



## Plastics recycler MBA wins Economist award

By Barry Copping

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LONDON (Sept. 23, 12:30 p.m. ET) -- Michael Biddle, founder and president of MBA Polymers, will receive the Energy and Environment award at the *The Economist* magazine's Innovation Awards ceremony, to be held Oct. 21 at the Science Museum in London.

Biddle founded Michael Biddle & Associates (MB&A) in his garage in 1992 to demonstrate that it was possible to recycle plastics from complex waste streams. MB&A was expanded to a pilot line in Berkeley, California and renamed MBA Polymers in 1994.

MBA Polymers now has headquarters and a research center in Richmond, Calif., and recovers materials from sources including computers, electronics, domestic appliances and automobiles.

The company has developed proprietary processes for separating polymeric materials from complex waste products for reuse in a variety of applications.

MBA's process is claimed to consume less than 10 percent of the energy required to make equivalent virgin resins from petrochemicals.

Commenting on the decision by an independent judging panel, Tom Standage, digital editor at *The Economist* said: "With this award, the judges have recognized Michael Biddle for the outstanding contribution his innovative way of dealing with plastics has made to improving the environment. MBA Polymers and the U.S. Department of Energy estimate that 5.4 million metric tons of mixed durable plastics are discarded in America each year. By using MBA's recycled plastic pellets as raw material, plastics manufacturers can save lots of money and significant amounts of energy. MBA's sorting technology also means that material that might otherwise end up in landfill can be recycled."

As well as California, MBA Polymers has facilities in Guangzhou, China and Kematan, Austria. A facility is being completed in Worksop, England, as a joint venture between MBA and European Metal Recycling. A grand opening for the plant is scheduled for Oct. 1.

In an email to *Plastics News*, Biddle said he was "thrilled and humbled" to receive the award from *The Economist*.

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