



**SECONDARY MATERIALS
AND RECYCLED TEXTILES**

The Association of Wiping Materials, Used Clothing and Fiber Industries

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SMART SUPPORTS AMERICA RECYCLES DAY

Encourages people to include textile recycling as part of their regular recycling routine

Bel Air, MD (November 15, 2011) – In recognition of America Recycles Day Tuesday, November 15, the Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) encourages everyone to recycle as much as possible. SMART is a non-profit trade association whose members reclaim, convert, and recycle textiles across the globe. SMART’s primary mission is to increase public awareness of textile recycling to remove clothing and textile products from the world’s waste stream.

SMART member companies across the country are participating in America Recycles Day events. “Nationally, only 15 percent of clothing and textiles are recycled with the other 85 percent is going to landfills or waste combustors,” says Larry Groipen, SMART President and President of ERC Wiping Products (Lynn, MA). ERC Wiping Products is supporting its local America Recycles event in conjunction with the City of Salem, MA.

For the past two years SMART has been an active supporter of America Recycles Day by encouraging member companies to host events, through its social media activities, and on its own website.

“We want the public to know all clothing and household textiles such as tablecloths, sheets, shoes, belts, and stuffed animals can be recycled. As long as the items are clean, even if they are stained or damaged, there is a recycling use for the material,” says Groipen.

Ninety-five percent of all clothing and household textiles can be recycled or repurposed, according to SMART officials. The Association encourages people to donate or recycle all clothing and household textiles in any condition as long as they are clean and dry at all times through the collection process. The 5 percent of textile materials that are disposed of as trash are either wet/mildewed or contaminated with oil, paint, or another hazardous material.

The recycling of clothing, shoes, linens and bedding supports a thriving industry estimated to be as large as \$1 billion across the country.

SMART member companies also work in conjunction with charities such as Goodwill, Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul. These organizations report that about 15-20 percent of the clothing and textiles they receive as donations are sold in their retail stores. The items they can't sell in the U.S. are sold to textile brokers who sort and grade the material into categories. About 45 percent is sent to developing countries as wearable clothing, another 30 percent is sent to companies where they are converted into industrial wiping cloths, and the remainder is sent to fiber converters where they are broken down into their basic fiber components to be re-manufactured into insulation, carpet padding or sound-proofing materials.

"Textiles are one of the lesser known recyclable products although there has been a thriving textile recycling industry for more than 100 years," says SMART Executive Director, Jackie King. "Textile recycling needs to become as familiar to the public moving forward as bottle, can, and paper recycling is today."

Consumers can locate textile recyclers in their area by visiting SMART's web site at www.SMARTasn.org. An interactive tool (widget) on the site allows users to enter their Zip Code to identify the closest organization that accepts clothing and other household textiles for recycling.

For more information on the textile recycling, contact SMART spokesman Paul Bailey at 410.420.2001.

For information on America Recycles Day events, visit: <http://americarecyclesday.org>

About

Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles (SMART) is an international 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 nonwoven, off spec material, new mill ends and paper from around the world. SMART member companies create thousands of jobs worldwide. Our members prove each day that you can make money by being socially responsible.

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