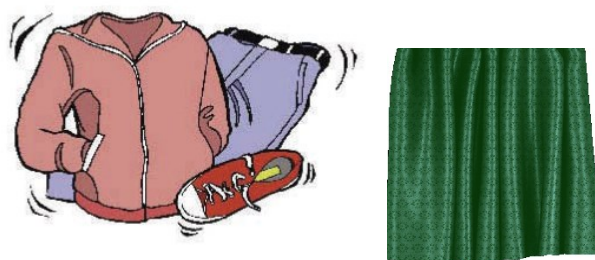


Waste & Recycling

Part 3g – Material Fact Sheets

Clothing – Textiles



What are Textiles?

Textiles are items made from fibre including clothes, bedding and curtains. They can be made from natural or man-made fibres.

Example of man-made fibres are nylon and polyester, while natural fibres include cotton, silk, linen and wool. To make textiles, fibres are knitted, bonded or woven together. Animal hairs and skin/leather may be grouped with textiles.

What Happens to Textiles?

Textiles placed in kerbside refuse bags or wheelie bins will be taken to landfill for disposal. Once in landfill, it can take several years before they begin to break down, and some synthetic fabrics do not decay.

Your Council may have a textile bank for recycling at one of the transfer stations, where it can be supervised. On-street bins are managed by business or charities



Textiles from clothing bins are sorted into grades and sold via shops, or sent overseas to less developed countries or recycled for use as cleaning cloths or wool insulation. Clothing which is clean and in good condition can be placed in these textile recycling bins. Good quality clothes can also be donated direct to the Salvation Army, Red Cross, Plunket and similar charity shops (gifted during opening hours only: phone first to check).

Textile Recycling Facts

- On average textiles make up about 3% by weight of NZ household refuse.
- Some people place unwanted clothing in their recycling bags/bins. This is discouraged, as it contaminates the rest of the recycling.
- Of all textiles sent to landfill, at least 50% could have been re-used or recycled.

What about Reduction and Re-use?

- Through the school office, set up a drop off point for outgrown clean school uniforms; perhaps others would benefit from them?
- Donate clothes from 'announced yet still unclaimed' lost property at the end of term to a local charity shop or place them in a textile recycling collection bin.
- Unwanted fashion clothing can be sold and re-used by others, via garage sales, Trade Me and Facebook; as a way to generate income, while reducing waste.
- With a group of friends, run a clothes swapping evening, as a fun way to reduce and re-use, whilst gaining new clothes for no charge. Entry is by bringing clothes to swap!
- Don't throw away unwanted curtains, contact local schools, pre-schools or theatre groups as they may be able to use them in costumes or set artwork. Alternatively, they could be sold via Trade Me or garage sales, or donated to 'curtain banks' which help lower-income households keep warm in winter.
- Ask your school if they would be keen to collect clothes to pass on to charities
- When donating textiles to charity shops or clothing bins, ensure they are clean and in a good condition; would *you* be keen to buy ripped or dirty items?

Further Resources

- www.recycle.co.nz provides information, guidance and facts on the recycling of textiles
- Visit <https://www.recyclenow.com/what-to-do-with/clothing-textiles-0> to view a UK video on the recycling of unwanted clothes and textiles.
- Investigate upcycling of old clothes into new fashions. UK example: <http://www.loveyourclothes.org.uk/refashion-upcycle>
More ideas pictured: https://www.etsy.com/nz/market/upcycling_clothing and <http://jembellish.blogspot.co.nz/p/clothes-upcycling-item-by-item.html>