

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 1, 2022

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State-of-the-art polypropylene extruder at MDI creates more product packaging options for market

Brand-new extruder at Minnesota company will create material for plastic boxes, bins, dividers & more

Minneapolis, Minn. – Plastics manufacturer MDI today announced that its brand-new, state-of-the-art polypropylene extruder – a machine used to create sheets that are converted in to custom and standard containers – is being installed at its Grand Rapids facility. These totes, trays and boxes are used in a wide range of industries including packaging, transportation, logistics, warehouse and medical. All products sold help provide jobs for people with and without disabilities.

The cutting-edge, \$3.2 million machine will allow MDI to produce up to five million sheets of material per year while creating an additional 75 new jobs across northern Minnesota over the next 10 years. [Click here](#) to download photo/videos of the new polypropylene extruder.

“While our new extruder will significantly improve our ability to provide a differentiated customer experience, the positive impacts of this extrusion line go well beyond that,” said Eric Black, president and CEO of MDI. “Growth from this innovative technology will also allow MDI to create new employment opportunities for people with disabilities.”

MDI creates high-quality plastic containers to ship, pack and store products, and offers product assembly and packaging services for organizations across the country, from small businesses to governmental organizations to large companies. Notably, MDI has produced more than 100 million totes for a federal government shipping organization, and logistic containers for a Fortune 100 company. Approximately half of MDI’s employees are people with disabilities.

The polypropylene extruder creates sheets of material that will be sold to other businesses for a variety of packaging applications; these sheets can also be converted at MDI into plastic boxes, totes and trays for use in manufacturing, distribution and logistics operations. Extruding its own sheets (versus previously purchasing extruded sheets) will allow MDI to be more competitively priced and provide even better service to its customers. This extruder also allows MDI to expand its offering to include 5mm thick sheets versus only 3 and 4mm sheets. MDI also has an engineering team which works with customers on design solutions based on their specific applications and provides free design samples.

“This is a day we’ve been excitedly anticipating at MDI,” said Barbara Majerus, vice president of sales at MDI. “With this extruder now online, our customers will get reduced lead times and be able to bring products to the market faster using MDI’s competitively priced polypropylene packaging solutions. We can’t wait to grow alongside our customers!”

The extruder was manufactured in Italy, then shipped to the Port of Minneapolis on the Mississippi River and finally, trucked to MDI's facility in Grand Rapids. In addition to a multi-year planning effort, the last several months were spent reconfiguring the complex equipment in the Grand Rapids facility and making room for the extruder and downstream equipment. The extruder will be fully operational by September 2022.

About MDI

MDI is a trusted Minnesota manufacturer and nonprofit social enterprise with the mission to provide employment opportunities and services for people with disabilities. We create high-quality plastic containers to ship, pack and store products, and offer unparalleled product assembly and packaging services for organizations across the country, from small businesses to Fortune 500 companies. By offering an inclusive workplace that allows employees to build confidence, independence and purpose, MDI's work results in dedicated employees and satisfied customers. To learn more, visit mdi.org.

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