



## Northwest Product Stewardship Council

### What are the Basic Requirements of SSB 6341?

SSB 6341 requires that producers of carpet that is sold in Washington State participate in a “carpet stewardship organization.” The carpet stewardship organization is required to submit a plan to the Department of Ecology for collecting, transporting, processing and recycling discarded carpet by January 1, 2014. The carpet recycling program will be phased in county by county beginning in 2015, starting with King, Pierce, Snohomish and Thurston counties, and then the remaining counties between 2018 and 2020.

### **What is a Carpet Stewardship Organization?**

*A carpet stewardship organization is an entity created to implement a carpet recycling program on behalf of carpet producers. It contracts with carpet collectors and processors, making carpet recycling available to businesses and residents, and provides the public with information about the program.*

### Why a state law?

Carpet is bulky, heavy, difficult to handle, and made from non-renewable resources. It is recyclable, but is more often disposed of in landfills, taking up valuable landfill space and wasting material resources.

Carpet recycling is new to the Pacific Northwest and not widely available in Washington State. Collection costs for recycling can be greater than the recovered material value, so carpet processors often charge a fee to collect and accept discarded carpet. A more rigorous program is needed that will encourage the growth of our local carpet recycling infrastructure and provide a convenient and cost-effective statewide carpet recycling program, at no cost to residents and businesses, such as carpet installation contractors and carpet sellers. The intent of SSB 6341 is to:



- **Create jobs in Washington**
- **Increase the amount of discarded carpet that is recycled throughout the state**
- **Establish a reliable supply of recycled raw materials from recovered carpet that can be used to manufacture new products**

# JOBS THROUGH CARPET RECYCLING: WASHINGTON'S SSB 6341



## Who will be involved?

- **Carpet producers:** will pay for the program and will contract with carpet collectors and processors to run the program.
- **Carpet installers and construction and demolition companies:** will gain access to recycling, at no cost, for all carpet they remove in Washington.
- **Businesses and residents:** will have convenient and no-cost recycling available for discarded carpet.
- **Carpet collectors and processors:** will receive a steady flow of carpet that will be processed to extract the recyclable materials.
- **Manufacturers:** will have a steady supply of recycled nylon and other materials to use in new products.
- **Government agencies:** will realize progress toward reaching waste diversion and recycling goals; space saved in public landfills, extending the life of those landfills; and benefits to the state's economy.

## How will the program be funded?

The program will be funded by the carpet producers. The carpet stewardship organization will collect funds from producers that sell carpet in Washington. These funds will pay for program operation costs and expenses as well as education and outreach efforts and administrative activities. The program will not charge a user fee at the time discarded carpet is collected, nor will there be new taxes.

## How will the program work?

Convenient locations for collection of discarded carpet will be provided for businesses and residents throughout the state. Carpet must be dry and free of contaminants, such as mold, paint and asbestos. The carpet stewardship organization will contract with carpet processors to separate the materials from which carpet is made, and those materials will be used to manufacture new products. The organization will also educate consumers, commercial building owners, carpet installation contractors and retailers about, and promote participation in, the program.

## Washington State needs jobs, not waste.

Discarded carpet and padding makes up nearly 3.6% of the state's total municipal waste by weight, or 335 million pounds, but very little of it is recycled. Carpet, made from valuable petroleum-based resources, is wasted when landfilled or incinerated, but is a job creator when recycled. Enactment of California's new carpet stewardship program added an initial 50 jobs to the state's economy and increased the number of facilities recycling carpet from four to 18.

Carpet can be recycled into a wide range of products, including carpet fiber and backing, engineered products such as car and electronics parts, and erosion control products. Increasing the recycling of carpet in Washington State will help create jobs and many business opportunities, including making adequate quantities of recycled carpet materials available to local industries.

*Learn more at [www.productstewardship.net/policiesCarpetNWStates](http://www.productstewardship.net/policiesCarpetNWStates).*

*Visit [www.kingcounty.gov/linkup](http://www.kingcounty.gov/linkup) to read and/or participate in a blog about SSB 6341 and learn about an effort to increase carpet recycling in the Pacific Northwest.*