

Wauna Mill's paper products in high demand

Production of Angel Soft bath tissue, Brawny and Sparkle brand paper towels increased during COVID-19

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WAUNA — When virus-related restrictions were introduced earlier this year and people began hunkering down at home, the Georgia-Pacific, Wauna Mill in Clatskanie got even busier.

The Wauna Mill produces Angel Soft bath tissue, as well as Brawny and Sparkle brand paper towels for retail markets across the entire West Coast.

Kristi Ward, a company spokeswoman, said the demand for bath tissue peaked in mid-March to May.

"But usage is still strong due to people spending the majority of their time at home," Ward said. She added that those staying at home are likely spending more time cleaning and eating at home, as the demand for Wauna Mill's paper towels is still up by 10 to 15% compared to this time last year.

"In talking with consumers, people are changing their cleaning and hygiene behaviors — washing their hands more, wiping down high-use surfaces like counters, light switches and door knobs and wiping down things that enter the house like shoes, groceries and deliveries," Ward said.

Linda Brown, owner of Brown's Coastal Corner Market and Deli in Long Beach, said the store had a 100% increase in demand for bath tissue in February and completely sold out of it. Brown had to close the store for three months, and by the time she reopened she was able to restock bath tissue again.

However, sanitary wipes are still hard to come by.

"This is the first time since February that I have them on my shelf, and I found those at Fred Meyer in Warrenton," Brown said.

Kailee Kobe, store manager of Main Street Market in Warrenton, said during the spring, bath tissue sold like crazy.

"We couldn't keep it on the shelf," Kobe said, adding that by now the store has caught back up with demand.

"At our store, a lot of people shop for meat and produce, and we didn't sell much paper products, but since COVID hit it's been a huge increase," Kobe said. She said in addition to Angel Soft bath tissue from the Wauna Mill, the market sold a variety of different brands, depending on whatever was in stock.

"We went through so many different brands," Kobe said. "We'd look in the warehouse and grab whatever we could."



Packaged Angel Soft moves down a conveyor belt at the Georgia Pacific mill.



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