

A SALUTE TO AN **EHRBAR** CUSTOMER

METRO GREEN

Two best friends start a Mount Vernon recycling company that caters to contractors



Angelo Maiorano,
Owner



Vito Secchiano,
Owner

Angelo Maiorano and Vito Secchiano have been friends for as long as either can remember. They grew up in the same Westchester neighborhood. Their fathers, Alfredo Maiorano and Gino Secchiano, both own construction companies (Community Paving Corp. and MVM Construction Corp., respectively) and are also friends. Angelo and Vito's summer memories are not about camp, swimming or baseball, but about working construction with their dads.

"Since I was a child, I've been obsessed with equipment, trucks, building — anything and everything construction-related," recalled Angelo. "Vito's the same. You see, it's not just our dads who were in construction. Our uncles, our grandfathers, nearly everybody in both our families was involved in construction. We worked with our dads every summer and never got sick of it. We truly have a passion for the construction industry."

"We both went to college," said Vito. "Angelo got an engineering degree and I graduated as a finance major, but there was really no question

that we'd both end up in construction. It's part of our culture. It's what we've always done. It's what we aspire to do."

After college, Angelo went to work for a large excavation company while Vito put his business degree to work in his dad's companies. Then, in 2009, the two friends formed their own company, Metro Green, a recycling facility in Mount Vernon.

"The property became available and it was a good location for this type of business," said Vito. "We saw it as an opportunity to get in on the ground floor of a growing section of the construction industry. Everybody today is concerned about the environment and conserving natural resources. This fits in with that, which is why we call it Metro Green."

"Contractors bring their waste material to us rather than dumping it in landfills," Angelo explained. "We accept soil, rock and concrete from excavation projects. We screen, crush and process the waste material back into useful soil and gravel products. We then sell those products back to contractors who use it as road base, for drainage work and backfill."

Strong background and work ethic

"We opened during a terrible time as far as the general economy and construction economy, but our fathers had established good reputations and had a strong foothold in this area," said Vito. "We knew they would bring their waste material to us. We believed that between them and their connections with other contractors, we would have enough business to get started and get on our feet."

"We don't lack confidence," admitted Angelo. "We have the background, the knowledge and

Metro Green owner Angelo Maiorano uses a Komatsu WA250-5 wheel loader to fill a truck with recycled material. The Mt. Vernon, N.Y., company recycles dirt, rock and concrete from construction sites.





(Above) Metro Green uses its Komatsu PC160LC-7 excavator at a jobsite and (right) when loading its Metso LT95 jaw crusher.



the work ethic to make a go of this, and that's how it's working out. Our plan is to make it through the tough times, then when the economy improves, we'll really blossom."

Angelo and Vito consult with their fathers about the business, but make their own decisions. "They often ask us before they do something, and we give them our two-cents worth," said Vito's father, Gino Secchiano. "But they don't always take our advice," added Angelo's father, Alfredo Maiorano. "It's their company and they run it as they see fit."

With its centralized location just off I-87 in Mount Vernon, Metro Green serves a wide range of customers from lower Westchester, north Bronx and Yonkers. "This area is home to many contractors, which is why we thought it was such a good location," said Vito.

Metro Green typically processes a few hundred cubic yards of material daily with a maximum of about 500 yards.

"Our yard is about 50,000 square feet and somewhat oddly shaped, so we had to do a lot of preplanning to make the operation fit and function correctly," said Angelo. "It limits us to some extent, but our main goal was to cater to smaller contractors in the area and we are able to do a good job of meeting their needs."

Productive equipment/ dealer support

The size and shape of the yard also impacted the equipment that Metro Green uses. Because

of the space constraints on the site, nothing can be too big, including the mobile equipment and the crusher. Metro Green turned to a Komatsu PC160LC-7 excavator to feed the crusher and screener; a Komatsu WA250 wheel loader to handle stockpiles and load trucks; and a Metso LT95 jaw to crush rock products.

"The Komatsu machines have been great," reported Angelo. "They are productive and dependable. We bought them used from Vito's dad's company, MVM, which had purchased them new from Edward Ehrbar, Inc. The equipment has worked really well for us. We use the wheel loader all day, every day, and downtime has been minimal."

"Ehrbar's help was critical in us getting up and running," acknowledged Vito. "Our Ehrbar Sales Rep, Chris Thompson, has worked with our fathers for years. We know Chris and we trust him. He was out here with us diagraming how to make everything fit. He made sure we got equipment that would work

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Metro Green owners predict strong future for recycling

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well on this site. For example, our three-way screener allows us to make three different products where most screeners only size for two. Because of the space constraints, we have to be able to do more with less. Chris and Ehrbar help us do that."

"We also rely on Ehrbar for parts," added Angelo. "We're a small company. We don't have spare machines sitting around. If something breaks, it shuts down our operations until we get it fixed. Ehrbar understands our situation and they get us what we need right away."

Prescreening improves quality

What separates Metro Green from many other contractor recycling facilities is, well, the separation process.

"Material comes to us all mixed together — rock, dirt, concrete," Angelo explained. "Trucks bring it in and dump it in a central location. Our PC160 then picks up a bucketful and puts it on a box screener to get the dirt out. After that, the rock and concrete are put into a jaw crusher to reduce the size to three inches and less. The jaw crusher feeds it onto a three-way screener which separates it into final products based on size."

"We're one of the few places that prescreen the material," noted Vito. "One reason we do

it is to reduce wear and tear on the crusher, but in our opinion, it also results in a significantly cleaner and better final product."

Metro Green has a couple of employees, but Vito and Angelo are definitely hands-on owners, which is one of the keys to the success they've experienced.

"We're not afraid to get in the trenches," said Angelo. "You're just as apt to see me on a machine as in the office, and Vito's as likely to be under the machine with a grease gun as he is talking on the phone. We do whatever we have to do to keep the doors open and turn a profit."

"We also give personal attention to our customers," added Vito. "We try to be on a first-name basis with them. If they want something special, they know they can call us and we'll work with them. For example, if they need us to stay open late, we'll stay open late. We try to be easy to do business with."

Planning for the future

Down the road, Vito and Angelo intend to be more directly involved in construction, and believe Metro Green will be an important part of that.

"Recycling is not a new concept, but there is a governmental emphasis on concern for the environment that's grown in recent decades, and we expect that to continue," predicted Vito. "We intend to be contractors one day and we believe Metro Green will be an important part of that contracting business. As a contractor, the more we can do in-house, the better off we are, so we believe having our own recycling facility will give us a leg up."

In the meantime, the two friends intend to grow Metro Green as a stand-alone business.

"Our goal is to increase our customer base and increase our volume," said Angelo. "We've also talked about expanding our product offerings and eventually having a bigger facility. We think we have a lot to offer contractors because, having been in their shoes, we understand their recycling needs. They're looking for quick turnaround, a quality product and a fair price. Those are things we provide every single day." ■

Owner of MVM Construction Gino Secchiano (left) and his son Vito, Co-owner of Metro Green, along with Community Paving Owner Alfredo Maiorano (right) and his son, Angelo, Co-owner of Metro Green, are all friends with lifelong experience in the construction industry.

