Carpet Stewardship in the U.S.

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Who is the Product Stewardship Institute?

- **Nonprofit** founded in 2000
- **Memberships**
  - 47 States
  - 200+ Local gov’ts
- **Partnerships (95+)**
  - Companies
  - Organizations
  - Universities
  - Non-US Governments
- **Board of Directors**: 7 states, 4 local agencies
- **Advisory Council**: Multi-stakeholder (14 members)
Carpet: What’s the Problem?

- **3.46 million tons generated** in the U.S. (2010)
- 8.9% **recycled** in the U.S. (2010)
- Bulky, heavy => **costly** to handle and manage
- Made of 45% **nylon**, 15% **polypropylene**, 10% **polyethylene terephthalate** (PET) => difficult to separate fibers for recycling
- Lack of markets for polyester (majority of carpet)
- Lack of recycling infrastructure
- Lack of awareness that carpet can be recycled


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Carpet Recycling + Climate

- Recycling one ton of used carpet reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions between **4,900 and 5,200 lbs of carbon dioxide equivalents** (eCO2)
- Using scrap carpet instead of coal in industrial boilers reduces GHG emissions by **3,800 lbs of eCO2**
- Hauling and landfilling carpet **increases GHG emissions** by 78 lbs eCO2
- Carpet **fourth** in terms of GHG reduction potential in an EPA Region 10 study, behind only food scraps, cardboard, and office paper

*Thus, recycling reduces the impact on climate change!*

Source: Environmental Impacts from Carpet Discards Management Methods, April 2010
Why EPR for Carpet is Needed

- EPR incentivizes manufacturers to design products that have greater post-consumer value
- State/local governments ≠ sustainable funding
- Will boost carpet recycling (increased supply)
- **Potential value of EPR for carpet:**
  - $346 million to $1.7 billion (if all carpet recycled)
- More recycling jobs

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Carpet Stewardship Timeline

- **Late 1990s**
  - Stewardship first pursued in IA, MN, and IL (for Axminster)
- **2000**
  - Carpet Stewardship Act passed in IL
- **Jan. 2002**
  - MOU announces voluntary carpet stewardship program
- **April 2010**
  - MOU announces voluntary carpet stewardship program in CA
- **Sept. 2010**
  - MOU announces voluntary carpet stewardship program in IL
- **Aug. 2011**
  - MOU announces voluntary carpet stewardship program in IA, NV, OK, WA
- **2012**
  - MOU announces voluntary carpet stewardship program in IA, MN, WI
- **Sept. 2010**
  - MOU announces voluntary carpet stewardship program in CA
- **Aug. 2011**
  - MOU announces voluntary carpet stewardship program in IL
- **Nov. 2012**
  - MOU announces voluntary carpet stewardship program in IA, MN, WI

The 2002 MOU set a recycling rate goal of 25% by 2012. By 2010, the actual rate was 4.5% (CARE), 8.9% (USEPA data).
What might EPR for Carpet Really Look Like?

- **Manufacturer**: Pays to implement program, either collectively or individually.
- **Retailer**: Purchase price includes cost to implement system.
- **Consumer**:
  - **Stewardship Organization**: Each company's contribution is determined based on market share, return share, or other factors.
  - **Industry run program (s)**

Map showing states with legislation, introduced legislation, and considering legislation.
California AB 2398

- Carpet stewardship legislation
- Applies to carpet and carpet tile
- Signed into law September 30, 2010
- Implemented July 1, 2011
- Goals:
  - Increase recyclability, recycling, and reuse of carpets
  - Spur market growth of products made from post-consumer carpet
  - Increase diversion of post-consumer carpets from landfills

How California AB 2398 Works

- CARE currently serves as the “Carpet Stewardship Organization”
  - Acts on behalf of manufacturers to create, submit, and manage a stewardship program
- Government provides oversight
  - Reviews/approves stewardship plans
  - Reviews CARE annual reports, monitors progress
  - Can issue fines for noncompliance
How California AB 2398 Works

• Consumers pay $0.05/sq. yd. assessment fee (visible on receipt)
• CARE uses funds to pay carpet processors and CalRecycle for oversight/enforcement
• Incentives paid to carpet recyclers based on output

What to Do Before Laws Get Passed

• Consider pursuing other policy options
  o Carpet disposal bans
  o Recycled content standards
  o Environmentally preferable product procurement
Thank you!

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