Collecting Textiles:
Make It Work for Your Community
Today’s Definition of Acceptable Textiles to be Recycled

Any clothing, household textile or commercial linen textile as long as it is CLEAN, DRY and has NO ODOR can be reused and recycled.
Acceptable Items to Reuse/Recycle Include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bedding:</th>
<th>Jerseys (sports)</th>
<th>Stuffed animals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(comforters, sheets, pillow cases, blankets)</td>
<td>Napkins (cloth)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belts</td>
<td>Pajamas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boots</td>
<td>Pants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bras</td>
<td>Pet beds &amp; clothing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coats</td>
<td>Pillows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtains/Draperies</td>
<td>Purses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dresses</td>
<td>Scarves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flip flops</td>
<td>Shirts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halloween costumes</td>
<td>Shoes (single or in pairs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hats</td>
<td>Shorts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackets</td>
<td>Skirts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeans</td>
<td>Slippers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socks (single or in pairs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use of the Term “Recycling” Within the Textiles Industries

The industry tends to use the words recycled and reused interchangeably.

The clothing that is sold in charity thrift store and sold to developing nations would be considered “reuse”.

The textiles that are turned into wiping rags and the textiles that are ground up into fiber would be considered recycled.
Why Recycle Textiles?

• 16.22 million tons of textiles were discarded in 2014 or 84%
• Only 2.62 million tons were reused or recycled or 16%
• 6.3% of landfill waste is comprised of textiles; equals 81 pounds per person thrown away annually

Why Recycle Textiles?

- Carbon footprint reduction
- Clean air preservation
- Reduce energy consumption
- Water conservation
- Woodland conservation
Beneficial Impact of Recycling Textiles

The EPA estimates the current level of recycling on reducing greenhouse gasses

- Yard Waste = removes 651,000 cars
- Glass = removes 175,000 cars
- Plastic = removes 670,000 cars
- Aluminum = removes 1.3 million cars
- Textiles = removes 1.3 million cars

why recycle textiles?
CLOTHING AND TEXTILE RECYCLING HAS MAJOR IMPACT ON REDUCING GREENHOUSE GASSES

2 million tons of textiles are recycled each year in the U.S.

That is equivalent to removing 1 MILLION CARS from America’s highways

HOW DOES THIS COMPARE TO OTHER RECYCLABLES?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recyclable</th>
<th>Cars Removed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recycled Yard Trimmings</td>
<td>170,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass Recycling</td>
<td>210,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic Recycling</td>
<td>640,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aluminum Recycling</td>
<td>1.3 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DONATE, RECYCLE, DON’T THROW AWAY!
According to the EPA, textile recycling has a major impact on reducing greenhouse gases. And yet... clothing is not typically considered a recyclable. While 2 million tons are recycled each year, there is a long, long way to go!
Where Does Recycled Clothing Go?

• 45% used for secondhand apparel
• 30% become wiping and polishing cloths
• 20% reprocessed into fibers
• 5% is unusable
Can Textiles Be Recycled? Yes!

- Oldest form of recycling
- Annually…
  - Average person discards 81 lbs of clothing
  - SMART/charities divert 4 billion lbs. of waste
  - SMART is reducing the world’s carbon footprint
  - Only 16% of textiles currently being diverted
- Remember – Donate, Recycle, Don’t Throw Away!
How Are Textiles Reuse & Recycling Industries Different Today?

The industry (process) has not changed in hundreds of years. What has changed is the industry is becoming more transparent and now being recognized by both Charities and regulators as having a positive environmental impact as a recyclable and an economic sector.
Textile Recycling Drives Economy

- Revenue stream for recycling agencies
- Creates jobs
- Funds charitable initiatives
- Promotes small business
- Encourages recycled product development
- Provides affordable clothing opportunity
Can Businesses Recycle Textiles? Yes!

• Healthcare facilities
• Hotels and hospitality facilities
• Textile & paper mills/manufacturers
• Cut and sew plants
• Textile dye facilities
• Retail stores
• Government agencies
• Recycling textiles is EVERYONE’S business!
Reused and recycled textiles return to the consumer as used clothing, home insulation, carpet padding and wiping rags.

The reuse and recycling processes of SMART member companies rely largely on human labor and are far less energy/water/resource-intensive or polluting than other recycling industries.

SMART member companies help prevent more than 3.8 billion lbs. of post-consumer textile waste from ending up in landfills each year.

It is estimated that only 15% of used clothing and textiles are being diverted from the waste stream for recycling purposes. More can and must be done to recapture these vital resources.

Consumers determine which clothing, shoes, purses, etc. are no longer needed. Consumer donates clean and dry items to charity or recycles them with a municipality or collection bin operator.

Charity sells 10-20% of donated items at storefront locations. The remainder of the material (80%) is sold to rag graders or brokers to help generate additional revenue to support charity’s programs.

Nearly 100% of donated clothing and textiles can be reused and recycled. The materials are separated into 3 grades: usable clothing, wiping cloth grades and fiber conversion grades.
SMART Background

• SMART – what does it stand for?
• Nonprofit trade association, established in 1932
• For Profit Used clothing, wiping material, fiber companies
• Nearly 150 companies worldwide
• Committed to “green” way of life
SMART’s Vision

SMART is the leading industry voice promoting high standards and best practices for reuse and recycling of textiles and related secondary materials. Our members reduce solid waste, by collecting, reclaiming, and “close the loop” by processing, reusing, converting, and distributing these recyclables.
What do SMART Companies Do?

• Pre-consumer market
  • Acquire byproduct from textile/fiber companies
  • Repurpose material for consumer products
  • Wiping cloths, insulation, home furnishings…

• Post-consumer market
  • Acquire textiles from charity & commercial linens
  • Once graded, clothing is recycled for various markets
  • Used clothing, Wiping cloths, insulation…
How does SMART Recycle?

• Reduce solid waste through life extension
• Reuse gently worn clothing
• Repurpose/recycle into wiping cloths
• Recycle and convert to fiber
SMART’s Goals

1. Increase awareness of need to recycle textiles
2. Increase supply of textiles in marketplace
3. Decrease the amount of clothing and textiles in landfills
4. Offer help and expertise to government in developing programs to promote textile recycling and help find recycling company partners
5. Reduce cost to municipalities by reducing tipping fees associated with textile waste disposal
6. Capture remaining 85% of textiles that are not being recycled – Donate, Recycle, Don’t Throw Away.
7. Educate students about textile recycling through Recycling Rangers program for grades K-5
Recent SMART Initiatives - Education

• Lesson Plans for Elementary Students
  - Grade Appropriate for students Grades K-5
  - Available free from SMART website under Educators & Kids
  - SMART’s Goal was to reach 1 million students by 2015. This goal was achieved in March 2015 in conjunction with 2014-15 campaign.
Recent SMART Initiatives - Communication

• Television PSA
  - Community Recycling of Clothing and Textiles
  - 60: second spot
• Radio PSAs
  - 4 versions, 30:seconds each
  - Scripts include: Back-to-School; Earth Day; Spring Cleaning; End-of-the-Semester
• Info graphics to help tell story about textile recycling and benefits to environment
• SMART Member Locator
donate recycle don’t throw away

A PROGRAM OF SMART THE SECONDARY MATERIALS AND RECYCLED TEXTILES ASSOCIATION

The average U.S. citizen throws away 81 lbs. of clothing each year.

95% of textiles worn or torn can be recycled.
15% end up in our landfills.

That amount is equal to 26 billion lbs. or 310,000 truckloads.

Textile recyclers reuse and recycle 5 billion lbs. of textiles each year.

More than $100 million is generated for charities from second-hand clothing sales.

Since 1932

SMART SECONDARY MATERIALS® AND RECYCLED TEXTILES
The Association of Wiping Materials, Used Clothing and Fiber Industries

SMART
the secret double life of donated textiles

NEARLY 100% OF DONATED TEXTILES ARE RECYCLED! They are separated into three grades:

- 45% USABLE CLOTHING
- 20% FIBER CONVERSION GRADE
- 30% MANUFACTURING GRADE

Recycled fiber products SAVE MONEY and RESOURCES by using existing materials.
Recycled cloth napkins use LESS WATER, LESS ENERGY and create a LOWER CARBON FOOTPRINT than all other alternatives.

CLOSING THE LOOP

The second hand clothing market provides AFFORDABLE CLOTHING to those in need and ENCOURAGES GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

SECOND LIFE...

- stained t-shirt → wiping cloth
- lone sock → pillow stuffing
- old denim → household insulation
- teddy bear → car seat stuffing
- torn bath towel → wiping cloth
SMART Member Locator
Listing of SMART Members on www.smartasn.org
Searchable by
Product Category, State
Available to Public
Recent SMART Initiatives - Legislative

- Clothing Collection Bins in the Community
  - Clothing Collection Bin Operator Code of Conduct
  - Draft Ordinance Language
  - Bin Position Paper
  - Development of Bin Committee of SMART members to work on proactive efforts in cities and towns
- Municipality Outreach Document
- Ongoing outreach to communities about benefits of textile recycling and need for reasonable regulations
Council For Textile Recycling

- Sister organization to SMART; 501c3 charitable org
- Membership open to municipalities, states, government agencies at no charge
- Goal is to educate public about textile recycling and to promote zero textile waste in landfills by 2037
- Members also include apparel manufacturers and retailers, charities, academics and textile recycling companies
- [www.weardonatererecycle.org](http://www.weardonatererecycle.org)
How Can You Help?

• Provide convenient collection points
• Promote textile recycling days
  - Earth Day (April 22)
  - America Recycles Day (November 15)
  - End-of-the-Semester (partner with local colleges)
• Include textile recycling in all public relations and promotion efforts supporting recycling programs
• Help educate the recycling public about textile recycling
• Encourage public agencies to use wiping products made from recycled textiles
Recent SMART Initiatives - ReClothe NY

• Partnership with NYSAR3 and CTR for first ever statewide textile recycling campaign
  - ReClothe NY launched in conjunction with America Recycles Day 2014
• Included PR toolkit for local recycling coordinators to use to conduct outreach to local media about program
• Developed Operational Manual for Communities to use to help them launch events around campaign
• Award Winning Program – 2015 EPA Environmental Champion Award – Region II
Additional Questions?

Contact SMART
Jackie King, Executive Director
443-640-1050 x105
jackie@kingmgmt.org
www.SMARTasn.org
Thank you!