Upcycled Denim and Uniforms

UPCYCLING MANUFACTURING IN LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles is uniquely positioned to lead as a global upcycling market center, with the nation's largest networks of **skilled labor, licensed factories, and access to materials and funding.**

The Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment's textile recovery pilot supports local factory training and workforce development. By procuring locally made products made from recovered textiles, the City is a market for its own waste.

The image above and below shows the LADWP uniforms used to create the recycled denim bags.

CITY-OWNED UNIFORMS AS A CASE STUDY

LASAN funded a textile recovery pilot in collaboration with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) and Homeboy Threads (HBT), facilitating the recovery and processing of approximately 600 retired uniforms (estimated at roughly 518 pounds of material after sorting). Rather than being discarded, these garments were transformed into new products, specifically bags, demonstrating a closed-loop system in practice.

The image to the right is a placeholder until a new picture of the uniform bags is obtained.

REPLICABLE UPCYCLING MODEL

This upcycling model demonstrates how textile recovery works best when collection, manufacturing, and procurement are aligned. The City of Los Angeles's landfill destined uniforms were manufactured into bags.

Similarly, Reformation donated denim pants that had faulty trims removed. The landfill destined denim was diverted to a factory that made bags to be given out at events.

Reformation

CREATING DEMAND FOR RECOVERED TEXTILES

The success of textile recovery systems depends on stable end markets. Public agencies and partners can support this system by procuring upcycled products, such as bags, signage, flowers, stuffed animals, and promotional merchandise. By incorporating upcycled products made at licensed factories into City purchasing, Los Angeles is helping build demand for circular textile products while keeping production and jobs local.

IFoster is an NGO in Los Angeles that upcycles materials including the Teddy Bear pictured above.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CALIFORNIA

With California's new Textile Recovery program, funding will be strategically directed toward in-state collection, sorting, and processing for unwanted textiles. Many of the collected textiles will need minor or major repair.

The new definition of repair includes modifying and upcycling existing materials into new products. The sustainably funded program will prioritize reuse and repair over recycling, as required by statute.

CalRecycle

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Request technical assistance from CPSC, LASAN or CalRecycle on collection and processing opportunities
- Engage in ongoing communication through textile events

VISIT CALPSC.ORG/LATEXTILEHUB FOR MORE INFO!

info@calpsc.org

calpsc.org