Carpet Recycling Summit
Action Plan

January 29, 2013
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This document is a publication of the SWANA Land of Lincoln Chapter. Questions or comments regarding this document should be directed to:

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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 swanaillinois.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.

Kathy Frevert, CalRecycle

Anthony Cline, Carpet America Recovery Network (CARE)

Nick Fiore, CLEAR Carpet Recycling

Eugene Knows, Go Green Carpet Recycling

Eric Nelson, Interface

Joe Faith, Shaw Industries Group, Inc.
APPENDIX B: SUMMIT REGISTRATION LIST

Peter Adrian
SWALCO

Mary Akers
Peroria County Recycling & Resource Conservation

Andrew Bennett
Illinois State University

Steve Brachman
University of Wisconsin Extension

Michael Brown
Ecology Action Center

Noreen Carroll
OEC Business Interiors

Sherri Clementi
D & P Construction

Anthony Cline
CARE

John DiFronzo
JKS Ventures

Robert Duermitt
Kinsdale Contracting Group

Jim Duzansky
Waste Management

Joe Faith
Shaw Industries Group, Inc

Jason Fierst
CLEAR

Jacob Fife
Carpenter Company (carpet pad recycler)

Nick Fiore
CLEAR

Mallory Frank
Shaw Contract Group, Shaw Industries

Billy Froeschner
WI-DNR

Jim Garner
Sergenian's Floor Coverings

Melissa Goetze
Tazewell County Health Dept.

Wendy Gold
MBL Recycling, Inc

Jerry Golf
Recycling Systems, Inc.

Cal King
Recycling Systems, Inc.

David DeRousse
Recycling Systems, Inc.

Cheryl Hanks-Sinecki
City of St. Peter's, MO

Jason Haus
Dem-Con Companies

Joy Hinz
DuPage County

Nancy Hirsch
C&D Recycling LL

Kenneth Hoving
K. Hoving Recycling & Disposal

Adam Jaquet
Eagle Enterprises Recycling

Jennifer Jarland
Kane County

Becky Jayne
Illinois EPA - Office of Pollution Prevention

Bob Kalebich
Republic Services

Marta Keane
Will County Land Use

Greg Klaus
Shaw Contract Group, Shaw Industries

Lisa Kneller
Grundy County

Eugene Knows
Go Green Carpet Recycling

Rob Lenzini
MBL Recycling, Inc

Kenneth Loerop
K. Hoving Recycling & Disposal

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 Peffer
Peoria County

Jason Peppmuller
Waste Management Sustainability Services

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 Services

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
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Melanie Williams
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Groot Industries

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The Carpet Recycling Summit agenda and registration details can be found at swanaillinois.org.