

# Carpet Recycling Summit Action Plan

January 29, 2013



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# SUMMIT OVERVIEW



On October 30, 2012 approximately 70 people attended the Illinois Carpet Recycling Summit to learn more about carpet recycling programs and trends, and to discuss the barriers to achieving greater carpet recycling and recovery and possible solutions for overcoming those barriers. The Summit Agenda, Briefing Paper and several of the presentations can be downloaded at [swanainlinois.org/events.html](http://swanainlinois.org/events.html) (See Appendix A).

The 70 attendees (See Appendix B) represent a broad range of interested parties and stakeholders including carpet manufacturers, retailers, contractors/installers, carpet processors/recyclers, construction and demolition debris recyclers, local government, state government and non-governmental organizations. During the five-hour Summit, the attendees heard speakers provide information from the manufacturers, installers and recyclers perspectives, and a presentation on California's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) approach to carpet and pad recovery. Attendees were strategically placed at round tables with a variety of stakeholders at each table. They were asked to keep notes on the barriers to greater carpet and pad recovery and recycling. During lunch, attendees were asked to develop potential solutions for overcoming barriers to carpet recovery. Afterwards, each table orally presented its barriers and potential solutions to the other attendees and a written record was kept and is presented below in the following section.

Prior to this Action Plan being finalized, a draft copy was sent to each attendee asking for comments. The result is a starting point for a more coordinated effort to overcome the barriers identified below and to begin implementing the recommendations as outlined in the Carpet Recycling Action Plan Section to further stimulate carpet and pad recycling in Illinois and the Midwest.

# BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS

At the summit, attendees were asked to actively participate by stating their stakeholder positions and helping to cooperatively compile strategies for increasing carpet and pad recycling. Major obstacles for achieving recycling results and the strategies for moving forward were discussed. Following is a list of those barriers and proposed solutions.

**Barrier #1: Need higher volume of carpet to be diverted from landfills to recyclers. It is easier to dispose of than recycle.**

Solutions:

1. Educate the public about recycling – why and how to recycle carpet and pad.
2. Develop better data base of current collection and processing sites and locations, and publicize this information so carpet and pad generators are aware of options other than landfilling.
3. Need more public-private partnerships to create collection sites and processing capacity.
4. Need more collection sites at the landfills, transfer stations, recycling facilities/drop-offs, and retailers.
5. Drop-off sites for consumers and installers need to be convenient and either low cost (cheaper than landfilling option) or free.
6. Specifications for diverting/recycling carpeting that is being removed and requiring recycled content in new carpeting should be part of government procurement requirements.
7. Facilitate long-term supply agreements with retailers and recycling processors.
8. Consider banning carpet and pad from landfilling like many other materials that have been banned in IL (e.g., tires, white goods, landscape waste, used oil, lead acid batteries and electronics).

**Barrier #2: No motivation or incentive to recycle, along with a lack of funds to create incentives.**

Solutions:

1. Initiate EPR or similar legislation to further develop an infrastructure and carpet processing/recycling industry in Illinois and the Midwest. Continue to monitor the California EPR approach and efforts upcoming in other states to pass similar legislation.
2. Encourage manufacturers to be sensitive to and responsible for the recyclability of the initial product, which will incentivize the collection and processing infrastructure by decreasing undesirable materials from being part of the carpet and pad material stream.

**Barrier #3: PET has limited recycling opportunities in Midwest markets and is used in multifamily and residential applications. It has a short lifespan of 3-4 years, is practically non-recyclable, but is growing in market share due to its lower cost versus nylon based carpeting.**

Solutions:

1. Limit production of PET carpeting by manufacturers through legislation unless manufacturers can demonstrate viable markets for used PET carpet. Another option would be to assess a recycling fee on PET carpet to create an economic disincentive for manufacturers to produce carpeting that is not easily recycled.
2. Continue to conduct research on new market applications for used PET carpeting that are not reliant on energy recovery.
3. Implement government procurement requirements that limit the use of non-recyclable carpeting such as PET.
4. Enact EPR legislation specifically for PET carpeting.
5. Conduct a Life-Cycle Analysis for carpet to determine the economic and environmental impacts of manufacturing, disposal and management of different carpet types.

**Barrier #4: There is no incentive or motivation to recycle carpeting and most don't perceive the problem to exist.**

Solutions:

1. Provide more education to the public, retailers and installers.
2. Create baseline data to measure future efforts against.
3. See solutions provided under Barriers #1 and #2 above.

**Barrier #5: The shipping distances are too great, and therefore too expensive to send to processors.**

Solutions:

1. Encourage the development of local processing capacity, specifically for the Midwest.
2. Develop and then document a strong collection infrastructure to attract carpet processors and new downstream manufacturers that need carpet and pad as a feedstock to the region.
3. Find new beneficial uses for carpet and pad locally to avoid transportation needs.

**Barrier #6: Storage of used carpeting must remain clean and dry in order for sorting gun to function.**

Solutions:

1. Collection sites must have enclosed containers to collect and store carpet and pad.
2. Ask or require that manufacturers begin labeling the back of carpet (similar to the plastic labeling requirements with numbers 1 – 7) to indicate what it's made from, and minimize the need for a costly sorting gun.

# CARPET RECYCLING ACTION PLAN

The following recommendations were developed based on the discussions and presentations from the Illinois Carpet Recycling Summit. Summit attendees were sent a draft of these recommendations and provided an opportunity to comment on them. The overall goal of the recommendations is to continue the growth of carpet and pad recycling in Illinois and the Midwest through a more coordinated effort with the various stakeholders.

1. In order to establish a visible presence of the carpet recycling efforts here in Illinois and the Midwest, the SWANA – Land of Lincoln Chapter should develop a webpage on its existing website or a new website dedicated to the carpet recycling effort in Illinois and nearby states by the summer of 2013. This website should contain, at a minimum, a database of carpet collection sites, processors and recyclers; a library of reports, studies and websites regarding carpet recycling and diversion efforts; a contact list of known and interested stakeholders; and up to date information on efforts here in Illinois.
2. The SWANA – Land of Lincoln Chapter should take the lead in forming a working group with members from SWANA, the Illinois Recycling Association (IRA), and the Illinois Counties Solid Waste Management Association (ILCSWMA) by the spring of 2013. Additional members could be added as deemed appropriate. The working group would be responsible for helping develop the web content from recommendation #1, holding periodic conference calls and/or meetings to discuss issues such as collection, processing infrastructure, market development, and public awareness and education on carpet diversion programs and efforts in Illinois. The working group would also be responsible for tracking the legislative efforts of other states regarding carpet legislation and developing a position on whether Illinois should pursue legislation as well.
3. All stakeholders should work together to increase the number of carpet and pad collection sites, including working with carpet retailers, waste management facilities such as landfills and transfer stations, C&D recycling facilities, units of local government, and other interested parties to increase the number of collection sites for all types of carpeting. All new collection sites should be included in the database on the website.
4. The SWANA – Land of Lincoln Chapter should work with the Illinois Recycling Association to have a session at the 2013 annual recycling conference dedicated to carpet recycling and diversion.
5. The SWANA – Land of Lincoln Chapter should consider holding another carpet recycling summit in the fall of 2014.
6. The SWANA – Land of Lincoln Chapter should work with IRA, ILCSWMA, carpet manufacturers, and state agencies to determine if funding can be secured to assist with market development projects in Illinois, with a focus on PET based carpeting.

# APPENDIX A: PRESENTATIONS

The following presentations are available for download at [swanaillinois.org/events.html](http://swanaillinois.org/events.html).

Kathy Frevert, CalRecycle



Eugene Knows, Go Green Carpet Recycling



Anthony Cline, Carpet America Recovery Network (CARE)



Eric Nelson, Interface



Nick Fiore, CLEAR Carpet Recycling



Joe Faith, Shaw Industries Group, Inc.



# APPENDIX B: SUMMIT REGISTRATION LIST

Peter Adrian SWALCO	Jacob Fife Carpenter Company (carpet pad recycler)	Nancy Hirsch C&D Recycling LL
Mary Akers Peroria County Recycling & Resource Conservation	Nick Fiore CLEAR	Kenneth Hoving K. Hoving Recycling & Disposal
Andrew Bennett Illinois State University	Mallory Frank Shaw Contract Group, Shaw Industries	Adam Jaquet Eagle Enterprises Recycling
Steve Brachman University of Wisconsin Extension	Billy Froeschner WI-DNR	Jennifer Jarland Kane County
Michael Brown Ecology Action Center	Jim Garner Sergenian's Floor Coverings	Becky Jayne Illinois EPA - Office of Pollution Preven- tion
Noreen Carroll OEC Business Interiors	Melissa Goetze Tazewell County Health Dept.	Bob Kalebich Republic Services
Sherri Clementi D & P Construction	Wendy Gold MBL Recycling, Inc	Marta Keane Will County Land Use
Anthony Cline CARE	Jerry Golf Recycling Systems, Inc.	Greg Klaus Shaw Contract Group, Shaw Industries
John DiFronzo JKS Ventures	Cal King Recycling Systems, Inc.	Lisa Kneller Grundy County
Robert Duermit Kinsdale Contracting Group	David DeRousse Recycling Systems, Inc.	Eugene Knows Go Green Carpet Recycling
Jim Duzansky Waste Management	Cheryl Hanks-Sinecki City of St. Peter's, MO	Rob Lenzini MBL Recycling, Inc
Joe Faith Shaw Industries Group, Inc	Jason Haus Dem-Con Companies	Kenneth Loerop K. Hoving Recycling & Disposal
Jason Fierst CLEAR	Joy Hinz DuPage County	Chris Martel CDM



Greg Maxwell  
Resource Management Co

Jennifer Mendez  
The Carpet and Rug Institute

Heidi Miller  
Grundy County

Susan Monte  
Champaign County RPC

Hugo Muniz  
Waste Management

Eric Nelson  
Interface Flooring

Mike O'Connell  
PCI FlorTech Inc.

Dean Olson  
Will County Land Use

Allyson Pepper  
Peoria County

Jason Peppmuller  
Waste Management Sustainability Ser-  
vices

Melissa Peters  
CDM

Dave Pinter  
Midwest Material Management

Suzette Robinson  
City of Evanston

Kelly Rooney  
Veolia ES Solid Waste

Karen Rozmus  
Village of Oak Park

Cameron Ruen  
SWANCC

Steve Rypkema  
Ogle County

Neil Samahon  
Metro Recycling

Steven Schilling  
SWANCC

Christina Seibert  
Shaw Environmental, Inc.

Emily Sjostrom  
Tazewell County Health Dept.

Anita Slach  
Heritage Environmental Services

Jackie Soccorso  
Village of Wauconda

Doug Stewart  
CLEAR

Kevin Stuffelbeam  
OEC Business Interiors

Coleen Talley  
Waste Management Sustainability Ser-  
vices

Lisa Teubner  
SWANA Intern

Shefali Trivedi  
DuPage County

David Van Vooren  
SWANCC

Jennifer Walling  
Illinois Environmental Council

Ken Daniels  
FUSE Alliance

Kathy Frevert  
CalRecycle

John Iskalis  
Iskalis Flooring

Paul Purseglove  
IEPA

Melanie Williams  
Veolia

Walter Willis  
SWALCO

Paul Wilson  
Groot Industries

Kimberly Worthington  
City of Chicago 2FM EHS



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The Carpet Recycling Summit agenda and registration details can be found at [swanaillinois.org](https://swanaillinois.org).