



## *News Release*

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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **BENDIX EARNS ENVIRONMENTAL RECOGNITION**

#### **FROM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S BETTER PLANTS PROGRAM**

*Waste Reduction Efforts Across the U.S. Garner a 2021 Better Practice Award*

**ELYRIA, Ohio – May 19, 2021** – In 2019, Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC sent a bit more than 273 tons of waste to landfill from its locations across the United States. Last year? Just 3.9 tons – a 98.5% reduction. The decrease is so impressive that it has earned Bendix a 2021 Better Practice award from the U.S. Department of Energy's Better Plants Program. The award recognizes Better Plants partners for innovative and industry-leading accomplishments in implementing and promoting practices, principles, and procedures of energy management.

"To put it in a perspective familiar to our industry, 273 tons – 546,000 pounds – is almost seven max-loaded Class 8 tractor-trailers' worth of weight," said Maria Gutierrez, Bendix director of corporate responsibility and sustainability. "Just under 4 tons, though, is only 7,800 pounds – less than the weight of an empty 20-foot moving truck."

The Department of Energy will recognize Bendix and other honorees at this year's virtual Better Buildings, Better Plants Summit May 17-20. The annual event provides opportunities for organizations to explore emerging technologies and share strategies for achieving greater energy, water, and waste efficiency.

"Better Plants partners are implementing innovative energy, water, and waste reduction solutions in the industrial space that are cutting costs and energy use while supporting job creation, combating the climate crisis, and driving a clean energy future in the U.S. The Better

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Plants Better Practice and Better Project awards honor their leadership,” said Dr. Michael McKittrick, acting director, Advanced Manufacturing Office, U.S. Department of Energy.

Bendix’s zero-waste culture supports the company’s ongoing support of the United Nations’ (UN) ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These 17 overarching environmental objectives adopted by UN member states promote prosperity while protecting the environment. Two of the objectives – Responsible Consumption and Production (encompassed within SDG 12) and Climate Action (the focus of SDG 13) – are central to Bendix’s sustainability efforts.

The company’s waste reduction efforts were successful across its wider North American footprint as well. With the inclusion of its operations in Mexico, Bendix in 2020 sent fewer than 16 tons of material company-wide to landfill, realizing a 97% decrease from the 508 tons of material that were landfilled in 2019.

### **Steps to Change**

Bendix has a long history of environmental stewardship efforts, and its current zero-waste journey has incorporated a specific, staged approach of continuous improvement and incremental steps. The company marked a major milestone in 2015, when all the waste generated by Bendix’s North American manufacturing processes was able to be diverted from landfills.

“Once we achieved our goal of sending zero industrial waste to landfill, we focused on the actual trash coming out of our facilities,” said Bill Schubert, Bendix corporate manager, environmental and sustainability. “What we learned was that almost half of that trash was ending up in a landfill, so we developed and implemented a spent-material audit process to discover what was being discarded and find ways to eliminate, reduce, or repurpose those materials. And we still use these ‘dumpster dives’ as a regular part of our continued zero-waste pursuit.”

As a result of the spent-material audits, Bendix implemented sustainable policies such as eliminating the purchase of foam containers and plastic bottled water in its dining facilities, providing centralized waste collection stations throughout facilities to encourage recycling and composting, and installing food waste digesters at several of its plants. To handle waste materials that are unsuitable for those channels, Bendix also partners with waste-to-energy (WTE) companies or – as a last resort – utilizes incineration.

By the fourth quarter of 2020, Bendix developed a Zero Waste to Landfill Certification Process that outlines the steps and credits necessary to achieve the status. The process is

reviewed monthly at all Bendix sites, and will require annual recertification to ensure the practices and procedures are maintained.

### **Costs, Culture, and COVID-19**

“Zero-waste efforts come with their own set of challenges – some more predictable than others,” Schubert said. “Financially, it’s more expensive to divert waste from a landfill, and culturally, there is often resistance to change in people’s daily consumer habits and practices. On top of those, the global pandemic meant we needed to adapt and adjust all of our processes to keep our employees safe.”

To keep costs down, Bendix partnered with a waste management company that delivered a solution for both transportation and waste tracking needs in getting material from Bendix’s sites in Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio to WTE sites. Additionally, the spent-material audits contributed significantly to reducing the amount of waste sent for disposal. Within the Bendix walls, culture shifts included the removal from office areas of small individual trash containers, which were donated to local schools, and the development of a Sustainable Purchasing Guide – initially focused on food service, which mandates the purchase of reusable, compostable, or recyclable items whenever the company gets a new food service provider or has a company-sponsored event.

“COVID-19 did place some strain on the waste management system, since, as an essential business, we needed to do things like perform additional sanitation and provide personal protective equipment,” Gutierrez said. “This generated additional waste and made sorting efforts harder on the facilities, but with all the effort and training to help employees in the correct disposal of those items, ultimately the additional trash generated by these actions is going waste-to-energy.”

### **Into a Larger Future**

Bendix’s achievements have also landed the company in the position of spearheading the global waste reduction efforts of its parent company, Munich, Germany-based Knorr-Bremse, which is developing a campaign across its locations in China, Europe, and South America. And in the United States, the process is being expanded to Knorr-Bremse’s rail division manufacturing facilities in Watertown, New York (New York Air Brake LLC), and Westminster, Maryland (Knorr Brake Company).

Ultimately, the result of Bendix’s changes in waste processing will be that landfills are eliminated as a disposal method across its North American facilities. Policies created based on what the company learned along the way have become standard operating procedures, and

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employees are taking initiative and embracing accountability in looking for the next step toward Bendix's sustainability goals.

"It's very rewarding to see more and more employee-driven ideas that would have a positive impact on environmental issues like waste generation, chemical usage, and energy savings," Gutierrez said. "And none of this would have been possible without the outstanding support of the company's leadership team. With everyone working together, it's possible that when we look back at 2021, it could be the year that Bendix doesn't contribute to any landfills."

**About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC**

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of Knorr-Bremse, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 4,100 people, Bendix – and its wholly owned subsidiary, R.H. Sheppard Co., Inc. – is driven to deliver the best solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit [bendix.com](http://bendix.com). Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at [knowledge-dock.com](http://knowledge-dock.com). Follow Bendix on Twitter at [twitter.com/Bendix\\_CVS](https://twitter.com/Bendix_CVS). Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at [brake-school.com](http://brake-school.com). And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit [bendix.com/careers](http://bendix.com/careers).

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