



CITY OF WEYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEXTILE RECOVERY CASE STUDY

INITIAL CASE STUDY DATED 2011 / UPDATED 2023

In this textile recycling program, schools collect clothing and other textiles from students, their families, and the public to raise funds for the school and educate the community about the environmental benefits of keeping textiles out of the trash.

2022 Community Population:	57,650
Weymouth Public Schools Enrollment:	5,921
Number of Participating Schools:	12

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

- Weymouth Public Schools, in partnership with Weymouth Dept. of Public Works, South Shore Recycling Cooperative, Tri-Town Alliance, MassDEP, Capitol Waste Services, EZ Disposal, and Bay State Textiles instituted a textile recycling initiative in April 2012.
- Each school has a 4' x 4' x 6' container for textile donations, which is accessible for drop-off 7 days a week. All types of clothing, footwear, handbags, and household textiles are accepted including single shoes, socks, ripped, torn, or stained items that are clean and dry.
- Each school was originally awarded \$250 for participating. During the program, Bay State Textiles, Capital Waste, Weymouth DPW, and other partners have sponsored contests with bonus monies awarded to top performing schools based on contributions per student ratio.
- The schools are paid \$100 per ton by Bay State Textiles of Pembroke, which picks up the materials up to three times a week.
- The textiles collected are exported to developing countries. As these reclaimed textiles are imported, jobs are created to bring quality used clothing to the marketplace. Employment is also created within the United States from the textile recycling industry.

BACKGROUND:

- Textiles represent about 5%-7% of Massachusetts trash.
- The average Massachusetts resident throws away about 100 pounds of textiles each year, equivalent to around 230,000 tons of useful textiles that were landfilled or incinerated with household trash.
- Weymouth residents produce an average of 19,000 tons of trash each year, so decreasing trash tonnage by 6% would divert 1,140 tons of textiles to reuse and recycling.
- Weymouth can reduce disposal costs by more than \$100,000 annually by recycling textiles on a regular basis. (Disposal Cost = \$73.18 per ton.)

IMPACT AND PUBLICITY:

Weymouth Public Schools (WPS) launched the textile recycling program in 2012, with a contest among the schools. Since then, continued outreach and publicity has included:

- Banners placed at strategic locations in town.
- Information scrolls on Channel 22, Weymouth's Educational Channel –approximately 4-8 times per hour for 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.
- Information and brochure on WPS website.
- Brochures sent home to each student via back-pack express.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Weymouth: Betsy Harris, elizabeth.harris@weymouthschools.org;
<https://www.smore.com/yrs65b>

MassDEP: Micaela Guglielmi, Micaela.Guglielmi@mass.gov;
<https://www.mass.gov/guides/textile-recovery>

- *Alert Now* e-mails sent to every family and School-Community Partner.
- Emails sent to all school staff and all town staff.
- Information regularly provided in the Weymouth Pride Newsletter, a district-wide newsletter.
- *OfferBeam* App which sends a text message to users driving past a drop off location, sponsored by Bay State Textiles.
- Flyers distributed with various School-Community Partners, i.e., on counters, pizza boxes, as bag stuffers, posted on windows, etc.
- Social media posts on WPS (and affiliated) Facebook and Twitter.
- Press Releases sent to various formats of media, i.e., Weymouth News, Patriot Ledger, Boston Globe, Patch.com, etc.
- Ads on Weymouth High School and Chapman Middle School lobby TVs.
- Announcement at the Weymouth School Committee meeting – broadcasted live to more than 50,000 Weymouth residents.
- Postcards announcing the textile program mailed to all Weymouth residents.



EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT 2022-2023:

- Bay State Textiles will participate in the Weymouth High School Career Academy Sponsorship and work with students to develop a Recycling Presentation for Primary and Middle Schools, with a goal of mentorship and education throughout the school district. Bay State Textiles will provide scholarship opportunities for WHS students who participate.
- Bay State Textiles will provide a college intern to assist with planning the educational presentation and help with the development of a RE: STEAM Fair (Recycling, Environmental, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math). This will be a hands-on interactive event with activity stations, displays, educational information and recycling collections.
- With the addition of textiles to the Massachusetts [Waste Disposal Bans](#) and the success of the Weymouth Public Schools Textile Recycling Program, WPS and Bay State Textiles are piloting the “Textile Recycling Corporate Citizen Initiative” as part of the WPS School-Community Partnership Program. The goal is to encourage the community at large to responsibly manage textiles through expanded education efforts and the placement of convenient donation bins beyond school locations. WPS will oversee this broader collection network and the proceeds will benefit the schools. Potential hosts for donation bins include apartment complexes, assisted living facilities, businesses, industrial parks, municipal buildings, non-profits, and shopping malls.

RESULTS:

- **Textiles diverted from landfills since 2012:** **1,545,575 pounds / 772 tons**
- **Funds earned for WPS:** **\$ 77,278**
- **Savings from avoided disposal costs:** **\$ 56,495**

BENEFITS:

- The program’s many benefits include protecting the environment, communicating the results of textile poundage NOT in landfills, raising funds for the school district (e.g., library books, technology, recess equipment, school supplies, extra-curricular supplements), decreasing disposal costs for DPW, helping the global economy, educating the public about textile recovery, reuse, and recycling, and improving collaboration between various School-Community Partners, town departments and students/staff.
- As a result of the original WPS pilot program, Bay State Textiles has grown this school-based program to 70+ communities with 800+ bins across Massachusetts, as well as Connecticut and Puerto Rico ~ and continues to grow!