

# Cherokee Tribune



## GREEN initiative

American Trade Products just began selling an Earth Plastics line of biodegradable paint trays and accessories made from recycled plastic water bottles. **Left:** Earth Plastics biodegradable products made by the Ball Ground company.



Cherokee Tribune/Amber M. Eberly

**Above:** American Trade Products employees Karina McDowell of Canton, left, and Maria Metcaffe of Ball Ground package recyclable paint trays at the company's Ball Ground headquarters. The company plans to expand the use of the material to all its products by June 1. **Below:** American Trade Products owner Dan Limmerick and account manager Chantelle Root talk about the importance of biodegradable products at the company's Ball Ground headquarters.

# Ball Ground company launches line of 100% recyclable products

By Kristal Dixon

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A Ball Ground company is mixing business with social responsibility.

American Trade Products just launched a line of paint trays and accessories made with its patented Earth Plastic material, which is designed to be 100-percent recyclable and biodegradable.

The company purchases recycled plastic water bottles from recycling centers and businesses such as Coca-Cola, melts the plastics and mixes it with additives to create the environmentally friendly trays.

Earth Plastics products now are on sale at all Home Depot and Sherwin Williams locations, including Cherokee County stores.

They also are available at select Wal-Marts and will be sold at all Wal-Marts and Lowe's stores within the next few months.

Dan Limmerick, founder and CEO, said it "couldn't have been a better time" to release his products to the public.

"It has been the direction we've been going with the company for years," he said, adding the world also is progressing toward a more eco-friendly way of living.



Limmerick said his innovation would save the countless number of water bottles from ending up in landfills.

More than 60 million plastic water bottles are thrown away and not recycled every day, according to a 2006 study by the Container Recycling Institute. And many of those bottles end up in waterways, parks and the streets.

Along with seeing millions of bottles not being recycled, Limmerick said his passion for using recycled water bottles grew from his concern for what he believes is the "second

highest point" in Cherokee County: the Pine Bluff landfill on East Cherokee Drive.

The site takes in about 5,800 tons of garbage per day, according to Gene Barnes, director of disposal services for Waste Management, which operates the landfill.

"That raised my awareness of what's going on in the county," Limmerick said. "We've got to start taking stewardship for where we live."

Along with re-using plastic water bottles, Limmerick said his products will biodegrade within two to

five years, depending on temperature, moisture and other conditions.

Traditional plastics, he said, can linger in landfills for generations.

"This stuff does not go away," he said of traditional plastics. "Earth Plastics does."

While Earth Plastics fits into the green revolution, company officials said the consumer will not notice a difference in the quality — or the price.

Chantelle Root, account manager at American Trade Products, said consumers

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are getting their money's worth by purchasing Earth Plastics products.

"They know they are purchasing a quality product," she said. "It has the same quality, but it's an eco-friendly product."

American Trade Products was founded by Limmerick in 1990. Along with paint trays and accessories, the

company also produces storage organizers and plumbing accessories.

The products are manufactured at a plant in Tucker and packaged and shipped at the Ball Ground plant, which also is the company's headquarters.

He started the company with the idea on creating products that would simplify the lives of customers while being environmentally friendly.

Limmerick is so confident about the future of his concept that after June 1, all of his products will be made of the Earth Plastics blend.

"Our goal is to get people to start asking about Earth Plastics," said Limmerick, 61, who lives in Macedonia with his wife, Wendy.

While Limmerick said he knows he can't change the world overnight, he believes his work could cause a domino effect among consumers and businesses.

While local residents can't solve the problems of India or China, "we can do something here," he said.

"These products are good for you and I," he said. "We need to start doing what is good for the environment."