



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 of 400+ retired uniforms, (estimated 518 pounds of material, and and processing 240 lbs into upcycled bags. Bags were designed by Rag Royalty who reskilled a factory for the job. These city-owned garments were transformed into new products, specifically bags, demonstrating a closed-loop system in practice.



The image to the left are tote bags made at a registered garment factory from City-owned uniforms.



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

RAG
ROYALTY

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.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED



Request technical assistance from CPSC, LASAN or CalRecycle on collection and processing opportunities in LA



Engage with the statewide Textile EPR program

VISIT [CALPSC.ORG/LATEXILEHUB](https://calpsc.org/lertextilehub) FOR MORE INFO!



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