













Firefighters brought a raging scrap-metal inferno under control just outside Winnipeg's northeast edge on Wednesday, but it had meant working through the previous night with a helicopter.

"We had to work very hard overnight. We didn't want to lose it," Dick Vlaming, chief of Springfield Fire and Rescue, told the Winnipeg Sun of the blaze that had broken out about 5 p.m. Tuesday at General Scrap in the Rural Municipality of Springfield.

"That paid off."

The fire at the company's expansive scrapyards spewed black smoke and proved too difficult — amid massive heaps of vehicles and other materials — for the approximately 30 on-call Springfield crew members who had responded to the emergency on Bismarck Street, off Springfield Road.

While the Winnipeg Fire-Paramedic Service remained on standby and ready to step in if necessary, firefighters from nearby rural districts such as St. Clements, Selkirk, East St. Paul, Beausejour and Bird River were called in to assist.

The "pretty good teamwork," Vlaming said, in addition to the contracted chopper arriving from Lac Du Bonnet to dump water on the blaze, eventually turned the battle in the crews' favour.

"The piles were 25 feet high, and then the flames were another 25 feet over that. They were raging. That fire was rolling," he said, adding access to the flames was the most difficult challenge.

"The fire worked its way to the middle, where we could not cool the metal off with our hoses. That's where the really intense fire was. We couldn't get it with our hand lines. That's why we called in the helicopter."

The cause of the fire hadn't been determined on Wednesday afternoon, while the crews doused hot-spots. The extent of the damage was also uncertain.

No firefighters or staff from the scrapyards were injured.

The provincial Office of the Fire Commissioner had staff at the scene during the blaze, while the Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization monitored air quality in the area.

"That's because of what kind of smoke it was. You don't know what's burning in this pile," Vlaming said. "There are cars in there, but it's everything. It's everything made of steel."



[birchwoodford.ca/FordWinnipeg](http://birchwoodford.ca/FordWinnipeg)  
We Have A Huge Inventory In Stock Now! Come  
In And Test Drive Today.

## SPONSORED LINKS

---



### **Try Triumph Cleaning**

Book your First Cleaning  
Today!

Click to receive \$40 OFF



### **Baseball Tournament**

Batting Against Breast  
Cancer Fundraising  
Tourney

Register your Team Here



### **Adopt or License a Dog**

View Pictures & Videos of  
dogs for adoption

Click for Details

[See All Sponsored Links](#)

*Girl Candy Shop*  
FASHION & FOOTWEAR BOUTIQUE



918 GROSVENOR | 975-4605  
(Corner of Grosvenor and Stafford)  
OPEN TUES.-SAT. 10-6

CURRENTLY:  19 °C A few clouds | TOMIGHT:  3 °C Clear

Full Forecast | SUBSCRIBE

Log in | Register | Manage

# Winnipeg Free Press



MAY 9, 2014

SCHOOL DAY 4

SIGN UP FOR:  
News Alerts | Editor's Bulletin

Search

[Advanced Search](#) | [Archives](#)

NEWS ARTS & LIFE BUSINESS SPORTS TRAVEL OPINION MEDIA

Home | Auto | Classifieds | Flyertown | Careers | Obituaries

Winnipeg Free Press > Historic Article > PLASTICS RECYCLING PLANT IN TRANSCONA DESTROYED BY FIRE

## HISTORIC ARTICLE

Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

# Plastics recycling plant in Transcona destroyed by fire

Posted: 10/8/2006 4:48 PM | Comments: 0

 Tweet |  Like |  Reddit |  ShareThis 35 |  Print |  Email 0

Fire destroyed a plastics recycling plant in the RM of Springfield Sunday morning, with fire officials placing the estimated dollar loss in excess of \$2 million. The fire at XPotential Products Inc., on Redonda Street, north of Transcona, was reported at 2 a.m.

Mike Purtil, chief of the Springfield Fire and Rescue Service, said the site's main building had finally burned out by late Sunday afternoon but added that a large outdoor stockpile of waste plastics was still burning and could be burning for another six to 12 hours.

Purtil placed the estimated dollar loss at between \$2 million and \$4 million. He said the fire destroyed a 50,000 square foot recycling building, which contained machinery and more than one million pounds of finished product, and a second, smaller building.

Owner Jack Lazarek said that XPotential uses a patented technology that takes waste plastic and non-metal auto parts and transforms the material into landscaping ties, parking curbs and fence posts.

"We lost two buildings but until we can get into the site we won't know the total extent of the damage," Lazarek said as he waited on Redonda Street in his truck watching the plant burn. "We have to evaluate the damage. My initial reaction is to rebuild and get going again as soon as possible."

The plant is located in an industrial park that juts into the eastern side of Winnipeg. Thick black smoke poured from the building all day but a strong wind took the smoke in an easterly direction away from Winnipeg and out over neighbouring farmland. There were concerns that the smoke could contain toxic material. The only single-family home on Redonda was evacuated early Sunday morning. A spokesman for the Office of the Fire Commissioner said an air quality sample was taken from an area to the east of the fire, atop a railroad overpass on the east Perimeter Highway. The test was negative for any presence of volatile organic compounds and other toxic substances. The spokesman said environment officials with the provincial Conservation department will monitor the situation.

Capt. Scott Wilkinson of the Springfield Fire and Rescue Service said that when the first crew arrived at the XPotential plant they found the facility's main manufacturing building fully engulfed. Wilkinson said the service's second crew was called out. Help was requested from East St. Paul and the Narol Fire Department in the RM of St. Clements, Wilkinson said, adding a total of 40 firefighters fought the blaze for most of the morning.

Wilkinson said firefighters tried to put out the blaze at the firm's main manufacturing building but intense heat and structural concerns forced them to leave the building.

"They had to pull the people out and then fought a defensive fire, ensuring that it did not spread to any other buildings," Wilkinson said.


Wilkinson said the fire was brought under control by 10 a.m. but the fire remained burning into the afternoon. A standby crew of about 6 firefighters remained on the site for the rest of the afternoon and into the evening, watching the stockpile of plastic waste product burn and to ensure the fire did not spread.

Wilkinson said fighting the fire was made more difficult by the strong easterly winds that fanned the fire. He said that crews were also cognizant of the hazardous nature of the stockpiled material. Wilkinson said crews from Springfield and Fire Rescue are familiar with the plant, having responded to fires and medical calls there in the past.

In May 2002, a fire at the plant forced the evacuation of three homes in nearby Transcona. Bales of shredded plastic caught fire in the early morning.


Lazarek said XPotential Products, a Winnipeg-based firm, began 15 years ago with a plant in Regina. The firm's Redonda Street plant was built six years ago. The site includes three buildings and an office

AAA Make text: Larger | Smaller

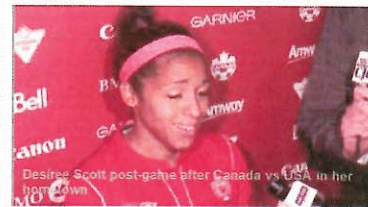


## MORTGAGES & REAL ESTATE

[» LEARN MORE](#)



### LATEST VIDEO



[View more like this](#)

### PHOTO STORY GALLERY



[View More Gallery Photos](#)

### POLL

**Are you trying to prevent mosquito hatching on your property?**

- Yes, I'm draining standing water.
- No, my property is high and dry.
- The skeeters find me no matter what I do.

[View Results](#)

[View Related Story](#)

### MOST POPULAR IN

[MOST VIEWS](#) | [MOST COMMENTS](#) | [MOST EMAILS](#)

building. The facility purchases used plastic bags and containers and other waste plastics from the Winnipeg area to make its composite material posts.

Lazarek refused to disclose sales figures but said the plant markets its unique composite material posts all over North America and elsewhere.

Lazarek used to own General Scrap, a nearby scrap metal operation on Springfield Road.

aldo.santin@freepress.mb.ca

Republished from the Winnipeg Free Press print edition October 8, 2006 \$sourceSection\$sourcePage

SEND A NEWS TIP | REPORT AN ERROR

Tweet 0 | Post 0 | ReddIt 0 | ShareThis 35 | Print | Email 0

You can comment on most stories on winniegfreepress.com. You can also agree or disagree with other comments. All you need to do is be a Winnipeg Free Press print or e-edition subscriber to join the conversation and give your feedback.

HAVE YOUR SAY
Be the first to comment
New to commenting? Check out our Frequently Asked Questions

The Winnipeg Free Press does not necessarily endorse any of the views posted. By submitting your comment, you agree to our Terms and Conditions. These terms were revised effective April 16, 2010.

FOLLOW

WFP JETS | THE BULLETIN | TWITTER | NEWS CAFE | FACEBOOK | BREAKING NEWS ALERTS

Back to Top
Return to Historic Article

TODAY | WEEK | MONTH
LOCAL FLYER DEALS
1. Festivals & Fairs
2. ...
3. ...
4. Fighting a traffic ticket is your right
5. Late-Night Winnipeg: Wide Awake
6. Concrete advice
7. Mud-jacking works, but isn't always best
8. Were you there?
9. They're popular, but poplars not suited to the city
10. Live the song of the paddles

ADS BY GOOGLE

Designer Poker Tables

bbopokertables.ca
Customized Premium Poker Tables Finished in Canada + Free Shipping

Sandals® Resort Specials

Best Credit Cards Canada

General | Contact Us | History | Publications | Advertising | Privacy Policy | Sponsorship | Subscriber | Customer Service | Retail Locations | Submit a News Tip
Opinion | RSS Feeds | Site Feedback | Archives | Photo Store | Flyerzone | Publications | Contacts | Store
Related | Winnipeg | Local | Real Estate | Jobs | Home | Classifieds | Celebrations | Careers | Outlines | FP Newspapers Inc. | News Cafe

Winnipeg Free Press
© 2014 Manitoba Free Press. All Rights Reserved.



website designed and created by
DIGITAL BUREAU
A Division of the Winnipeg Free Press

