



RUF Briquetting System Is Right On Target

RUF helps global training ammunition manufacturer squeeze value from its scrap.

The Client

Ultimate Training Munitions (UTM) makes high-performance training ammunition and safety systems that allow armed forces and law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and around the world to conduct safe and effective Close Quarter Battle (CQB) training exercises. Headquartered in the United Kingdom, UTM also has production facilities in the United States and a global sales network operating in 45 countries.

The Situation

In UTM's U.S. factory, 10 machines work in 60,000 square feet of space to create training ammunition, weapon conversion kits, and safety system equipment. During production, tons of turnings are created as the precision munitions and system components are turned and finished using high-speed aluminum turning processes. Because copious amounts of oil is required to keep the aluminum lubricated as it is turned, the turnings that are produced are so saturated with oil that it is practically worthless. This created a problem for UTM because it was forced to dispose of these oily, messy turnings as best it could—primarily staging the waste in hoppers where it could be partially drained before being gathered up and then sold for next to nothing to scrap processors.

The RUF Solution

Coming across RUF Briquetting at an international manufacturing technology trade show, UTM's plant manager saw the potential for briquetting as a way to tackle his plant's chip disposal problem. After making a visit to RUF's German production facility to gain a ground-up understanding of its innovative briquetting technology and systems, UTM began working with RUF's team in the U.S. UTM's Ralf Wagner says that RUF was a pleasure to work with every step of the way and was willing to do "whatever it took" to help UTM find the right briquetting solution for its operations. According to Wagner, this included briquetting test batches of UTM's scrap and then sending the briquettes to an independent lab to test their moisture content to ensure that RUF's technology would meet the company's needs. "Our moisture content threshold for getting optimum return for our chips is two percent. With RUF briquettes, our chips contain only 1.1% to 1.8% moisture. This drastically improves our chip resale revenues—by about 50 cents per pound."

Results

UTM is very happy with its RUF briquetting system and has repeatedly recommended RUF and its briquetting technology to other companies. Since deploying its RUF briquetter, UTM's scrap revenue has grown by 250% and it's able to filter and reuse the processing oil it reclaims during the briquetting process as the scrap is compressed. Wagner says that his company's RUF briquetter paid for itself in less than 6 months. Overall, the efficiency of UTM's operations has risen with streamlined scrap processing, and because scrap drainage hoppers are no longer needed, UTM is able to use 20% less valuable floor space than before. Its factory is cleaner, and as a result, its employees are safer.