, go to NewWood.com.