

David VanPevenage

I'm a third generation mill worker. My family started down in the mill in 1948. I work in the environmental department, and I remember going down to the mill in the late 70's early 80's when I was a kid, you know seeing my uncle Donny down there, he ran the 14 paper machine. And I remember the smell that was in Tacoma, and the way—everybody knows the Tacoma Aroma obviously, it was incredibly powerful. And I just think that Simpson, when they purchased the mill in 1985 and they put hundreds of millions of dollars, you know, into—we were the first Superfund cleanup site, you know, the first successful Superfund cleanup site anywhere in America and I think that's an amazing thing and I think that it has only gotten better with time and I see what WestRock over the last 4 years has done for our facility. I see how we run differently compared to the way Simpson ran us, and I'm sure compared to the way my family when they worked for St. Regis ran us. And, no, industry is not perfect, there is pollution, I totally understand that. But I think that we do a great job by staying within our permit, and I think that people don't realize that there has to be this balance between environmentalism and jobs. And these aren't—these aren't—like, most people don't realize, most people have jobs. Like, you work at a hotel maybe, that's a job. These are careers down there and every single one of us makes at least \$100,000 a year. And we're talking about 433 union employees down there. And we're also talking about an industry where we support at least 3,000 people on the outside, with all of our vendors that come in every single day, the trucks that transport our materials, that sell us the chemicals, and I just think that you have to figure out a way to have that balance between the two. And I support what WestRock is doing because I know it's going to help the longevity of the mill and I want that mill to be there another 100 years, you know, I have family that works there, and they're a lot younger than me and it provides a great living. But yet, it's still, we're still an environmentally friendly company and every single year, and as technology gets better and better, we go ahead and put that technology in and we install that technology. We install better scrubbers on everything, we're constantly trying to upgrade the mill, not just to make it financially more feasible for us, and not just to make it more money for the company in general, but it's for everyone. It's for the employees, it's for the company, and it's for the environment. They want to be, we want to be involved in the community, I mean that's why we do things like Community Care, United Way, all these things that we sponsor and we do throughout the community, Those are things that, you know, the employees do on their own time, they don't get paid by the company to do that. We volunteer to do those things because we want to be a partner, we want to live in this community and support this community.