

# At Assateague, recycled containers become a store

Rachael Pacella, DelmarvaNow 8:57 a.m. EDT April 20, 2015

## A Baltimore-based company created the Assateague Outfitters retail building using 3 shipping containers.



(Photo: Staff Photo by Rachael Pacella)

After being towed across the sea for almost a decade, three shipping containers have come to rest on a bayside beach at Assateague Island.

Three containers weighing 18,000 pounds and equaling 640 square feet have been turned into the new home of Assateague Outfitters on the bay side, a partnership between the Maryland Coastal Bays Program and Super Fun Eco Tours.

Using these former shipping containers to create indoor spaces is growing in popularity, Chesapeake Container Systems President Scott Thielemann said.

"It's becoming a very eco-friendly way to recycle cheaply," he said.

Containers have been recycled into bathrooms, cafes, office spaces or even homes. The Baltimore-based company created the Assateague Outfitters building using one 40-foot-by-8-foot container for the main retail space and two 20-foot-by-8-foot containers to create storage areas.

A building made from containers costs about \$100 per square foot. The containers are also incredibly durable, Thielemann said, adding they're capable of being stacked on top of one another to create additional stories. A special paint is applied to the outside of the containers to help protect them from the salt air.

"They'll last forever if they're maintained," Thielemann said.



Tom Simon, co-owner of Super Fun Eco Tours, is shown inside Assateague Outfitter's new building by the bay. (Photo: Staff Photo by Rachael Pacella)

Tom Simon, co-owner of Super Fun Eco Tours, said they chose to build using recycled materials because it was more in line with the company's carbon-neutral ethos than using virgin material. The company came up with a design, sent it to Thielemann, and he helped them figure out what would be possible.

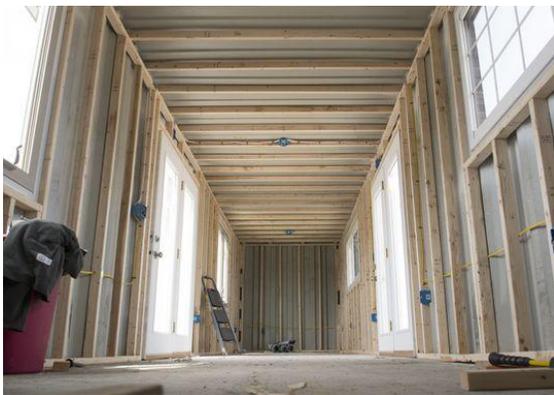
Before that they looked into other options, such as building with recycled barn wood or Amish-built structure. The recycled barn wood wasn't feasible with the company's budget, and the Amish-build meant using all new materials.

"It just didn't make sense to us," Simon said.

The new building will store bikes and other supplies in the smaller containers on the side. The main container will include a space to sell ice cream, ice and drinks on one side, and higher-end camping gear on the other side, Simon said. Assateague Outfitters will also sell firewood.

Simon plans to create retail shelving using wood recycled from the old deck of their former building nearby. Simon was also able to get used windows and doors for the building from the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, a nonprofit store that sells hardware products.

"We tried to do as much up-cycled stuff as possible," Simon said.



The incomplete inside of Assateague Outfitter's new shipping container building. (Photo: Staff Photo by Rachael Pacella)

For things they have to get brand new, materials are being purchased locally from The Adkins Co., Simon said.

In addition to reduced waste, the shipping container building has another big advantage: it can be moved, which is important as the bay inches closer, Simon said.

"Our spot might be moving eventually because it's eroding so fast," he said. "This thing could get moved in a day to pretty much any place on the island."