Outstanding Success for Carpet Recycling!

Recent years have shown remarkable advances in the amount of carpet collected and recycled into useful new products. In particular, the California Carpet Stewardship Program achieved an unheard-of carpet recycling rate of 33.9 percent for 2022. This far exceeds the 27 percent goal set in the Program’s Five-Year Plan, and the California carpet recycling rate has more than tripled since 2015.

In addition to the recycling rate performance, in 2022 for the first time in its 11-year history, the California Carpet Stewardship Program achieved or surpassed all of the Program’s annual goals, including:

- Achieving 76% recycling efficiency rate, passing the goal of 75%. Recycling efficiency refers to the amount of collected carpet that is transformed into recycled products.
- Supporting 131 public drop-off sites, in addition to the over 200 private sites across the state. Public drop-off sites increased pounds collected by 33% over 2021.
- Meeting the carpet reuse goal of two million pounds.
- Promoting some 100 products made from recycled-carpet material.

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The Carpet Assessment

CARE’s activities are funded by the California carpet assessment that is paid by consumers when purchasing new carpet. Since 2022, the law requires CARE to implement a differential assessment on each square yard of carpet that reflects its cost to recycle. Another provision of the law requires that CARE incentivize carpet products containing post-consumer (PC) content.

As a result, there are four different levels of assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>&gt; or = 10% Post-Consumer Content</th>
<th>&lt;10% Post-Consumer Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadloom</td>
<td>$0.56 /square yard</td>
<td>$0.58 /square yard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpet Tile</td>
<td>$0.71 /square yard</td>
<td>$0.73 /square yard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How is the Assessment Used?

The assessment funds CARE’s efforts to grow the amount of carpet that is kept out of landfill and recycled. CARE is working to comply with all legal requirements, which include:

- Payment of subsidies to recyclers to enable continuous and meaningful improvement in landfill diversion via carpet collection, recycling and the manufacture of recycled-content products
- Public outreach and education
- Convenient carpet drop-off locations for flooring professionals and contractors, most offering discounted rates.

In 2022, 92% of assessment funds went directly to these program efforts, including subsidies, grants, marketing/outreach and the drop-off site program. (see pie chart)

Retailers MUST comply with the assessment.

Retailers are required by law to charge the current carpet assessment to all customers in the state. CalRecycle periodically inspects retailers to check current practices. To ensure compliance:

- All invoices must have the assessment clearly and correctly labeled as a separate line item.
- Retailers must purchase carpet from carpet manufacturers in compliance with the carpet stewardship law. See CalRecycle.ca.gov/Carpet.
- Retailers are required by law to monitor CalRecycle’s website to determine if the sale of a manufacturer’s carpet is in compliance with the carpet stewardship law.
- Retailers must retain records for three years.

CalRecycle will continue to make site inspections of retailers to confirm compliance. Failure to comply with the requirements of the carpet law may result in penalties of up to $10,000 a day. Monitor CalRecycle’s website for product compliance at CalRecycle.ca.gov/Carpet.

A change to the assessment amount is expected in late 2023 or early 2024. Please make sure you are receiving CARE’s assessment communications. Email CA@CarpetRecovery.org to be sure you are on the list.

For updates on the assessment and compliance requirements, see CarpetRecovery.org/Assessment.
Convenient Carpet Collection Across the State

Beyond the over 200 private on-site pickup service locations for carpet and pad, the number of CARE-supported public access carpet drop-off sites has grown to over 130 sites, with at least one site in all 58 California counties.

CARE supports drop-off sites by providing:

- A container for collection,
- Third-party hauling to bring carpet material to recyclers,
- CARE pays tip fee to recycler
- Promotional materials for local government and the hosting facility,
- Technical assistance from CARE staff,
- Ready access to micro-grants supporting site set-up and collection equipment.

While there is usually a fee to drop off carpet for recycling, the fee is usually less than the standard tip fee charged at landfill. **CARE recommends that drop-off sites offer at least a 20% discount for carpet prepared for recycling.**

To find a drop-off site near you with the most up-to-date listing, hours and rates, visit CarpetRecovery.org/CA

CARE’s carpet collection partners provide convenient on-site collection service to large volume tear-out carpet generators throughout the state. To request information for large volume on-site service or recommend that a solid waste/recycling facility near you becomes a CARE Drop-off Site, email CA@CarpetRecovery.org.

If you would like print copies of the drop-off site map, please email CA@CarpetRecovery.org.

Who is CARE?

CARE America Recovery Effort (CARE) is an independent non-profit organization whose mission is to advance market-based solutions that increase landfill diversion and reuse and recycling of post-consumer carpet and encourage design for recyclability. CARE administers the California Carpet Stewardship Program, which is charged with meeting the requirements for carpet recycling set by California law and managed by CalRecycle.

Hard Surface Retailer/Installer? Your Help is Key!

While retailers that do not sell carpet are not involved in collecting the carpet assessment, they often work with tear-out carpet that could be recycled. CARE encourages hard surface retailers to find out how and where to take carpet for recycling. Find out more at CarpetRecovery.org/CA or send your questions to CA@CarpetRecovery.org.

Training Installers

Flooring contractors and installers are a very important part of increasing carpet collection for recycling. CARE’s outreach team contacts installers at supply houses, regional distribution centers and retail locations to let flooring contractors know about carpet recycling in their area. In addition, CARE is working with the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT) District Council 16 and District Council 36 to help train apprentice installers and advise current members on carpet preparation for recycling. CARE’s video for training flooring contractors in carpet recycling best practices is at CarpetRecovery.org/CA-Installers.
Collecting Carpet for Recycling: A Top Priority

After many years of building and developing markets for products incorporating recycled carpet materials, demand for used carpet is now growing and CARE is supporting an aggressive expansion of collection programs and services.

Already recycling your tear-out carpet? Thank you for all your efforts! For retailers and installers not yet recycling, your options for recycling may include:

- Self-Haul: Asking your installers to take old carpet to a CARE drop-off site.
- On-Site Service: Contracting with one of our carpet collectors, or your local hauler, to place a collection container for carpet at your business.

Most retailers find that by recycling their carpet they can realize an average savings of 20% or more on their landfill disposal costs. If you are not yet sending your carpet for recycling or have a suggestion for a convenient collection site near you, email CA@CarpetRecovery.org and tell us how we can help you start recycling in 2023. Please email us today!

CARE Grants Support Carpet Collection

In 2022, CARE’s California Carpet Stewardship Program continued to invest in new infrastructure and ideas to increase California’s carpet recycling and collection capacity as well as seed research to increase post-consumer carpet (PCC) collection volume and product recyclability. In 2022:

- CARE made awards to two capital improvement grantees totaling approximately $650,000 along with five micro grantees totaling more than $61,000.
- Three new post-consumer carpet collectors and one new reuse entity came online as a result of the micro grants program, helping CARE to meet its 2022 convenient collection and reuse goals. One other awardee is testing new fiber-identification technology and will share insights with the carpet recycling community.
- CARE made a $50,000 award under its New Collection Strategies/Small Infrastructure Award Pilot Program to investigate the impact and cost of collection from smaller sources.
- The Program launched Innovation & Design Grants to seed projects that create more recyclable carpet constructions and environmentally preferable PCC-content products. Awards will be announced in 2023.
- Grant-funded capital projects begun in 2022 or earlier resulted in nearly 40 million pounds of recycled output or PCC in finished secondary products, along with more than 25 million additional pounds of PCC collected for recycling or reused.
- Micro grantees awarded in 2022 or earlier collected or reused over 4.2 million pounds of California-sourced PCC.

CARE’s Micro Grants for Collection/Reuse program (up to $15,000 per project), is open to California-based entities, including carpet retailers and flooring contractors, for the purpose of collection of post-consumer carpet and pad. Interested parties may apply through CARE’s easy-to-use online grant application form.

Learn more at CarpetRecovery.org/CA-Grants.

Is That Recycled Carpet Under Your Hood?

Once collected for recycling, carpet and carpet tile are sorted and processed into fiber and pellets, or new tile backing material. A large percentage of assessment funds go to support businesses that collect and process tear-out carpet into fiber and pellets, and to the companies who then use those materials to create new products such as insulation, carpet pad, new carpet fiber, manufactured building products and even car parts.

In an effort to increase demand for post-consumer carpet products, we are working with manufacturers to encourage them to include carpet material in their products to prevent carpet from going to landfill. See CarpetRecovery.org/Products for currently available products made with recycled carpet material.

Watch CARE on YouTube at Youtube.com/c/CarpetAmericaRecoveryEffort

CARE made awards to two capital improvement grantees totaling approximately $650,000 along with five micro grantees totaling more than $61,000.

A CARE Capital Improvement grant helped Circular Polymers by Ascend build and develop its carpet processing facility in Lincoln, CA.

Plastic from recycled carpet is sold to auto manufacturers, where it is used for plastic casings under the hood.