

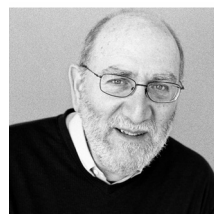


Waste Warriors

Four Marin companies are leading the charge to conserve resources in safe and creative ways.

BY JIM WOOD • ILLUSTRATION BY JONATHAN CUMBERLAND

Headlines tell the story: “Texas-Size Garbage Patch Floating in Pacific Ocean.” “300 Pounds of Plastic Bags Found in Dead Whale.” “Americans Waste 40 Percent of Food Produced.” Tired of that kind of story, four Marin residents set out to do something about it.



Appropriately, Greenbrae’s Paul Tasner’s packaging firm is called **PulpWorks**. “Our mantra,” he says, “is ‘Molding a Better World.’” What differentiates PulpWorks’ products is that they’re made of bamboo, sugar-

cane pulp or even old cotton T-shirts, rather than plastic. “Once it’s in a landfill, plastic takes hundreds of years to decompose,” the 72-year-old late-in-life entrepreneur and former TED speaker points out, “while the packaging PulpWorks produces pretty much decomposes inside of 90 days.”

To date, PulpWorks’ customers include EO Products, Google, Campbell Soup and Anthropologie. So far clients have placed mainly smallish specialty orders, and Tasner would love to land a customer like the cosmetics giant CoverGirl. “However, with their volume, our product being a tenth of a penny per item ordered is a big deal,” he notes, “and, although plastic is the enemy, it’s also cheaper.”

Despite cost challenges, Tasner, who has a Ph.D. in mathematics, sees a bright future for PulpWorks. “Many corporations are now taking the position that their commitment to society doesn’t end when their products are »