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SMART Promotes Sharing of Textile Education From a Digital Distance this Earth Day



An example of one of the many infographics and digital resources available to consumers to educate themselves and their communities on the importance of textile recycling

ABINGDON, Md. (April 20, 2020)— April 22, 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the result of a unified response to an environment in crisis in 1970 where 20 million Americans – 10% of the U.S. population at the time – took to the streets, college campuses and hundreds of cities to protest environmental ignorance and demand a new way forward for planet Earth.

What's usually celebrated annually through a host of large public events, marches, volunteer cleanup groups and more, is forced in 2020 to shift primarily online amid social distancing concerns related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). That's why, this year, the Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) is urging consumers to play their part in reducing the negative environmental impact of the textile industry by acting from a digital distance.

Why is it important? According to the association, 81 pounds of textiles per person are thrown away annually. Meanwhile, roughly 95% of all used textiles including old clothes, shoes, towels, sheets, curtains, stuffed animals and more, can be recycled as long as they are clean, dry and odor-free – a process that reduces the need to create more landfill space, reduces pollution created by incinerators and saves our environment from tons of harsh chemicals.

“Reuse and recycling of clothing and textiles is the equivalent of removing 1.3 million cars from America's highways and is equal to the impact of aluminum recycling,” explains SMART's Executive Director, Jackie King. “It is also more impactful than plastic and glass recycling,” she continues.

This year, SMART encourages the community to act by sharing information about textile reuse and recycling with their friends, neighbors, co-workers and more through digital channels like social media.

“The SMART website hosts a number of resources available to the community including sharable infographics, FAQs and more,” says King. “This year, we can all play our part by sending an email or posting to social media to challenge and educate our friends and family on the importance of textile reuse and recycling.”

For those that have to frequent public settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, SMART also turns its attention to the health and safety of consumers. [According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the use of cloth face coverings helps to slow the spread of COVID-19 – and, they can be fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost as an additional, voluntary public health measure. “This is the perfect opportunity for consumers to ‘upcycle’ their old t-shirts and pillowcases,” says King. “There are a number of easy, no-sew tutorials available online, and in a matter of minutes, people can create their own masks and heighten their safety while also reducing textile waste,” she continues.

To learn access SMART's resources, or learn more about textile reuse and recycling, visit www.smartasn.org. Please direct media inquiries for SMART to Patrick Seidl at 410-420-2001 or by email at Patrick.Seidl@fallstongroup.com.

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About SMART

Established in 1932, the Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) is an international nonprofit trade association that strengthens the economic opportunities of its diverse membership by promoting the interdependence of the for-profit textile recycling industry segments and providing a common forum for networking, education and trade. SMART members use and convert recycled and secondary materials from used clothing, commercial laundries and non-woven, off spec



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material, new mills ends and paper from around the world. SMART member companies create thousands of jobs worldwide, proving each day you can make money by being social responsible.