

***Toolkit for Greener Practices***  
**Showcase of Ideas**  
**Option 2-2: Materials Exchange**

**Used Utility Poles & Recovered Product; Materials Exchange Brokers**

**Site conditions:**

Any site that generates outputs or that has a surplus of inputs that have a value on an exchange market as may any site in need of free or reasonably priced inputs. An exchange may be made through a broker, such as the regional system of outlets provided by the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP) Materials Exchange program), or through direct negotiation between two businesses (Bell Pole and Park Penta).

**Preventive activity description:**

I am aware of only one remediation site at which this principle has been embraced. A wood-treatment plant negotiated with another company conducting cleanup, and various regulatory entities to acquire 14, 55-gallon drums of recovered pentachlorophenol to be incorporated in its wood-treatment solution. The company also negotiated an exchange with a regional energy utility for used, treated utility poles. The outer treated surface of each pole is shaved, and the shavings are sent to Michigan for the Refuse-to-Fuel program. The untreated portion of the pole is reprocessed into fence posts and components of laminated poles.

There may be other sites of which I am unaware that have taken advantage of the regional brokers established by the state, like MnTAP. The Minnesota Materials Exchange connects businesses that have reusable goods to those who can use them. It's a non-regulatory program that helps businesses reduce waste. Typically, the program does not handle potentially hazardous wastes, such as recovered product.

**Benefits realized through the Pollution Prevention/Sustainability approach:**

- Eco-industrial principles are realized at some small scale.
- Potentially hazardous outputs are diverted from landfills and reused.
- Resource conservation

**Keys to Success**

- Business acumen
- Infrastructure and regulations that support or avoid barriers to storage and transport of these materials

**Recognition:** Bell Lumber and Pole, New Brighton, MN