

4th International Conference on
GREEN ENERGY & EXPO
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6th International Conference on
RECYCLING: REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE November 06-08, 2017 | Las Vegas, USA

Sustainability can be profitable and profitability can be sustainable: Converting trash into valuable recyclable commodities

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A common reason given for not recycling is that it is not cost effective and too costly to do. To be successful is easy but one should shift paradigms to make it work. Whether you are an educational campus, training facility or community, it can be done effectively and efficiently. It will take a shift in culture and thinking in the beginning. That first shift is to stop thinking of all solid waste as “trash”, but rather a commodity that has monetary value in today’s market place of shrinking resources. Recyclable commodities such as old corrugated cardboard (OCC), standard office paper (SOP), aluminum drink cans are no different that gold, orange juice or pork bellies, they are sold to those companies that need the recyclables as raw material to keep their mills operating, personnel employed and their products flowing into the stream of commerce around the globe. These recyclable commodities are crucial to saving natural resources when they are processed back into their natural states to begin the manufacturing process all over again. Aluminum can be recycled indefinitely and results in a 95% energy savings and reduces pollution by 95% over tradition saves 4 lbs. of bauxite from being smelting for pound of aluminum recycled. Recycling not only generates positive revenue streams but also saves natural resources but also allows for cost avoidance associated with traditional waste collection and disposal.

Biography

Stephen W Brooks is the Chief of the Assets and Logistics Management Division (ALM) of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) Glynco campus. As Chief of ALM, he is responsible for all the personal property located at four FLETC sites. This includes 32,691 assets valued at \$96,190,410.39 dollars located in Charleston South Carolina, Cheltenham, Maryland and Artesia, New Mexico. He oversees the business lines of inventory management, fleet management, mail management, property disposal and the recycling program. In 2015, he was named the 2015 sustainability hero for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for his innovations in recycling solid waste generated by law enforcement firearms training. He has published in recycling and has been a Noted Speaker at the 2015 Southeastern Recycling Conference in San Destin, Florida and the 2015 Georgia Recycling Coalition Conference on St. Simons Island, Georgia.

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