

DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL

SMALL BUSINESS OWNER

Hanstrom turns medical waste into confetti



► WINNER

**BEVERLY
HANSTROM**

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Beverly Hanstrom saw a problem in medicine and she's finding a way to open people's eyes about it and find a solution.

"Head on. No fear," says Hanstrom on her approach to business. "There's always going to be challenges and obstacles but if you're passionate about it and you have perseverance and you believe in what you're doing, it's just one foot in front of the other."

The medical community uses the same sterilization and disposal practices that have been in place for more than 50 years, using autoclaves and incinerators that can pose a hazard to public health and the environment. Hanstrom believes these practices need to be brought into the 21st century.

In 2010, she was introduced to ozone processing technology, which sterilizes without emissions. Single-handedly, she financed an ozone processor that reduces waste volume by 90 percent.

"She's identified a new way of doing business that's more sustainable to Colorado," said Erin Beckstein of Adams County Economic Development, who worked with Hanstrom's on tax cred-

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its in the early phases of the business.

Hanstrom is passionate about sustainability and meets with executives from hospitals to government agencies about how to dramatically change the medical waste industry.

"The amount of medical waste that's generated just by the health care community is staggering. People don't know where their waste goes, so 90 percent volume reduction to a sterile confetti residue is game-changing," said Hanstrom.

In 2010, she became a member of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's stakeholder group in an effort to get ozone processing approved as an alternative medical waste treatment technology.

These efforts turned out to be Hanstrom's first victory, as updated regulations were adopted by the Hazardous Waste Commission in 2011. She then set out to build her facility, leading a rezoning effort to allow it to operate close to the Anschutz Medical Campus. After reconstructing the building and obtaining a Certificate of Designation and permit to operate, Colorado Medical

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Will having a female major party candidate for president open more C-level doors for women?

Yes. However, it shouldn't be about gender, it should be about being qualified for the position. As with the presidential election this mirrors my experience in the medical waste industry, especially opening my processing facility. A woman in a male dominated industry was like trying to get on an NFL team!

Waste began ozone processing operations in 2014, the first facility of its kind in Colorado and only the third in the nation.

"To know that I can be a part of changing the industry in the state that I was born and raised in and make a difference not only for the industry but for future generations is, I think, something worth working towards," said Hanstrom.

Hanstrom has been recognized nationally for her innovation as one of 100 small business owners chosen by Small Business Majority for the 2015 Leadership Summit where she met with members of the Obama administration. She was also presented with the 2015 Sustainability Award presented by Rep. Mike Coffman, R-Colo., and CEO and founder of Small Business Majority, John Arensmeyer.

Hanstrom continues to reach out to people throughout the community to educate them on the reality and repercussions of traditional medical waste disposal.

"She brings innovation, passion, dedication," said Beckstein. "She's had to not be afraid to tackle new things and get in front of people and have conversations that have never been had before."

**OUTSTANDING
WOMEN
IN BUSINESS**