Discarded Textiles Management Training
Concord, New Hampshire
April 22, 2016
Calculating the Disposal Costs of Discarded Textiles

- 82 lbs. of textiles/person/year

- 85% of textiles generated each year is discarded annually = 69.7 lbs/person

- 70/lbs of textiles x 10,000 people = 700,000lbs = 350 tons

- 350 tons x $96/ton = $33,600 in disposal costs/year
Conducting Due Diligence on Non-profit Vendors

- Search for them at Charity Navigator [http://www.charitynavigator.org/] and Charity Watch [http://www.charitywatch.org/]

- Visit the vendor’s website to see what they say about themselves.

- Search for them on the Internet to find out what others are saying about them.

- Contact State’s Better Business Bureau
Conducting Due Diligence on For-profit Companies

• Visit the vendor’s website to see what they say about themselves.

• Search for them on the Internet to find out what others are saying about them.

• Contact State’s Better Business Bureau

• Contact State’s environmental regulatory agency
States Charging Ahead With Textile Recovery
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April 22, 2016
Today’s Definition of Acceptable Textiles to be Recycled

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

Bedding: (comforters, sheets, pillow cases, blankets)
Belts
Boots
Bras
Coats
Curtains/Draperies
Dresses
Flip flops
Halloween costumes
Hats
Jackets
Jeans

Jerseys (sports)
Napkins (cloth)
Pajamas
Pants
Pet beds & clothing
Pillows
Purses
Scarfes
Shirts
Shoes (single or in pairs)
Shorts
Skirts
Slippers
Socks (single or in pairs)

Stuffed animals
Suits
Sweaters
Sweatpants
Sweatshirts
Table linens
Ties
Towels
T-shirts
Undergarments
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?

“The EPA estimates that between 1999 & 2011 the amount of textiles in our landfills grew by 22% from 9.1 Million Tons to 11.1 Million Tons. Yet textile diversion only grew by 2.4%, from 12.9% to 15.3.”*

Source: EPA report on Municipal Solid Waste Facts and Figures 2011
Why Recycle Textiles?

• Carbon footprint reduction
• Clean air preservation
• Reduce energy consumption
• Water conservation
• Woodland conservation
• 6.6% of waste stream is currently made up of clothing and household textiles; adds up to more than 11 million tons thrown away annually
Beneficial Impact of Recycling Textiles

The EPA estimates the current level of recycling on reducing greenhouse gasses:
- Yard Waste = removes 170,000 cars
- Glass = removes 210,000 cars
- Plastic = removes 640,000 cars
- Aluminum = removes 1.3 million cars
- Textiles = removes 1 million cars

Source: EPA report on Municipal Solid Waste Facts and Figures 2011
Table 5. Page 12.
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 COMPARISON TO OTHER RECYCLABLES?

- RECYCLED YARD TRIMMINGS: 170,000 CARS REMOVED
- GLASS RECYCLING: 210,000 CARS REMOVED
- PLASTIC RECYCLING: 640,000 CARS REMOVED
- ALUMINUM RECYCLING: 1.3 million CARS REMOVED

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!

SMART - The Association of Wiping Materials, Used Clothing and Fiber Industries
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 15% 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!
The lifecycle of rags

1. START HERE
   - Reused and recycled textiles return to the consumer as used clothing, home insulation, carpet padding and wiping rags.
   - 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.

2. 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.
   - 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.
   - 45% usable clothing
   - 20% fiber conversion
   - 30% wiping cloth
SMART Background

• SMART – what does it stand for?
• Nonprofit trade association, established in 1932
• For Profit Used clothing, wiping material, fiber companies
• Nearly 200 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.
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
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 lines
  • Once graded, clothing is recycled
  • Some members collect used clothing and textiles using textile recycling bins
Donate, recycle, don’t throw away

A Program of SMART, The Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association

Donate, recycle, don’t throw away

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

95% of textiles worn or torn can be recycled. Only 15% of that gets donated or recycled.

85% of that goes into 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 dollars of funding generated for charities from second-hand clothing sales.

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% VULNERABLE CLOTHING GRADE

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

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

Since 1932
SMART
The Association of Wiping Materials, Used Clothing and Fiber Industries
SMART THE SECONDARY MATERIALS AND RECYCLED TEXTILES ASSOCIATION
SMART Member Locator
Listing of SMART Members on
www.smartasn.org
Searchable by
Product Category, Company, State
Available to Public
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.
A PROGRAM OF SMART THE SECONDARY MATERIALS AND RECYCLED TEXTILES ASSOCIATION
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
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

• [Website Link](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 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
Recent SMART Initiatives - Mass DEP

- Partnership with Mass DEP and CTR for textile recovery campaign
  - Stakeholder Meeting October 2015, Boston MA
  - Launch to take place in January 2016
  - Events in 2016 to coordinate with Earth Day
- Includes PR toolkit for local recycling coordinators to use to conduct outreach to local media about program
- Operational Manual for Communities to use to help them launch events around campaign
2016 MassDEP Recycling Dividends Program (RDP)
Textile Recovery Initiative Bonus Points Activities

Earn bonus points for keeping textiles out of the trash! Once your municipality has earned the 6 points required to qualify for RDP, your municipality is eligible to earn a bonus point by completing 3-6 of the activities detailed over the next couple of slides. 7,499 or fewer households must complete 3 activities. 7,500+ households must complete 6 activities. Activities must be completed between 6-15-15 and 6-15-16.
2016 MassDEP Recycling Dividends Program (RDP)
Textile Recovery Initiative Bonus Points Activities

- Municipal recycling coordinator participated in Textile Recovery Media Toolkit Webinar offered by MassDEP on 3-2-16.
- A link to MassDEP’s Beyond the Bin Recycling Directory is in a prominent location on municipal recycling webpage.
- News articles or guest editorial on textile recovery was published in local newspaper.
- Textile recovery information and locations posted on community boards (library, schools, town hall, community center, etc.)
- Quarterly online promotion of textile recovery through blog post, social media, municipal website, mobile applications prompts or electronic newsletter.
- Textile recovery program has been established at one or more schools.
2016 MassDEP Recycling Dividends Program (RDP) Textile Recovery Initiative Bonus Points Activities

- Municipal recycling mailing to residents (e.g. direct mailer, postcard, statement stuffer, calendar) that includes information about textile collection locations
- Annual or seasonal textile collection event or zero waste event that includes textile collection
- Textile recovery PSAs or other videos to promote textile recovery air on local cable or radio station
- Municipality has adopted regulation or ordinance governing clothing/textile donation bins
- Permanent textile collection bin located at municipal drop-off, transfer station, library or other non-school public facility
- Municipality tracks textile tonnage data from private and municipal collection sites and reports to MassDEP on the CY 2015 Recycling and Solid Wastes Survey
Future Smart Partnerships with States

• SMART interested in partnering with more states
• Need to have members in community to collect and support and help SMART provide resources needed to partner on campaign
  • Are there SMART members in the community?
  • Are SMART members able to present at meetings or can SMART provide staff to present?
• Need to have all stakeholders engaged for program to work – charities, for profit, thrifts and government
• Consensus from partners on messaging very important to SMART
Additional Questions?

Contact SMART
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Thank you!