

# Recycler hopes to eliminate plastic throwaways

**A** Vancouver plastics recycling firm with a new technology for recovering household plastic containers recently received venture funding to build and increase its business.

Partek Corporation, an AWB member firm founded just over two years ago, received \$750,000 for expansion from the Environmental Venture Fund.

Partek's raw materials are used plastic containers that once held milk, soft drinks, shampoo, liquid soap or bleach. Using a patent-pending process, these plastic bottles are recycled into a clean plastic resin without having to first remove the paper label. The label removal challenge has historically been a major deterrent to consumer recycling efforts. The firm has developed a unique kinetic dry scrubbing process to remove paper labels and adhesives after plastic bottles are ground, thereby eliminating the need for a wash process.

"Many consumers would rather throw away the plastic bottle than try wash off or cut out the labels," observes Partek president Victor Bitar.

Noting that plastic represents about one-fourth of the volume in the solid waste stream, Bitar views the recovery of plastic as "probably one of the most significant contributions anyone can make to our environment and to the solution of the solid waste disposal problem."

The company's major challenge now will be working with waste haulers and local governments to establish plastic container collection systems.

Partek's 23,600 square foot plant and headquarters in Vancouver will initially process all consumer containers acquired by Partek. As the intake of plastic grows, so will Partek. Bitar expects to have five to ten plants operating across the nation within the next three years. Each plant would recover between 15 and 25 million pounds of plastic per year.

"Our goal is to make plastic bottle recycling convenient, commonplace and profitable in every city we serve," says an ambitious Bitar. "Soon there will be no excuses left for consumers to throw away their plastic, or for communities to encourage landfilling of plastic."



Partek's Victor Bitar demonstrates how his patent-pending process transforms used containers such as plastic milk bottles into a clean plastic resin.

## Youngsters taught that fishing is better alternative to drugs

**S**everal hundred Tacoma youngsters recently caught their first fish - not in a nearby lake or mountain stream, but inside the huge Tacoma Dome. While they got the fish, they also got the message: it's better to be "Hooked On Fishing - Not On Drugs."

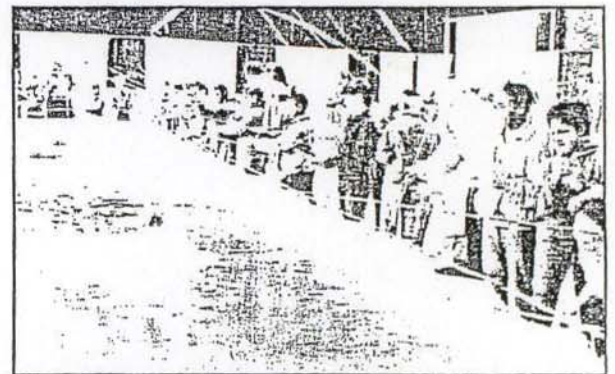
That's the name of a nationwide program sponsored by the Future Fisherman Foundation. It encourages youth to become involved with the positive aspects offered by fishing, to adopt healthy lifestyles, and to develop an appreciation for America's natural resources.

To-Ro Enterprises, Inc., a Portland-based producer of consumer trade shows and a new member of the Association of Washington Business, made space available to the non-profit group during the 1989 Fall Fishing and Winter Sports Show Nov. 15-19.

Fifth-graders from four Tacoma elementary schools, under the guidance of volunteers from Trout Unlimited and other outdoor groups, learned how to tie fishing knots, cast a line and actually catch a fish from an indoor pond stocked with trout.

Up to 5,000 students will be invited to take part in a free day of fishing June 9, 1990, on one of the core city lakes in or near Tacoma.

Each child will receive instruction in basic knot-tying and fishing techniques. Youngsters get to keep the fish they catch, along with the rod and reel. All activities will be supervised by adults.



Tacoma elementary school students caught trout from an artificial lake created in the Tacoma Dome as part of a "Hooked on Fishing" display during the 1989 Fall Fishing and Winter Sports Show.

In addition to To-Ro Trade Shows and Trout Unlimited, other supporters of the "Hooked On Fishing" program in the Tacoma Dome included the Tacoma School District, Tacoma Teachers Association, Washington Bass Clubs, and the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma.