



Department of  
**Environment &  
Conservation**



## Lodge: Quality, Integrity, Sustainability

Founded in 1896 by Joseph Lodge, Lodge Manufacturing Company is the oldest family-owned cookware company in the country. Located in South Pittsburg, Tennessee, Lodge produces over 130 items of foundry seasoned cast-iron cookware: the most extensive selection on the market. Not only do they produce a variety of high quality products, they prioritize production and materials management choices to promote more sustainable operations while reducing their bottom line.

Matt Maynard, Facilities Manager of Lodge, is quite proud of the over one hundred years of quality and integrity that the company has shown in this small southern town. Lodge has a long history of being a sustainable and environmentally responsible company and made a significant commitment when joining the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's (TDEC) Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership (TP3) soon after the program began in 2003. Most recently, Lodge became a member of [TDEC's Tennessee Green Star Partnership](#) (TGSP) which is a voluntary environmental leadership program designed to recognize Tennessee industries that are committed to sustainable practices.

"The recent summer series of TGSP Sustainable Industry Workshops helped us network and learn from other industry members," said Matt Maynard during a recent tour of the facility. "We're always trying to find a reuse for virtually everything." This task may become more daunting with work currently beginning on their largest expansion in the company's history including plans for a new 127,000 square foot foundry with two production lines and a new 212,000 square foot warehouse. "We generate a lot of foundry sand, used to create the molds for our cookware, so we are using that as our foundation base for the new foundry."



- Member since 2003
- Adding 100 jobs in 2017
- #1 in cast iron cookware



Using the foundry sand is nothing new for Lodge, which donated over 9,000 tons of it to the Marion County landfill for a 12-inch protective cover in 2003, saving the county \$191,000. Lodge worked with TDEC's Division of Solid Waste Management to determine the sand as non-hazardous in 1996, which won them a [Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award](#).

Lodge's commitment to sustainability also means they don't send much to the landfill in the first place. "Our return rate on products is about one return for every 33,000 pieces manufactured," said Mark Kelly, Public Relations & Advertising Manager for Lodge. "We recycle cardboard, used steel shot, motor oil, mixed metals and light bulbs, but we also have virtually no production waste." In fact, Lodge makes up to 8,000 pieces of seasoned iron cookware an hour, doubling their production since 2005.

"We can thank the Food Network as much as anyone for the resurgence of interest in authentic cast-iron skillets and other cookware," said Kelly. There is also the popularity of the annual National Cornbread Cook-Off, part of the National Cornbread Festival, held annually in April. The only rule for entry is the use of Martha White self-rising flour and a Lodge cast-iron product. Martha White is also a Tennessee company, founded in Nashville in 1899, not long after Lodge cast their first skillets. The National Cornbread Festival grows the town of South Pittsburgh, a town of just over 3,000 people, to almost ten times that number.

Lodge Manufacturing Company and South Pittsburgh have maintained their integrity with increased fame and financial success. "We've maintained the feel and culture of a small Tennessee town," Kelly said. Lodge is a great example of sustainability, quality, and integrity as it continues to match quality production with environmental stewardship.



**Artist's rendition of Lodge's planned expansion**