



By Jan Rahn
Managing Editor

Although Leon Regier is anxious to get his corn crop harvested, up until then, he has a way to stay busy.

He leads a crew operating a cement crusher—a rented piece of equipment from Denver. Trucks used to haul the crushed product belong to his uncle Ivan Regier, who owns Regier Land Improvement.

The land improvement business uses the recyclable product on some of their projects, so the mutual agreement is beneficial to both. New customers, of course, who seek cement crushing, are always welcome.

The equipment, dubbed “Peggy Sue” by the crew, is on site at the city dump south of town chewing up and spitting out the multitude of discarded chunks of cement near the city lagoons.

Regier said he became interested in the cement recycling business when his uncle Ivan took him on a tour of Regier Land Improvement projects along the Platte River.

On Aug. 11, the Pegson Terex equipment from Power Screen company in Denver was brought home on Ivan’s heavy transport truck, and was put to work immediately.

Regier has been told there was probably enough concrete there for a year’s worth of crushing, and the land improvement company has other projects available from farmers and other towns, as well.

There is an all-around benefit from this scenario—the crushers keep the product and recycle it, and the City of Grant gets rid of years worth of cement piles that are overtaking space at the dump site.

The nearest similar equipment is believed to be in Kearney.

“All of a sudden, I notice concrete piles all over,” said Regier. “I’ve been pouring new chips out of my boots at night. It used to be corn, now it’s concrete.”

It takes three employees to perform the crushing process. The machine is rated to crush 100 tons of cement per hour.

Equipment such as this has been around a long time in big cities, said Regier, typically used to crush streets that need to be replaced.

There is a market for the rock that is produced from the recycled cement, such as building roads.

“Turning disposed concrete into a usable product sounds right to me,” said Regier. When products normally used are unavailable, crushed concrete fills the gap.

One idea he has for its use is for center pivot tracks, providing a solid base but one that would shatter if hit by a ripper or strip-till machine. Because the rock is porous, it allows water to filter through and the coarse texture with sharp corners allows pivot tires to grip in heavy mud conditions, said Regier.

Regier said he is familiar with the immense amount of resources available in the recycling

business through his son who works in the Wichita area. There, contractors recycle products from home improvement projects and the proceeds go to Habitat for Humanity.

Though this new method of income is exciting, the farmer in him for the past 38 years says the cement crushing will be put on hold when it's time to pick corn. Something else he has in mind as a goal is to go to on mission trips such as Uganda.

As for the future and the success of the crushing business, Regier said, "If God is in it, win or lose, we will still persevere."