

Waste leaflet: Textile sector

The levels of solid waste from the textile industry (which includes textiles, packaging and raw materials waste) have increased and they can cause a significant environmental impact if disposed of in landfill.

Waste categories

Packaging materials

- Flattened cardboard boxes can be collected for recycling by **Southwark Commercial Waste**. You can also contact them for details on cardboard recycling and on how you can save 40% from your commercial waste bill.
- Other means of packaging (such as polyethylene bags, tissue paper and bubble wrap) can be collected by a packaging specialist collector. A list of packaging collectors are published on **Letsrecycle** website.
- Contact the **Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)** for more information on the packaging Directive.
- Contact **CRISP** for a free copy of the **Legislation leaflet**.

Textiles

- Natural textile fibre products can be reused for sound insulation or upholstery padding purposes.
- Textile banks accept any type of textiles for either reuse or recycling and for reclaiming fibres.
- Local charity shops also collect the majority of textile types. Contact the **Association of Charity Shops** for a list of shops close to you.
- TRAID** also provide recycling of unused textiles and related items.
- Textiles can also be collected at the **Manor Place Depot** in Southwark (a fee applies for businesses).
- More information on textile recycling can be found via the **Textile Recycling Association (TRA)**.
- More information on waste management for cotton and leather goods manufacturers/producers can be found from **Enviowise** publications GG84 and GG237.

Carpets and rugs

- Carpets made from cotton or wool will decompose eventually but synthetic fibre ones (such as nylon, rayon, polyester etc.) will not.
- Unsold carpets can be donated to charity shops or can be recycled for acoustic purposes.
- Send unused/obsolete materials back to your supplier for reuse or recycling.

Knitted goods and yarns

- Woollen garments do decompose but can be harmful to the environment.
- Yarn from knitted wear can be reclaimed and sold to specialist firms for fibre reclamation to make yarn or fabric. Manufacturers of textiles such as **J P Textiles (Evergreen)** may be interested in spare fibres.
- Knitted goods can also be collected at textile banks or donated to charity shops.
- Refer to **Enviowise** publication GG42 for more information on waste management in the knitwear sector.

Chemicals for dyeing/treating

- Some products in this category can be hazardous. Please see the **Waste leaflet: Hazardous waste** from **CRISP** for options regarding the disposing of chemicals.

Cones and rolls

- Separate out cardboard and plastic cones or rolls used for the textiles.
- Although plastic ones can be reused it is generally easier to recycle cardboard ones that can be collected from **Southwark Commercial Waste** with your cardboard recycling.
- If cones cannot be reused, contact a plastic recycler or find a recycler that specialises in card and plastic to avoid extra waste-management costs.
- If possible return any used cones to your original textile or yarn supplier.



BASE team

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CRISP

southwarkalliance
YOUR LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Southwark
Council

Green ideas

- Donate clothes to local schools and art groups for hosting events.
- Look for local green fairs or give and take days to donate any unwanted textiles.
- Local knitting groups will also take yarns, buttons, zips, or bits of cloth (but preferably natural fibres for cloth), old or spare knitting needles, and scissors. A list of local knitting groups can be found in http://acechick.typepad.com/knitchicks_groups/
- Choose to work with a manufacturer or producer that uses less packaging or biodegradable materials for packaging or can operate a packaging take-back scheme to minimise your commercial waste costs.
- Contact **Envirowise**, which has a wide range of publications to help with recycling and waste minimisation specifically for the textile sector.
- Advertise unwanted goods (carpet, rugs, clothes etc.) at <http://www.recycle.co.uk>
- **Envirowise** also has a guide that can be downloaded for reducing packaging costs.
- The production of cotton is responsible for the release of huge amounts of chemical pesticides each year, enough to be classified as hazardous. Find a supplier that uses organic cotton products instead. For a list of organic cotton retailers please contact **Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN)**.
- Contact the **BASE team** to get a free Sustainability guide with tips and information on how to make your workplace more GREEN and save money.

Contacts

Southwark Commercial Waste

T: 020 7525 2000

www.southwark.gov.uk

Letsrecycle

T: 020 7633 4500

www.letsrecycle.com

DEFRA

T: 0845 933 5577

www.defra.gov.uk

TRAID

T: 020 8733 2580

www.traid.org.uk

Manor Place Depot

Penrose Street
 London SE17 3DW
 (off the Walworth Road)

J P Textiles (Evergreen)

T: 01226 232630

Association of Charity Shops

T: 020 7255 4470

www.charityshops.org.uk

Textile Recycling Association

T: 0870 042 8276

www.textile-recycling.org

Envirowise

T: 0800 585794

www.envirowise.gov.uk

Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN)

T: 020 7065 0905

www.pan-uk.org

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