

Textile Reuse & Recycling in Vermont

September 2016

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I. Executive Summary

State statute (10 V.S.A. §6604(a)) requires the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) to adopt Solid Waste Management Plan (referred to as the Materials Management Plan, or MMP). Specifically, ANR is directed to “set forth a comprehensive statewide strategy for the management of waste,” which included the new requirement to reduce “the state’s reliance on waste disposal to the greatest extent feasible,” and continue to promote “waste processing to reduce the volume or toxicity of the waste stream necessary for disposal.” (10 V.S.A. §6604(1)(D) and (F)).

The resulting MMP, adopted in June 2014, committed to initiating a process by which stakeholders would be convened to evaluate materials that do not fall under the disposal bans adopted under the Universal Recycling law. This commitment was also made in the November 2013 *Report to the Vermont Legislature: Act 148 Implementation*. The MMP states:

ANR will host a stakeholder process convening during 2014 to direct legislative consideration of additional programs to increase diversion of difficult-to-manage materials and offset the expenses incurred by solid waste management entities and taxpayers (MMP, 2014).

The legislation also requires ANR to include “used clothing” in the MMP as a target material for diversion. Given that market for the reuse and recycling of these materials includes rags and fibers beyond just used clothing, the MMP devised performance measures around “textiles” to meet both the legislative requirements and ANR’s overall goal to reduce reliance on waste disposal. The industry recognized definition of “textile” acceptable for reuse or recycling includes “any clothing, household textile or commercial linen textile as long as it is dry and has no odor.” From that definition and for the purposes of this report “diversion” means the reuse and recycling of these materials.

Vermont has made progress in reducing and diverting solid waste since the passage of its first significant solid waste management law in 1987¹. However, leading up to the passage of Vermont’s Universal Recycling law (Act 148 of 2012), the state’s recycling and reuse rate (“diversion rate”) had stagnated between 30-36%, and the per capita generation rate was over 5lbs per person a day. While Vermont’s disposal and diversion numbers are reported and compiled on a recurring basis, the latest data set from 2015 indicates that municipal solid waste generation is down 5%.

With the passage of the Universal Recycling law, the State aims to increase recycling and reuse statewide, reaching 50% diversion of municipal solid waste by 2022. The remaining 50% or so disposed is comprised of materials not captured by waste hauling and processing infrastructure, resulting in a material type that is difficult or less convenient to reuse or recycle.

In response to this remaining 50% of the waste stream, a “Beyond Waste Advisory Group” was convened in the fall of 2014. An outcome from that group was a list of priority materials that will benefit from further analysis and discussion from targeted stakeholder meetings with support from ANR. The Advisory Group determined that textiles fell near the top of that list as a category of material that has some existing diversion infrastructure, but faces some convenient collection and market challenges. To provide a structured and facilitated conversation, ANR initiated a Textile Stakeholder Series in the spring of 2016.

This report captures a summary of the findings as it relates to textiles, the observations and anecdotes that were highlighted during the stakeholder series, and a summary of recommendations devised by the 2016 textiles stakeholder group to support markets and increase textiles reuse and recycling collection.

¹ Act 78

Textile Stakeholder Series

The Textiles Stakeholder Series (Series) convened four meetings beginning in April and running through September of 2016. Each of the four meetings were centrally located in Montpelier and were inclusive of representatives from municipal entities charged with implementing the MMP, private collection and processing organizations, retailers, environmental interest groups, and higher education institutions. Stakeholder meetings were focused on increasing textile diversion, improving awareness of textiles that can be diverted from the landfill, and gauging opportunities to support and expand collection infrastructure in Vermont.

Process and Goals

Those participating in the Series were tasked with evaluating the current collection infrastructure from their organization's perspective, assessing needs and barriers to increase diversion of textiles, and to coalesce on recommendations and strategies to increase textile reuse and recycling. The process drew upon state and regional efforts to date, effectively engaged Vermont-specific stakeholders, and recognized the State's unique characteristics and challenges. Decisions were made by consensus.

Recommendations

The participants were directed to develop actionable recommendations that may assist with improving collection convenience, support markets, and increase education on the breadth of reusable and recyclable textiles. Several suggestions were presented by the stakeholders. Amongst those discussed, a smaller selection was identified to move forward on in the near future.

Recommendations of the Textiles Stakeholder Series:

- Request Solid Waste District Managers' Association to consider collaborating on a contract with one or more textiles collection organizations, which could help them find an affordable collector and ensure convenient infrastructure is in place and is maintained for Vermonters
- Improve information sharing between collectors and municipalities to clarify things such as how collectors evaluate ability to place a bin, or the type and quality of materials accepted through various collection methods
- Increase matchmaking efforts to partner schools and community groups with collection organizations
- Adopt consistency in language similar to neighboring state efforts to align with inter-state commerce

The participants also agreed that the following action items warranted further consideration:

- Quarterly or bi-annual textiles conference calls or in-person meetings to gauge progress and share information
- Partner with retailers that offer textile recycling programs and collaboratively advertise through various media platforms on a recurring basis
- Encourage annual community collection events to host a textile swap, or encourage donation activities
- Provide a resource hub for residents and local municipalities with information about reuse and recycling in Vermont

II. Background

While Vermont has made progress in reducing and diverting solid waste since the passage of its first significant solid waste management law in 1987², much remains to be done. For the past ten years, Vermont's diversion rate – the amount of material kept out of landfills or incinerators – has been stuck between 30-36%. Additionally, in 2014 Vermonters disposed of 3.60 pounds of waste per person per day, a number that is higher than the 2.69 pounds per person per day disposal goal identified in the MMP. One mechanism to achieve this goal is through implementation of the Universal Recycling law (Act 148 of 2012). The UR law aims to increase diversion rate by focusing on building consistent and convenient services for recycling of typical “blue bin” recyclables, such as metal, plastic and glass bottles and containers; and paper and cardboard; increase capture of edible food for food donation, provide as animal feed when appropriate, and direct food scraps to composting, and anaerobic digestion; and divert leaf, yard, and clean wood from the landfill. With full implementation of the Universal Recycling law, Vermont is anticipated to reach 50% diversion of municipal solid waste by 2022. The remaining 50% disposed is comprised of materials that do not lend themselves easily to reuse or recycling through the existing infrastructure, resulting in a material type that is difficult to manage.

Another approach ANR is taking to decrease the amount of material disposed is to tackle difficult to recycle materials. By doing so, ANR is addressing “the other 50%” of materials that constitute what is discarded in Vermont based on the state's Waste Composition Study. These types of materials are the kind that cannot go through processing at the materials recovery facilities (MRF) or commercial organics (food scraps and leaf and yard debris) processing facilities. For that reason, these materials are referred to as “difficult to recycle” materials. While there may be some infrastructure in place to help collect and divert them there may not be the same convenience as more commonly recyclable or compostable materials. Convening stakeholder meetings on targeted difficult to recycle materials has been a first step to setting priorities and developing action items to assist with outreach and education, infrastructure expansion, and market support.

To measure progress to attaining the 2.69 lbs per person per day disposal goal, ANR compiles data reported from certified solid waste facilities in to an annual report known as the Diversion and Disposal Report (D&D Report). The 2015 D&D Report reflects that Vermont is already seeing a decline in per capita trash disposal rate. In the 2015 calendar year the total waste tonnage disposed was 5% lower than the previous year.

While it is too soon to attribute the observed decline in the disposal rate solely to the implementation of the UR law, it is a promising indicator and one that ANR will watch closely. The ultimate goal of the MMP and the Universal Recycling law is to reduce the amount of material disposed of and ensure adequate infrastructure for sustainable management of these materials such as, reuse, recycling, donation, composting etc. Realizing these goals will better protect our groundwater and air quality, curb greenhouse gas emissions, extend the life of our landfill, and grow new Vermont jobs. A timeline for implementing Universal Recycling can be found in Appendix C.

Beyond Waste Advisory Group

The Beyond Waste Advisory Group (Advisory Group) was formed in response to a commitment ANR made in the November 2013 *Report to the Vermont Legislature: Act 148 Implementation*, and the statewide Materials Management Plan of 2014, which stated:

ANR will host a stakeholder process over the next year to direct legislative consideration of additional programs to increase diversion of difficult to manage materials and offset the expenses incurred by municipal solid waste districts and taxpayers.

Convened in 2014, the Advisory Group considered the impacts and management of materials that may not be covered by the disposal bans outlined in the Universal Recycling law. Materials evaluated are difficult-to-manage due to

² Act 78

characteristics such as their volume within the waste stream, toxicity, limited end markets, and limited collection and processing infrastructure among other things.

To prioritize the materials, the Advisory Group established a matrix consisting of eight elements divided into two categories (Characteristics of Material & Existing Infrastructure) with a third category to balance feasibility (Likelihood of Success). The first category relates to the inherent characteristics of the material that impacts its ability to be diverted from the landfill. The second category encompasses infrastructure related factors. Lastly, is a category to gauge the likelihood a new collection program would be able to get off the ground, or expand an existing collection infrastructure if one exists.

As a result, the materials recommended by the Beyond Waste Advisory Group for additional individualized management strategies were chosen because of their high volume within the waste stream or their hazardous nature, and therefore pose the greatest risk to or stress on Vermont’s waste (materials) management system and natural resources. The following prioritized materials were identified. Refer to the 2015 *Report to the Legislature: Beyond Waste Advisory Group* for details.

Priority Materials:

- Textiles
- Construction & Demolition Debris (beyond architectural waste)
- Tires
- Household Hazardous Waste, Oil and Oil Filters

The group also agreed by consensus that the following materials warranted further discussion:

- Pharmaceuticals
- Agricultural Plastics
- Printed Material, Paper and Packaging (paper-based and non-paper based)

Categories & Criteria	Sub Criteria
<i>Characteristics of Material</i>	
Environment & Human Health	Product toxicity and potential impact on human health and the environment, including GHG emissions
Value	Inherent value in the material; existing markets and potential of the market to expand
Recyclability	Able to be recycled, reprocessed or repurposed
Volume	Impact on existing landfill capacity; amount currently diverted. Weight is often used as a proxy because volume data is difficult to collect. Though there are instances where low weight high volume materials impact landfill capacity
<i>Existing Infrastructure</i>	
Low Recovery Rate	Material reflects a low recovery, or diversion rate
Opportunities to Expand Existing Programs	Opportunity exists to improve under-performing programs; access to programs is low; importance of assessing program effectiveness; and existing recovery rate
Infrastructure Readiness	Collection and processing logistics
Cost	Cost to consumers, manufacturers, municipalities all effect diversion rates. Is there a more costs effective way to handle the material and maintain a high diversion rate

Based on the priorities identified by the Advisory Group, textiles were a class of materials that warranted further action from a material specific stakeholder group. Understanding the state of textile collection infrastructure, disposal rates, and market demand was a next step to evaluating the success and challenges of diverting the material from the landfill.

III. State of Textile Collection in Vermont

Before assessing the status of the disposal and diversion rates in Vermont clarifying what “textiles” encompass was important. The definition used by Secondary Materials and Recycling Textiles (SMART), an association of 150 companies worldwide that specialize in wiping materials, used clothing, and used fiber industries, is “any clothing, household textile or commercial linen textile as long as it is dry and has no odor can be reused and recycled.” SMART indicates acceptable textiles to 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; Scarves; 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; and Undergarments.

Of the materials that SMART organizations recycle, they reported in late 2015 that an estimated 45% is used for secondhand apparel, 30% become wiping and polishing cloths, 20% is reprocessed into fibers, and 5% is unusable.

A 2002 report, *Vermont’s Municipal Solid Waste Diversion Rate: Results of Reuse and Recycling Survey*, estimated just over 1,790 tons of textiles were diverted from the landfill. Although ANR has not commissioned a similar report since then, 2014 diversion data provided from 9 out of 27 solid waste municipal entities (SWME) 147.58 tons diverted. Late reporting from two municipalities added 757 tons, and one for-profit organizations that provided data added another 58.5 tons to round out to a low-end estimate of 963.08 tons diverted in 2014. There are likely additional tons being diverted but it is not feasible to know how much more tonnage that may total to. The reason being is that because reuse and direct to market sale of the commodities are not required to be reported to ANR.

Because Vermont does not have reliable diversion data for textiles, the best available Vermont specific data we do have is based on the *2012 based on the Vermont Waste Composition Study (WCS)*. Based on the WCS, we know that textiles comprised an estimated 27,658 tons of the total materials landfilled in Vermont annually. A larger portion of that, nearly 16,800 tons, was attributed to the residential sector. The remainder was associated as disposal from the institutional, commercial, and industrial sectors based in Vermont. Textiles sent to the landfill in the 2012 WCS shows a slight increase from the previous WCS completed in 2001. This increase is characteristic of a decline in convenient collection ANR has heard from SWMEs, and complaints of low commodities market pricing from the reuse and recycling sector.

One rural town shared “The company we were using pulled out all of their containers and are still pulling out containers in other towns due to lower returns for the materials they collect. Some of the agencies that collect locally have limitations on what they can take in. So the options are limited at best to not available.” A more populated SWME shared with ANR that “We’ve had a textile recycling program for over 10 years, we’re now with our 7th vendor.” These difficulties for collection are reflective of changes in commodity pricing for the textile reuse and recycling industry.

A 2015 white paper from SMART, *Why is There Currently Less Demand for Used Clothing?*, responds to industry frustrations regarding low markets by describing the challenge as “In light of the economic shifts... many used clothing graders in North America have reduced their grading capacity by 40-50% and even still are having difficulty selling their graded production. There is less worldwide demand for post-consumer textile waste and derivative secondary market products, and there is still a global glut of used clothing.” In light of these challenges SMART has a positive perspective. “Despite these challenging times, SMART remains optimistic about our industry and its prospects. Textiles have been

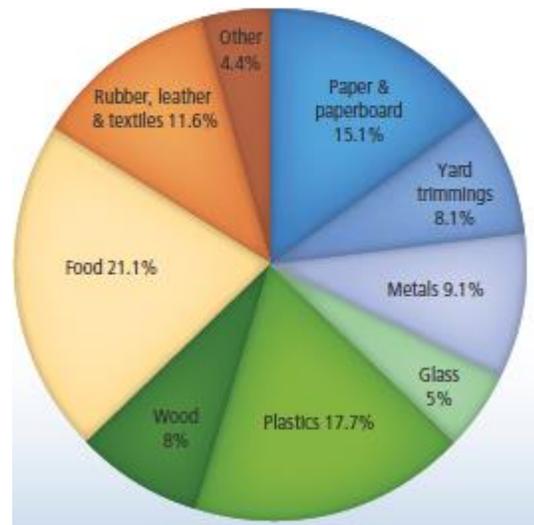
reused and recycled for centuries and we are confident that both demand and prices for used clothing will eventually rebound.” Considering these realities as it impacts Vermont, the disposal rate of textiles nationally is not better.

The graph to the right reflects 2013 data reported by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). It shows that an approximate 11.6%, or 12.83 million tons, of the 167 million tons disposed of nationally is comprised of rubber, leather, and textiles.

Given that there is some infrastructure in place in Vermont to collect textiles or reuse and recycling, and the disposal rate was estimated above 27,000 tons annually in 2012 there was opportunity for ANR and interested stakeholders to convene to assess how additional textiles could be diverted from the landfill.

Total MSW Discards (by material), 2013 167 Million Tons (after recycling and composting)

USEPA National Disposal Estimate



IV. Stakeholder Series Summary

The Textile Stakeholder Series was initiated in response to textiles being identified by the Beyond Waste Advisory Group as one of the prioritized materials recommended for further action in a short time period following the late 2014 Advisory Group meetings.

To respond to that need, a series of four meetings was initiated in the spring of 2016 and carried into late summer. Stakeholder Series participants included agency staff, municipal solid waste representatives, retail industry representatives, for-profit and non-profit collection and processing organizations, academic institutions, and environmental groups (See Appendix A). ANR Solid Waste Program staff coordinated the meetings, provided the group with background information regarding the current data available on textile diversion and disposal, shared anecdotes from municipal entities challenged by finding consistent collection companies, and shared information on campaigns from other northeast states have taken on to increase textiles diversion.

Goals and Process

The Stakeholder Series was formed to develop recommendations for increasing and sustaining the reuse and recycling (diversion) of textiles. As markets for traditional “blue bin” recyclable materials have faced lower than normal commodity pricing, so too have the textile reuse and recycling markets. This tends to be exaggerated in regions with lower population and limited transportation corridors. Recently, in some areas of Vermont, textiles collectors such as Planet Aid have been pulling out their yellow drop-boxes and other solid waste districts are finding it hard if not impossible to find an affordable textile collector. Several stakeholders commented that textiles often suffer from inconsistent, inconvenient, or limited collection systems, which are not cost effective.

Together, the Stakeholders:

- Reviewed previous efforts by other states and organizations to establish consistent terminology.
- Assessed Vermont’s challenges in relation to those other states are facing to gauge reasonable next steps.
- Identified a list of action items that the Stakeholders can reference to gain additional support from colleagues, organizations, and community members.
- Utilized sister state resources, lessons learned, and web based tools to narrow down potential next steps to align ourselves with efforts already underway in other regions so efforts to increase diversion in Vermont can more focus on better access to textile collection services for residents and Solid Waste Management Entities.

Some noteworthy discussion from the meetings included perspectives from the for-profit sector. While some non-profit organizations are removing their collection bins from Vermont, the gap in service allows some companies to explore the opportunity to offer collection in Vermont for the first time, or to expand. For example, St. Pauly Textiles indicated that while they are open to expanding collection services in Vermont the opportunities to connect with viable local partners has been low. Matchmaking with schools, churches, and municipalities would be welcomed assistance.

On the non-profit end, Salvation Army shared the possibility to creating a hub in southern Vermont to provide a base closer to northern New England. Having a service center would allow for expanded collection services to regions that have not been accessible previously to the non-profit due to the expense of transporting the textiles long distances before reaching a sort location.

Municipalities are having mixed experiences. While some have had success forming new relationships with for-profit companies expanding into the state but indicate some expense for ensuring the textile collection services are available. Others have shared that their reuse stores are no longer accepting donations and cannot solicit interest to place collection bins within their jurisdiction. The experiences vary across the state but all seem consistent in the need for increased convenient and consistent collection locations and, once available, more outreach and education to the general public to help with understanding the broad array of materials that can be donated for reuse or recycling.

The overall process drew upon state and regional efforts to date, while effectively engaging Vermont-specific stakeholders and recognizing the State's unique characteristics. Decisions were made by consensus. Stakeholder Series participants invested a great deal of time, energy, and travel to discuss existing challenges faced by various portions of Vermont.

V. Recommendations

The results of the Textiles Stakeholder Series are a combined product of the work accomplished by the Beyond Waste Advisory Group and those that participated in this material specific series of meetings. Since, Vermont is facing a unique challenge with a lack of convenient and affordable collection options, the recommendations differ from next steps that would focus solely on outreach and education. In addition, without understanding the infrastructure available, knowing its effectiveness, and its quirks, participants felt that developing an outreach campaign as an immediate next step would not be productive.

Recommendations of the Textiles Stakeholder Series:

- Request Solid Waste District Managers' Association to consider collaborating on a contract with one or more textiles collection organizations, which could help them find an affordable collector and ensure convenient infrastructure is in place and is maintained for Vermonters
- Improve information sharing between collectors and municipalities to clarify things such as how collectors evaluate ability to place a bin, or the type and quality of materials accepted through various collection methods
- Increase matchmaking efforts to partner schools and community groups with collection organizations
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The participants also agreed that the following action items warranted further consideration:

- Quarterly or bi-annual textiles conference calls or in-person meetings to gauge progress and share information
- Partner with retailers that offer textile recycling programs and collaboratively advertise through various media platforms on a recurring basis
- Encourage annual community collection events to host a textile swap, or encourage donation activities
- Provide a resource hub for residents and local municipalities with information about reuse and recycling in Vermont

The Advisory Group noted that as the materials management landscape evolves, ANR should use its discretion regarding the order in which these and other difficult to manage materials are addressed in greater depth.

VI. Conclusions

Textile Stakeholder Series participants succeeded in reviewing current conditions that facilitate or prohibit expanded textile collection across the state. Through sharing their organizations experiences and perspectives of the course of four meetings held over a six-month period, the participants developed a set of recommended action items. These were developed collaboratively to ensure there is convenient and consistent collection of textiles exist in all regions of Vermont. It is noteworthy that this group of stakeholders could develop actionable tasks given that it is not as simple as a dedicated outreach and educational campaign. These stakeholders were able to identify that services need to be in place prior to, or in tandem with, additional efforts to educate Vermonters about opportunities to reuse and recycle their textiles. (See Appendix A for list of participants). Their efforts will lead to a collaborative effort to support an expansion of a collection system that has faced economic challenges in volatile domestic and international commodities markets. By implementing the set of recommendations proposed, these collaborative actions should work to decrease volume of textiles sent to the landfill, support and expand market development for reuse and recycling, and grow new Vermont jobs.

VII. Appendices

APPENDIX A: List of Textile Stakeholder Series Participants and Schedule of Meetings

The following participants contributed to the Textile Stakeholder Series discussion. Note that not all participants listed below were able to attend each of the three meetings held. The “*” denotes participants that were present for the final meeting held on September 8, 2016. These participants assisted with framing the state of textile collection in Vermont and contributed to the development of action items for additional collaborative efforts in the near future.

Alex Hillis - St. Pauly Textiles

Joe Whitten - Apparel Impact

Mike Peabody - CVSWMD

Elly Ventura - LRSWMD

Amanda Carlson - Lowell Town

Amy McVey – CSWD

Mary Ann Remolador – NERC

Falko Schilling - VPIRG

Jim Harrison – Vermont Retail & Grocers Association

Nicole DiDomenico – Norwich University

Brian Perks – Salvation Army

Sarah Reeves – RIRR (call-in speaker)

Brook Nash – MassDEP (call-in speaker)

Ann McGovern – MassDEP (call-in speaker)

Cathy Jamieson, Josh Kelly, Bryn Oakleaf, & Mia Roethlein - VTANR

Textile Stakeholder Series Meetings

1. April 19, 2016
2. May 27, 2016
3. July 7, 2016
4. September 8, 2016

Minutes from all Textile Stakeholder Series meetings are available upon request to the Agency of Natural Resources by calling 802/828-1138.

APPENDIX B: Sample webpages from State Agencies from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York

There is great value in looking at what other states in the northeast have done to assist with textile reuse and recycling. During the second of the four stakeholder meetings representatives from Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and Rhode Island Resource Recovery (RIRR) provided the Vermont Textile Series participants with presentations on stakeholder groups they have convened, resulting programming offered, and web-based tools for easy reference to types and condition of textiles accepted for reuse or recycled. Included here are examples of the webpages from MassDEP and RIRR.

The screenshot shows the Mass.gov website. The top navigation bar includes 'Mass.gov', 'State Offices & Courts', 'State A-Z Topics', 'State Forms', 'No Active Alerts', 'Skip to main content', and a language dropdown set to 'English'. The main header identifies the site as 'The Official Website of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' and features the 'Energy and Environmental Affairs' logo and a search bar. A secondary navigation bar lists various departments, with 'Agencies' selected. The breadcrumb trail reads: 'EEA Home > Agencies > MassDEP > Waste & Recycling > Reduce, Reuse, Recycle > Textile Recovery'. The main content area is titled 'Textile Recovery' and contains an introductory paragraph, a list of links, and two sub-sections: 'Textiles by the Numbers' and 'How & Where to Recycle Textiles'. A right-hand sidebar features a 'MassDEP Waste & Recycling' image, 'A to Z Quick Links', 'Waste & Recycling Index', and a 'Textile Recycling in the News' section with several news links.

Textile Recovery

Massachusetts residents and businesses dispose approximately 230,000 tons of textiles annually. About 95 percent of this material could be reused or recycled instead of thrown away. Learn what the state is doing and what you can do to keep clothing, footwear, bedding, curtains - even stuffed animals - out of landfills and incinerators, and to extend their useful lives by putting them in the hands of new owners or recycling their fibers into other products.

- Textiles by the Numbers
- How & Where to Recycle Textiles
- Promoting & Regulating Textile Recycling in Your Community
- Textile Recycling Education in Schools
- State & Regional Initiatives

Textiles by the Numbers

- [Used Textiles: A Valuable Resource](#)
MassDEP fact sheet describing how textile recycling benefits our economy, environment and society.
- [Textile Recycling](#)
Facts and figures from the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI)
- [Waste Combustor Class II Recycling Program Waste Characterization Data Profiles, June 2012](#)
Nearly six percent of the waste delivered to Massachusetts combustion facilities for disposal is made up of clothing, curtains, towels and other fabrics. See Page 8: Textiles.

How & Where to Recycle Textiles

- [Beyond the Bin](#)
Search by type of material and your location to find out where in Massachusetts to recycle, reuse, or repurpose items that don't belong in your household recycling bin.
- [Clothing & Footwear Manufacturer & Retailer Take-Back Programs](#)
A growing number of companies accept unwanted or worn-out apparel and shoes for reuse and recycling.

Textile Recycling in the News

Atlantic Monthly:
[Where Does Discarded Clothing Go?](#)

Boston Globe:
[Money in Old Clothes](#)

National Public Radio:
[The Afterlife of American Clothes](#)
[How Not Recycling Old Clothes Can Hurt the Environment](#)
[The Global Afterlife of Your Donated Clothes](#)

USA Today:
[Clothes Recycling Goes Curbside as Demand Rises](#)

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/recycle/reduce/textile-recycling.html>



Wondering what to do with ratty old clothes and textiles?



You wouldn't give them as gifts.



You shouldn't throw them in the trash.



You can't put them in the recycling bin.



This is where they belong.

As long as they're CLEAN, DRY, and ODORLESS.
(it's OK if they're still stained after washing)

You know you can give these organizations the good clothes you no longer wear.

But did you know you can also give them clothes that aren't good enough to wear?

Why do they accept such items?

Because they can sell them to companies that repurpose them into rags, furniture stuffing, insulation, and more. Of course, they still want your gently worn, usable clothes, too. So, put the good stuff and the not-so-good stuff in the same bag and toss it into your favorite collection bin.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/kbel4pp0n1ead6p/Screenshot%202016-08-26%2015.56.36.png?dl=0>



Universal Recycling Law TIMELINE

JULY 1
2014

- › Transfer stations/Drop-off Facilities must accept residential recyclables at no separate charge
- › Food scrap generators of 104 tons/year (2 tons/week) must divert material to any certified facility within 20 miles

JULY 1
2015

- › Statewide unit based pricing takes effect, requiring residential trash charges be based on volume or weight
- › Recyclables are banned from the landfill
- › Transfer stations/Drop-off Facilities must accept leaf and yard debris
- › Haulers must offer residential recycling collection at no separate charge
- › Public buildings must provide recycling containers alongside all trash containers in public spaces (exception for restrooms)
- › Food scrap generators of 52 tons/year (1 ton/week) must divert material to any certified facility within 20 miles

JULY 1
2016

- › Leaf, yard, and clean wood debris are banned from the landfill
- › Haulers must offer leaf and yard debris collection
- › Food scrap generators of 26 tons/year (1/2 ton/week) must divert material to any certified facility within 20 miles

JULY 1
2017

- › Transfer stations/Drop-off Facilities must accept food scraps
- › Haulers must offer food scrap collection
- › Food scrap generators of 18 tons/year (1/3 ton/week) must divert material to any certified facility within 20 miles

JULY 1
2020

- › Food scraps are banned from the landfill



› For more information, visit www.recycle.vt.gov