Post-Consumer Textiles Value Chain

Primary movement of post-consumer textiles through the value chain. Note that materials also move between Functions and Process/Features.

Collection ->

Public drop-off

• Thrift stores

R 70

Includes clothing,

linens, shoes, bags,

hats, belts, stuffed

animals, pillows,

upholstery, and

products made

from natural and

synthetic fabrics/

materials, such as

polyesters and

Products mostly

loose or bagged.

Note: Other non-textile

materials, such as books

and household goods,

are often collected in

conjunction with the

textiles on which this

value chain focuses.

leather.

cottons, wools, silks,

woven nylon, rayon,

fabric scraps,

other similar

rags, curtains,

Inputs

- Drop boxes/drop-off sites
- Special events
- Recycling facilities
- Retail take-back
- Mixed textiles
- Textiles mixed with other household items
- Products mostly loose or bagged, not baled or compacted

Private pick-up

- Residential curbside pick-up service
- Charity or other organization
- Garbage/recycling subscription service
- Commercial/industrial pick-up service
- Customer-directed packaging and shipping through a third-party carrier
- Mixed textiles
- Textiles mixed with other household items
- Commercial rag grades
- Commercial linen grades
- Products mostly loose, bagged, or boxed, not baled or compacted

Key/Legend

Primary Links Function

Process/Features Products/Outputs

Processing

Sorting

- Primarily manual
- Local to global sourcing and markets
- Local and regional operations
- Sort up to dozens of grades
- Products include clothes, shoes and accessories
- Packaging and shipping products in bales, bags, boxes and gaylords

Grading

- Manual and highly mechanized
- Local to global sourcing and markets
- Sort up to hundreds of grades
- Same as "sorting" products (above), with more specificity and combinations of sorted and graded items for more diverse and global markets
- Packaging and shipping products in bales, bags, boxes, and gaylords

Fiber conversion

- Tear apart fabric; separate into loose fiber and other fiber products
- Process lower-quality and mixed textiles
- Provide certified product destruction services
- Non-woven fabrics Shoddy
- Fire retardant materials

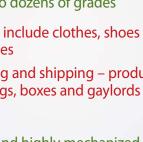


Contact: Kris Beatty, Kris.Beatty@kingcounty.gov, 206-477-4620 LinkUp website: www.kingcounty.gov/linkup

Enhance Value and Move Material Consolidation **Brokering**

Wholesaling

Shipping





Shipping

Enhance Value and Move Material

Wholesaling

Markets

(In order of highest and next best use.)

Resale and rewear

- Second-hand sales
- Informal sharing activities
- Local to global markets
- Wide variety: from high-end fashion items to mismatched shoes

Repurpose and reuse

- Adapt for a different purpose/use
- Wiping rags
- Absorbent materials
- Use materials to create new products - toys, clothing, accessories

Recycle/downcycle

- Fiber reclamation to produce raw materials and new products
- Fill for automotive industry
- Insulation and sound-proofing for household appliances and other applications
- Padding for carpet, mattresses, upholstery and other applications
- Towels, rugs, blankets
- Niche markets example: punching bags
- Bi-products of processing; sometimes burned for energy (for example, dust bricks)
- Building products (emerging)

Recycle/closed loop

- Closed-loop remanufacturing of textiles specifically designed for this purpose
- Textiles remanufactured into the same product or product line