

Composting offered to contractors

Acts as 'holding company' for land used to process landscape debris.

■ GreenCycle, Inc. of Northfield, Ill., has mastered the science and business of composting, just in time for the projected increase in the need for alternatives to landfill sites.

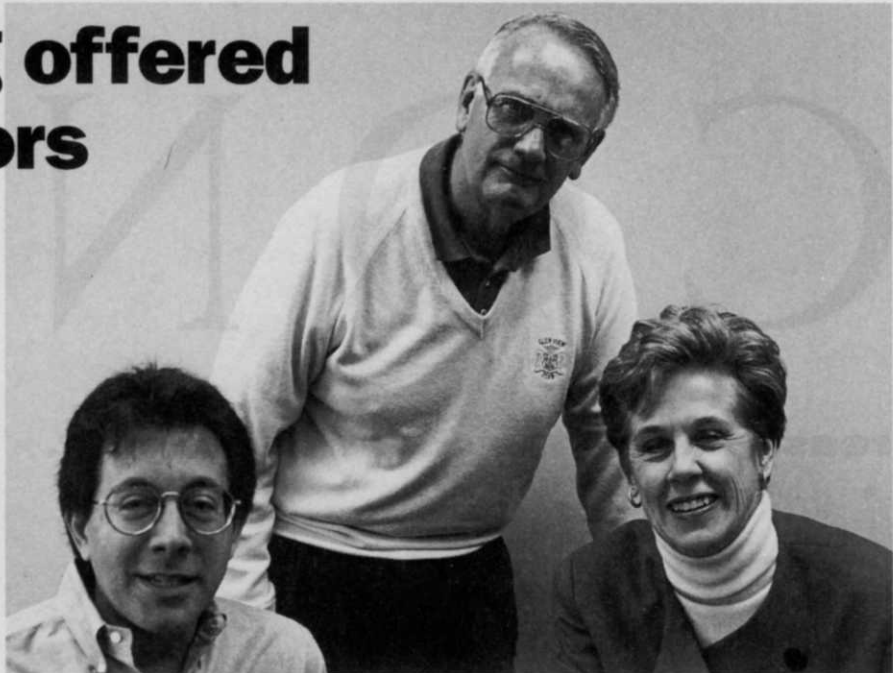
Along with the belief that landfill sites are becoming depleted is the realization that yard waste, by its very nature, is reusable.

GreenCycle began its service in July of 1992 and has grown to where it now operates composting sites in Missouri, Massachusetts, Georgia, Connecticut, Illinois and Indiana. Proposals are pending for several other sites throughout the U.S. The company services primarily municipalities, private landscape contractors and waste disposal companies.

The company expects to process about 600,000 cubic yards of material into approximately 150,000 cubic yards of high-quality compost in 1994.

Sites are as small as five acres, and tipping fees are competitive. And it's important they blend in with the community, lest the citizens complain about odors, as has happened to other composting companies.

The actual time it takes to process debris into usable compost is about 120 days. The resulting mulch or soil amendment is sold to farms, greenhouses, nurs-



David Wagner, Peter Repenning and Caroline Repenning (left to right) form joint ventures with local operators.

eries, landscape contractors, sod farms, golf courses, parks, home gardeners and other associated industries.

A family affair—GreenCycle is run by Caroline Repenning, president; David Wagner, vice president of marketing; and Peter Repenning, vice president of operations.

"A well-managed composting site quickly reduces yard waste to useful, environmentally-safe humus," says Caroline Repenning. "When sites are planned properly and managed correctly, it costs less to turn yard waste into valuable compost than it costs to employ other disposal methods. And using the correct technology eliminates the overpowering odor which often results from stockpiled yard waste, a com-

mon phenomenon of poorly-run facilities."

To eliminate odors, waste is formulated, mixed and shredded before it has a chance to rot and begin emitting odors. The byproduct is clean: no viable weed seeds or pathogens remain, and virtually all the pesticides in the initial material are broken down into benign, inorganic carbon compounds.

Even though pesticide residues are unlikely, the company goes ahead and tests for them anyway. Any which might remain are broken down into benign, inorganic compounds by the heat and microbial digestion of the composting process.

Joint ventures—GreenCycle has formed joint ventures with local operators who chalked up years of experience on their own prior to this association.

One is a former owner of a solid waste disposal company; another has eight years of experience in the composting business.

But don't confuse this arrangement with a franchise approach. Repenning says these are not franchise agreements. The local operators help GreenCycle in its search for land, which the company then leases.

GreenCycle arranges sufficient project funding for site development and operation, and provides each site with necessary general management and financial skills, a uniform operating plan and a national corporate identity.



GreenCycle will produce 150,000 cubic yards of compost in 1994.