

**NEW YORK STATE SETS EXAMPLE FOR BUILDING OWNERS:
RECYCLES OLD CEILING TILES RATHER THAN DUMPING THEM**

*Nearly Half a Million Square Feet of Tiles Are Being Reclaimed
As Part of the Renovation of the A.E. Smith State Office Building*

The state of New York prides itself on being one of the most aggressive states in the country when it comes to addressing the issues of energy efficiency and green building practices.

As one evidence of its commitment to environmental responsibility, Governor George E. Pataki recently signed an Executive Order directing all state agencies to be more energy efficient and environmentally aware.

Titled "Green and Clean State Buildings and Vehicles," Executive Order No. 111 calls for state government to "assume a leadership role in promoting the efficient use of energy and natural resources in the interest of the long-term protection and enhancement of our environment, our economy, and the health of our children and future generations of New Yorkers."

One of the ways in which the state is currently manifesting its leadership role is by recycling nearly a half a million square feet of old acoustical ceiling tiles as part of the renovation of the A.E. Smith Building, a 33-story state office building located across the park from the state capital in downtown Albany.

In the past, the tiles would have been taken to a landfill for disposal. Now, they are being reclaimed as part of a unique ceiling recycling program offered by Armstrong, the country's largest manufacturer of acoustical ceilings.

Largest Public Project in Albany Since 1979

Named for Alfred E. Smith, the four-time governor of New York known for his initiation of public improvements, the 600,000-square-foot building was constructed in 1928 and serves as home to nearly 2,000 state employees. The \$85 million renovation of the historic landmark will be the largest public project in the Albany area since construction of Empire State Plaza ended in 1979.

The renovation began in November, 2002 and is scheduled for completion in August, 2005. The project is a complete interior gut in which essentially everything from one outside wall to the other is being removed and replaced.

Architect Ed Girzone of the Design & Construction Division of the state's Office of General Services (OGS) explains that the only other renovation of the building occurred back in 1964. The current renovation is being implemented to modernize the facility and bring it up to date for the state agencies that will occupy it.

Girzone also explains that as a result of Executive Order No. 111, a variety of construction waste materials generated during the demolition phase of the project are now being recycled instead of being sent to a landfill. They include drywall, concrete, metal and metal scraps, dimensional wood, carpeting and acoustical ceiling tiles.



The A. E. Smith Building, a state office building in Albany, recycled approximately 500,000 square feet of ceiling tile. It is the first building under the new executive directive to do so.

First State Building to Recycle Ceilings

He notes that the renovation of the A.E. Smith Building is the first major state project under the directives of Executive Order No. 111 to take advantage of the ceiling recycling program offered by Armstrong.

The program, which is the only one of its kind, enables building owners to ship old ceilings from renovation projects to an Armstrong ceiling plant as an earth-friendly alternative to landfill disposal. Under the program, Armstrong even pays freight costs for shipping the old ceilings, which it uses as raw materials in the manufacture of new acoustical ceilings.

Since it introduced the program in 1999, Armstrong has already recycled over 13,000,000 square feet of discarded ceiling tiles. This represents more than 4,600 tons of construction waste that would normally have been dumped in landfills.

The program involves three steps. First, building owners need to verify that their old ceiling tiles can be recycled. The tiles do not have to be Armstrong products to qualify for the program.

Following verification, the old ceilings must then be packaged for pick-up. Once there is a full trailer load of old ceilings, the owner simply needs to contact Armstrong, which will then arrange for a truck to pick up the material and transfer it to its nearest manufacturing facility.

Old Ceilings Are Primarily 1'x 1' Tiles

The Pike Company of Rochester, New York, is the primary construction contractor for the A.E. Smith renovation. It contracted Yannuzzi & Sons, Inc., of Orange, New Jersey to handle the demolition work, including the removal of the old ceiling tiles and their preparation for pick-up.

The bulk of the old ceilings are 1'x 1' concealed spline tiles that were installed during the previous renovation. There is also a small amount of 2'x 2' and 2'x 4' suspended ceiling panels.

The new ceilings that will be installed in the renovated space consist primarily of 1'x 1' Armstrong Cirrus® fine textured tiles, along with a small quantity of Cortega™ Second Look suspended ceiling panels.

Construction management of the A.E. Smith project is being conducted by a joint venture between BBL Construction Services, a general contractor based in Albany, and URS Corporation, headquartered in San Francisco, with an office in New York City.

According to Joe Styczynski, BBL's project manager at the site, the ceiling recycling process is going well. "Armstrong made a modification in the process in terms of how they receive the material," he says, "and this allowed us to really accelerate the removal process."

Ceiling Recycling Program Is Working Well

The A.E. Smith renovation marks the first experience with ceiling recycling for both OGS's Girzone and BBL's Styczynski. And, both agree the program's benefits make it worthwhile.

"The program is a good one that is going along smoothly and fits in well with the state's overall philosophy on the environment," architect Girzone states. "And, as long as the old ceilings are recyclable, it will likely be included in future renovations of state buildings."

Project manager Styczynski concurs. "It's a great concept," he says. "Anytime we can recycle waste materials and make something new from something old, it's a good thing. The fact that the program is working well, makes it even better."