



## Working Together to Increase Carpet Recycling in Washington

More carpet recycling means more recovered materials for use in new products, less waste, more jobs, and fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Here in Washington, businesses and governments have made important strides to increase carpet recycling. Yet significant quantities of carpet continue to be disposed of as garbage in the state. Carpet recycling remains both a difficult challenge and an exciting opportunity.

Seattle Public Utilities and King County LinkUp, along with new partner Zero Waste Washington, want to build on existing public and private efforts and convene *a coalition of diverse participants who work together to significantly increase carpet recycling throughout Washington*. We hope that the coalition will tackle thorny challenges, thoughtfully consider diverse approaches, and eventually implement joint strategies. Our goals are to:

- Learn more about carpet recycling in Washington, including opportunities, barriers, and potential solutions.
- Explore what statewide carpet recycling system/approaches would be best and might garner widespread support.
- Build a diverse coalition to increase carpet recycling in Washington.

**What we are doing now.** We recently hosted a webinar to share new developments in carpet recycling that are happening around the country and locally. In the fall of 2013, we will conduct a couple dozen in-depth Interviews with a sampling of people who are involved with recycling carpet in Washington, including carpet retailers, property owners/managers, carpet installers/removers, haulers, processors, and end users. We'll also gather information through an on-line survey and share the results.

**What will follow.** In 2014, we expect to convene group meetings with diverse participants to consider a range of approaches that could be implemented to increase carpet recycling in Washington. For example, participants could explore purchasing policies, cooperative collection partnerships, carpet disposal bans/recycling requirements, financial measures, funding options, and more. The specific next steps will be developed based on what we learn during the interviews and on-line survey.

**Haven't we already had these conversations?** Yes . . . and no. Some businesses and governments have been engaged in discussions and developed important strategies to increase carpet recycling in Washington. However, we want to expand and deepen the conversation with more parties around the table to jointly examine a broad range of approaches. In addition, many things have changed in recent years, making it worthwhile to take a new look. And, finally, we have a great opportunity to move joint strategies forward when we work as a coalition.

**Is this just about product stewardship?** No. We expect participants to explore multiple approaches. However, since a product stewardship program is now being implemented in California and carpet stewardship bills were introduced in Washington in 2011 and 2012, we expect product stewardship to be one of the approaches discussed.

**We'll keep you informed as the project moves forward.** Please feel free to contact us with questions or ideas.

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