

# A Review of the National Carpet Recycling Agreement

May 8, 2007

Carpet America Recovery Effort (CARE) Annual Conference  
Charleston, SC

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# Midwest Workgroup on Carpet Recycling

- Regional approach to product stewardship.
- Minnesota Iowa, Wisconsin and U.S. EPA.
- Carpet and resin manufacturers, retailers, recyclers and NGOs.
- Center for Clean Products, UT.
- Workgroup met February-November, 2000.



# Why Stewardship for Carpet?

- Challenge for disposal system.
- Local economic development.
- Presence in waste stream.
  - 2.4 percent of MSW (MN, 2000)
  - 3.7 percent of C and D (MN, 2006)
- Carpet industry leadership and innovation.
- Need for new approaches to address rising costs and volumes.



# Workgroup Outcomes

- Memorandum of Understanding signed January, 2001.
- Agreement to develop “Negotiated Outcomes” to collect and process discarded carpet.
- Third-Party Organization.
- Establishment of reuse and recycling goals.
- Model procurement guidelines.



# Negotiated Outcomes

- Specified recycling and reuse rates.
- US EPA, MN, IA, MA, NC, CA, OR, MD.
- Industry and NGOs.
- Facilitated by UT.
- March-October, 2001.
- Signing of Agreement on January 8, 2002.



# National Carpet Recycling Agreement

- Carpet industry established long-term goal to eliminate disposal of carpet.
- Goals to be achieved by 2012:
  - Overall 40 percent landfill diversion goal.
  - Reuse, recycling, cement kilns, WTE.
- Roles and responsibilities for signatories.
- Evaluation criteria and schedule.



# Establishing a Precedent

- First national stewardship agreement.
- Approach and outcome embraced for other products.
- Goals, industry led organization and evaluation schedule.



# Lessons Learned

- Articulate objectives supported by product stewardship policy.
- Define timeline.
- Need for quantifiable goals.
- Multi-state approach.
- Engage industry leaders.



# Lessons Learned

- Develop consensus among government participants.
- Methodology for disposal and recycling data.
- Define responsibility in practice.
- Resource intensive.
- Agreement as template.



# Challenges

- Integrating industry and government perspectives.
- Level playing field and determining financing.
- Arriving at common agenda and strategies.
  - Cement kilns
  - Recycled content
- Engaging the universe of key actors.
  - Retailers
  - Existing recycling infrastructure
- Identifying promising technologies and companies.
- Using power of public entity purchasing.



# Moving Forward

- Adequate progress towards meeting goals.
- Examine state and local policies to promote reclamation.
  - Disposal restrictions.
  - Incentives for procurement of CARE products.
- Midterm agreement evaluation.



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