

Troubleshooting Underweight Bales



Is your waste hauler docking you for the additional freight cost because your bales are too light? If so, these suggestions from Puhl will help.

1. If your bales are made up of lightweight paper stocks, there may not be much you can do with the baler, however you may be able to add water to make the stock breakdown and compress further in the bale. Keep in mind that the weight of the water also counts as weight you are paid for. Some operations add a significant amount of water to the bales during and after the baling process for dust control and bale integrity. When the bale is recycled at the mill, the mill must wet all of the fibers in the bale, so adding water actually helps the paper machine digest the scrap faster as the water you add to the bale starts the digestion process early. Water you add to the bale is also water that the mill does not have to pay for. Consult your scrap dealer prior to making these changes.
2. If your stock is a large piece size or often changes composition within a single bale and does not compress well, consider adding a shredder. See photo below.



3. If your baler has not been adjusted or tuned by a qualified technician lately, it may be time for a tech visit. Setting side tension pressures can be tricky and over tensioning the baler can cause the ram to stall and/or damage the baler frame. Sometimes a baler ram stall can be caused by internal leakage of hydraulic fluid. If this is the case, your in-house mechanics will find it difficult or impossible to adjust out of the problem.
4. Make sure your baler is the correct baler for the task. Ram face pressure forms the foundation for the resulting bale weight. The ram face pressure on a baler can range from 30 to 300 PSI depending on the baler model and type. A larger diameter main cylinder baler may be the answer to increasing bale density. There is a limit to bale compression and the increase in ram pressure is not a linear relationship to bale density, but the general rule of thumb is that a larger diameter bale cylinder will make a higher density bale for a given ram face area. In most cases, baler main cylinders cannot be changed to a larger size due to fittings and pump speeds. However, balers can be traded in for balers with larger cylinders.
5. Make sure your baler producing the correct length bales. Short bales are a common cause of light truck weights.

If any of these issues sounds familiar, a baler optimization survey will help you get to the root of the problem. Get your survey by emailing sales@gfpuhl.com. We are here to help you maximize your scrap revenue—and one of the best ways to do this is to minimize freight costs per pound of scrap.

Questions? Give us a call at 615.230.9500 or email us at sales@gfpuhl.com.

