HighCube, LLC is located in Durham and has been recycling expanded polystyrene (EPS) - commonly known as Styrofoam - since 2016. HighCube sources EPS from pharmaceutical, technology, re-packaging and distribution companies in North Carolina. Once the EPS is transported to the company’s facility, it undergoes a two-step size reduction process. HighCube uses the EPS particles to create its proprietary Meristone, a lightweight slab made of 90% recycled EPS and concrete materials. The Meristone slabs are then used to create eco-conscious furnishings. By creating high-value products from the waste material, HighCube extends the weeks-long lifecycle of EPS to a decades-long lifecycle.

The Recycling Business Assistance Center (RBAC) awarded HighCube a grant for $21,067 to purchase two shredding machines for primary and secondary size reduction of EPS. Before getting this machinery, the initial size reduction process was labor-intensive and limited daily production. The new equipment has automated the shredding process, reduced safety hazards and greatly increased the volume of EPS processed on a daily basis. With the increased capacity, HighCube plans to source EPS from 50 local businesses to divert an additional 45 tons of EPS from landfills every year. As the processing capacity of HighCube grows, the company hopes to expand throughout the state and the nation.

HighCube will purchase two shredders to recycle expanded polystyrene into finished goods.