



Tip of the Month

November 2010

Reuse and Recycle Textiles

Kids that create holes in their clothes, ever-changing seasonal fashions, or a laundry mishap can all result in clothing becoming non-wearable. Once clothing has passed its useful stage, it will at some point find its way to the landfill.

The textile industry is an energy intensive industry that requires large amounts of water, hazardous chemicals, such as pesticides and dyes, and petroleum-based materials for production. The greatest environmental impact of the textile industry is pollution, particularly water pollution. With many of the garments we purchase being manufactured overseas, it is difficult to know if strict environmental regulations are being followed. These are just some of the reasons that reusing and recycling textiles is more desirable than producing textiles from virgin materials.

Instead of sending your non-wearable clothing and textile rags to the landfill, here are some ideas on reusing and recycling them:

- Favorite blue jeans too worn out to wear? Instead of trashing them, take them to your local Gap during their *Recycle Your Blues* jean recycling campaign. The denim is recycled into formaldehyde-free [Ultratouch Denim Insulation](#) for communities in need. To find out when the next round-up is, please visit their website at www.gap.com.
- Don't know what to do with your old linens, towels or blankets? Contact your local SPCA or animal shelter; they may be able to reuse them as animal bedding.
- Many garages and automotive shops accept textile rags for reuse as cleaning cloths. Contact your local garage to see if they need cleaning cloths.
- If you're in the Metro Vancouver area, there is an organization called Our Social Fabric that accepts textile rags to create products like yoga bags. If you're looking for fabric for your next project, they also hold fabric sales. For more information, please visit their website at www.oursocialfabric.org.
- Nike's *ReUSE a Shoe* program accepts any brand of worn-out athletic running shoes for recycling at any one of their Metro Vancouver locations. The worn out rubber is used to create new athletic surfaces (i.e. courts, tracks etc.) or to create new shoes and apparel. For more information, please visit their website at www.nikereuseashoe.com.
- Dust off the sewing machine and turn that non-wearable dress into a fashion statement. There are many websites out there where you can learn how to turn old pieces of clothing into something new, such as www.newdressaday.com.

For additional information, contact the RCBC Recycling Hotline, Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm at 604-RECYCLE (Lower Mainland) or 1-800-667-4321 (province-wide).

Need more information?

Contact the **RCBC Recycling Hotline!**

Lower Mainland: 604-732-9253 | BC Toll-Free: 1-800-667-4321

Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-4pm

Recyclepedia: www.rcbc.bc.ca