

How this Charlotte Startup is Using Technology to Go Green

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Ever wondered what happens to old technology — those 2000s-era computers or has-been data-storage components?

Peter and Carol Jegou, the founders of Charlotte-based startup All Green Recycling Inc., discovered a way to glean the last bit of life from tech waste and how to do so with the environment in mind. All Green patented a new, environmentally safe "wash" system to extract precious metals from old circuit boards acquired from businesses through All Green's Precious Metal Recovery division.



The system extracts and refines gold and silver for profit from the boards, while the remaining copper base is then distributed to other recycling facilities. All Green is planning to start extracting platinum and copper as well, Carol Jegou says. For context, about 125 pounds of hard-drive circuit boards produce an ounce of gold.

Old circuit boards are typically shipped overseas to Europe and Asia, where they are then burned as waste. Many competitors use cyanide to extract the metal. All Green eliminates the carbon footprint and dangers associated with stripping, shipping and burning the old boards, Jegou says.



"Peter actually had this idea," Jegou says. "We did a small production run for a good period of time, you know, to see if indeed we could really do this on a larger scale."

The Jegous started the business a few years ago in New Brunswick, New Jersey, but decided to open the headquarters office in northeast Charlotte's so-called "Smart Zone." All Green initially hired an engineering firm based here to assist with the extraction process, along with chemistry graduates hailing from the University of North Carolina system.

Carol Jegou notes the Queen City's gold rush history and says she feels the business is bringing the gold industry back here in a different way.

"I love Charlotte. It's a wonderful place to live. It's a vibrant city. I never thought I'd live anywhere else but where I did in New Jersey," Jegou says. "I think there's always a plan for your life. If someone had said to me five, six, seven years ago this is what I would be doing, I'd look at them like they had two heads. But here I am."



She says the overall vision for All Green is to grow the business on a global scale, while also building out the headquarters location in Charlotte. The Jegous originally planned for All Green to be a small, environmentally friendly business, but they soon realized the mission was bigger than them.

"That 'ah-ha' moment came, and I said this is really bigger than us, that we need to get this technology out in the world because it's so important for the environment," Jegou says.

Nonprofit B Lab recently recognized All Green as a certified B Corporation, a title reserved for about 2,400 companies across the globe that are making a positive environmental impact. It is the only company in Charlotte to receive that recognition.

"People are hungry for companies like All Green Recycling, who are changing the system by building businesses that seek to create the greatest positive impact," says Jay Coen Gilbert, co-founder of B Lab. "As consumers, talent and investors increasingly demand transparent, values-aligned businesses to buy from, work at and invest in, companies will need to not just the best in the world but the best for the world, and not just to be nice but to be the most successful."