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Used clothing/textile recycling kick-off event collects nearly 6,000 pounds from Rhode Island residents

SMART partners with RIRRC as sponsor of kick-off event for state wide used clothing collection campaign

Bel Air, Maryland (August 28, 2014) - The Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) says it collected nearly 6,000 pounds of used clothing and household textiles at its recent kick-off event for its new household textile and used clothing educational campaign. The RIRRC, in partnership with all clothing collection companies in the state and the Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) wants the Rhode Islanders to place their used clothing in collection bins found throughout the state.

“We want everyone in Rhode Island to know that their first thought when getting rid of unwanted textiles should be to recycle, not to put those valuable items in the trash,” says Sarah Kite-Reeves, director of recycling services at RIRRC. “Recycling textiles in clothing collection bins found throughout the state reduces the amount of waste buried at the Central Landfill, reduces municipal landfill disposal fees, and gives local charitable organizations and businesses the assets they need to hire more employees and increase their revenue.”

RIRRC brought together eight companies and organizations in Rhode Island that collect textiles: Big Brothers Big Sisters, Goodwill, Kiducation, Mint Green Planet, Planet Aid, Recycling Associates, Salvation Army, and St. Vincent de Paul. All of these organizations have or will be adding stickers to their collection bins to continue to educate the public on what they will accept for processing. Regardless of the condition of their unwanted clothing Rhode Islanders should now utilize one of the newly labeled collection bins. As long as the textiles are clean, dry and odorless, they are perfect for recycling. And the items don’t even need to be separated. The eight collection organizations say just put clothes, shoes, towels, blankets, etc. in a plastic bag and drop them off at a clothing collection bin.

The Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) is the international trade association of the for-profit used clothing recycling industry. Past SMART president, Larry Groipen was at the event answering questions about recycling used textiles. “95% of all used clothing and household textiles can be recycled,” says Groipen. “If the items aren’t reused as clothing, they can be cut into industrial wiping or polishing cloths, or they may be shredded and processed back to their original fiber content. Those fibers are then used to manufacture new items such as household insulation, car

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soundproofing material, carpet padding, stuffing for sports equipment or pet bedding, and many other products.”

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, approximately five percent of all trash is comprised of textiles. Rhode Island’s Central Landfill buries approximately 800,000 tons of waste each year. Using the EPA’s five percent figure that would mean 40,000 tons are used clothing and other household textiles that could have been recycled.

For further details about the companies in Rhode Island that accept textiles, bin locations, and rules and facts, go to RItextiles.org or call 942-1430 x109. To learn more about recycling used clothing, visit SMART’s web site at SMARTasn.org.

About

Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles (SMART) is an international nonprofit trade association that strengthens the economic opportunities of its diverse membership by promoting the interdependence of our industry segments and providing a common forum for networking, education and trade. Since 1932, SMART has been at the forefront of recycling. SMART members use and convert recycled and secondary materials from used clothing, commercial laundries and non-woven, off spec material, new mill ends and paper from around the world. SMART member companies create thousands of jobs worldwide. SMART members prove each day that you can make money by being socially responsible.

For additional information on SMART, visit the association’s website at www.SMARTasn.org. The following link will take you directly to informational videos on textile recycling <http://www.smartasn.org/about/videos.cfm>.

About

Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation is the quasi-state environmental agency dedicated to providing the public with environmentally sound programs and facilities to manage waste. The agency helps fund and promote the state’s recycling program, and owns and operates the Materials Recycling Facility and Central Landfill in Johnston, RI. Go to rirrc.org for more information about recycling and waste in Rhode Island.

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