



Department of
**Environment &
Conservation**



Unilever: Making Sustainable Living Commonplace

Unilever is a company with a massive global footprint. Over 2 billion people use their products every day in over 190 countries.

Of the 169,000 employees that work for Unilever, around 700 are employed in Unilever of Covington. The facility is the largest ice cream manufacturing site in North America.

Paul Polman, Chief Executive Officer of Unilever, has set an ambition to be one of the most sustainable corporations on the planet. That means that Unilever of Covington wastes absolutely nothing. This is accomplished by always searching for the highest and best use for discards and by-products.

Santos Martinez-Rozas is the Safety, Health and Environmental & Security Manager for Unilever of Covington. Since the facility is nearly 2 million square feet, Santos is, understandably, a very busy man. "Ensuring the safety of our employees, security of our facility and lessening our impact on the environment is my job."

Another part of Santos' job is keeping Unilever of Covington zero waste to landfill.



- Established in 2011
- Located in Covington, TN
- Employs 700
- Member in 2016



This year, Unilever developed a system to deal with food production waste in a way that provides for a local solution. Nutrient-laden process water from the facility had always been used for local land application, but with the addition of a belt-press drying system even the solids

can be used for that. “Unilever is committed to finding a sustainable end-use for everything we have,” said Santos. Since the introduction of the belt-press drying system, over 12,000 tons of waste haulage was reduced with 675 fewer truckloads leaving the facility. That also means a reduction of 140 metric tons annually of CO2 emissions and a tremendous savings of fuel costs.

Solving the solid food and liquid waste problem would be enough for most companies. After all, those two waste streams made up over 85% of the facility’s waste but the facility is now looking to use reusable totes to replace drums.



Like any large manufacturer that makes a retail-ready product, packaging and receiving wastes such as pallets and cardboard, shrink-wrap, plastic and metal straps add up in a hurry. One of the most valuable commodities in a facility is floor space. Containers and compactors to handle the wastes can be big and bulky. That’s why Unilever of Covington is investing in a rotary compactor. “It’s great,” said Santos. “You can take a 40-yard compactor’s 7 loads and fit it into the back of my pick-up.”

“Unilever strives to do more with less,” said Galen Sienicki, Factory Director for Unilever of Covington. “Our goal is to decouple our growth from our environmental footprint while increasing our positive social impact.”



Unilever Covington is committed to sustainability for both their company and the state of Tennessee. That is why Unilever made the decision to join dozens of other corporate sustainability leaders in Tennessee by becoming our newest member of the [Tennessee Green Star Partnership](#).

The Tennessee Green Star Partnership is a voluntary environmental leadership program designed to recognize industries in the state which are committed to sustainable practices. If you are interested in joining Unilever and other sustainable industries in Tennessee by becoming a member, please contact us.