



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **By design, rather than by default, recycled tyres can now be used to build houses**

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**Immediate Release**

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With recycling increasingly top of mind, especially since the new Waste Act came into play, people are becoming much more conscious of their waste. More questions are being raised as to how to recycle specific items and to be environmentally attuned, for example, how should tyres be recycled?

Non-profit organisation, The South African Tyre Recycling Process Company (SATRP Company), was established in 2002 specifically with the vision in mind as to how to solve the waste (scrap) tyre problem in South Africa and support a sustainable waste tyre producer industry .

According to Dr Etienne Human, CEO of SATRP Company, “Four major pollution problems can be virtually eliminated with the proper disposal of tyres.” He explains, “Waste tyres are burned to recover the steel. Water is used to try to extinguish burning tyres, which is both a waste of water and costly. Burning tyres can cause cancer and asphyxiation and massive air pollution and is even a hazard to aircraft landing at major airports. Rain water forms pools of stagnant water within the tyres that attract mosquitoes which may then breed and add to the spread of malaria.” Human concludes “Large stockpiles of burning tyres are a serious fire hazard and, as well as being unsightly, can pose a threat to property.” Human warns that something else to take into consideration, “often waste tyres, being defective, are sold as part worn tyres (second hand) to unsuspecting vehicle owners with resultant accidents and death on the roads.”

There are many benefits to be realized through recycling tyres. Individuals can earn an income and also maintain a clean environment. Statistically, only about 4% of waste tyres are processed in South Africa due to financial constraints as waste tyres have little commercial value.

However, Nick Ralphs, Managing Member of Tierra Construction Projects has identified an alternative way of using used tyres. Tierra’s methods of recycling tyres will not only preserve a clean and safe environment, but also create employment for unskilled labour in the Western Cape and help to build low income houses for people.

Tierra has been constructing buildings from recyclable material for the past three years. Tyres, bottles, tins, cardboard boxes, earth and roof tiles are all used in the construction of these enviro-

buildings. The Thina Recycling centre in Cape Town was recently completed using Tierra's construction methodology. Tierra provides hands-on training for unskilled workers providing them with the opportunity to gain experience in the building industry. A building of approximately 18 m<sup>3</sup> takes about three months to complete using 420 tyres, 1 800 glass bottles, 2 500 tins, 800 cardboard boxes, 40m<sup>3</sup> earth, 1 000 roof tiles and a workforce of around four unskilled workers. The construction of such a house is based on the concept of turning old tyres into bricks by filling them with earth and compacting the filling. The tyre bricks are dry-stacked in alternating courses, much like brickwork in stretcher bond.

Ralphs commented, "I am very excited about the huge potential that exists in South Africa to build with waste. It is a great opportunity for unskilled labourers to learn a trade and soon we hope that used tyres will be in demand, just like new tyres."

Stan Jewaskiewitz, President of the Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA) has commended the work being done by both the South African Tyre Recycling Process Company and Tierra Construction Projects and has said that they are setting examples in exemplary waste management which is supported by the IWMSA.

On 30 March 2011, the IWMSA Eastern Cape branch will be hosting a workshop specifically focusing on the recycling of tyres and the role of the Waste Act in Port Elizabeth. For more information on the session please contact Karen du Plessis on 043-7210003 / 0721117917 or Email: easterncape@iwmsa.co.za

For more information on the South African Tyre Recycling Process Company visit, [www.rubbersa.com](http://www.rubbersa.com), more information on Tierra Construction Project are available on [www.tierraprojects.co.za](http://www.tierraprojects.co.za) and more information on the IWMSA and events that they host can be found on [www.iwmsa.co.za](http://www.iwmsa.co.za)

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