

Textiles Reuse in Strathcona County

What is the current situation, and is there need for improvement?

Agenda

- Textile reuse
 - North American perspective
 - Local perspective
- Why is this happening?
- Why is it important?
- What's happening in the County?
- What's happening elsewhere?
- Recommendations for improvement



Textile Reuse

DEFINITIONS | WHAT DO WE MEAN?

Textiles

A type of material composed of natural or synthetic fibres. Often textiles refer to clothing, however they also include accessories such as shoes, purses and belts. Towels, sheets, curtains and other linens are also included.

Reuse

Traditional 'recycling' does not typically apply to the textiles industry as fabrics are made from a number of different materials (ie. cotton, wool, polyester, etc.) and cannot be easily turned into another product. Often when programs state 'fabric or textile recycling' they are more about 'reuse' of these textile materials.

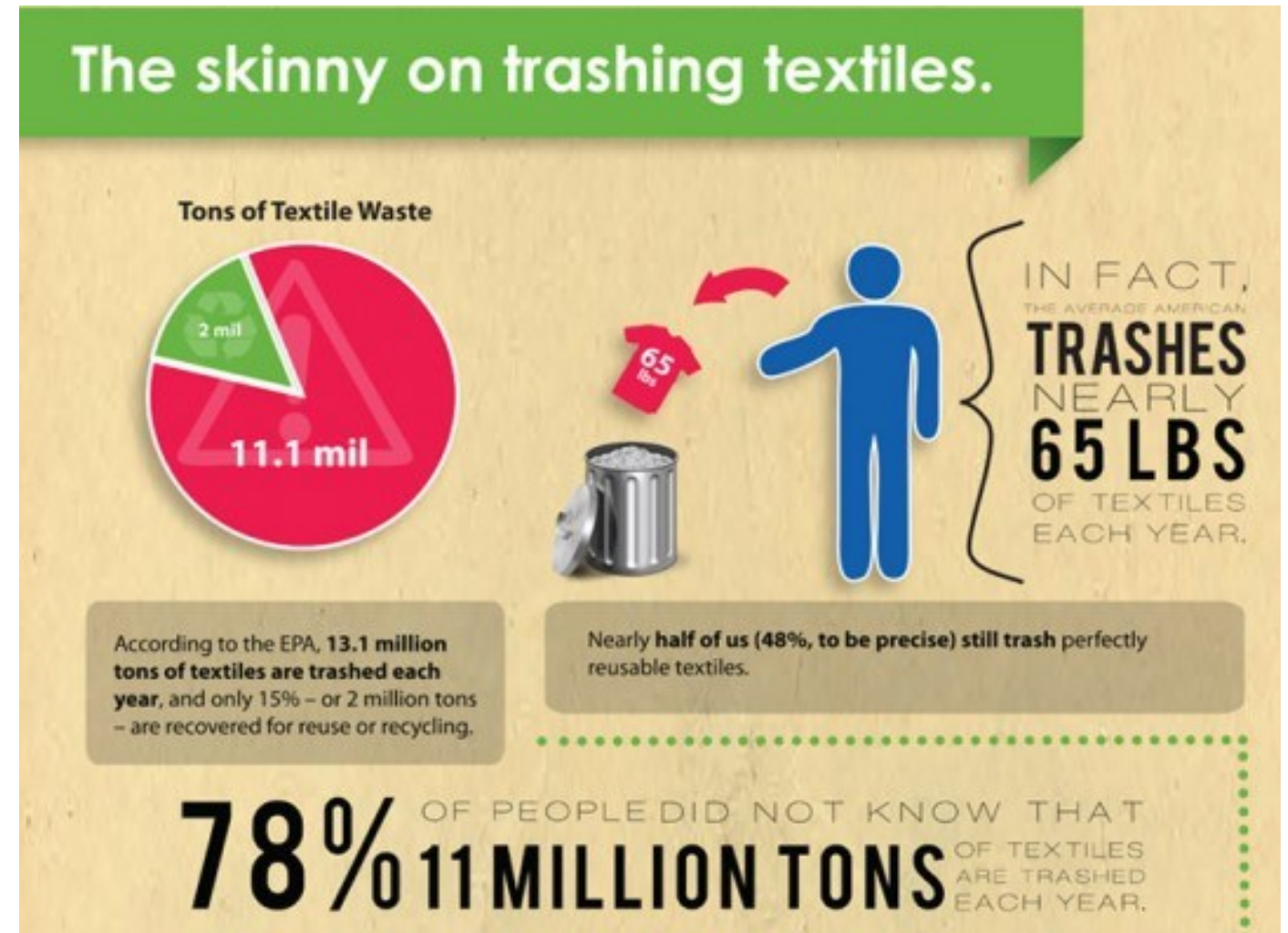


North American Perspective

- The average Canadian disposes of 30 to 40 kilograms of textile waste a year, 95 per cent of which is reusable or recyclable.
- A recent study done in Ontario concluded that 85 per cent of discarded textiles end up in a landfill site, meaning just 15 per cent find another life.
- The bulk of these textiles are a result of disposal practices in the manufacturing and retail industry; however textiles do account for 5 to 11% of all residential garbage.

North Americans send over 10.5 million tons of clothing to landfills every year.

The average person throws away 81 pounds of textiles per year.



Local Perspective



REGULAR WASTE AUDITS

Utilities has conducted two waste audits. One in 2013 and two separate audits in 2017, February and August, to discern any seasonal differences.



SORT THROUGH SAMPLES

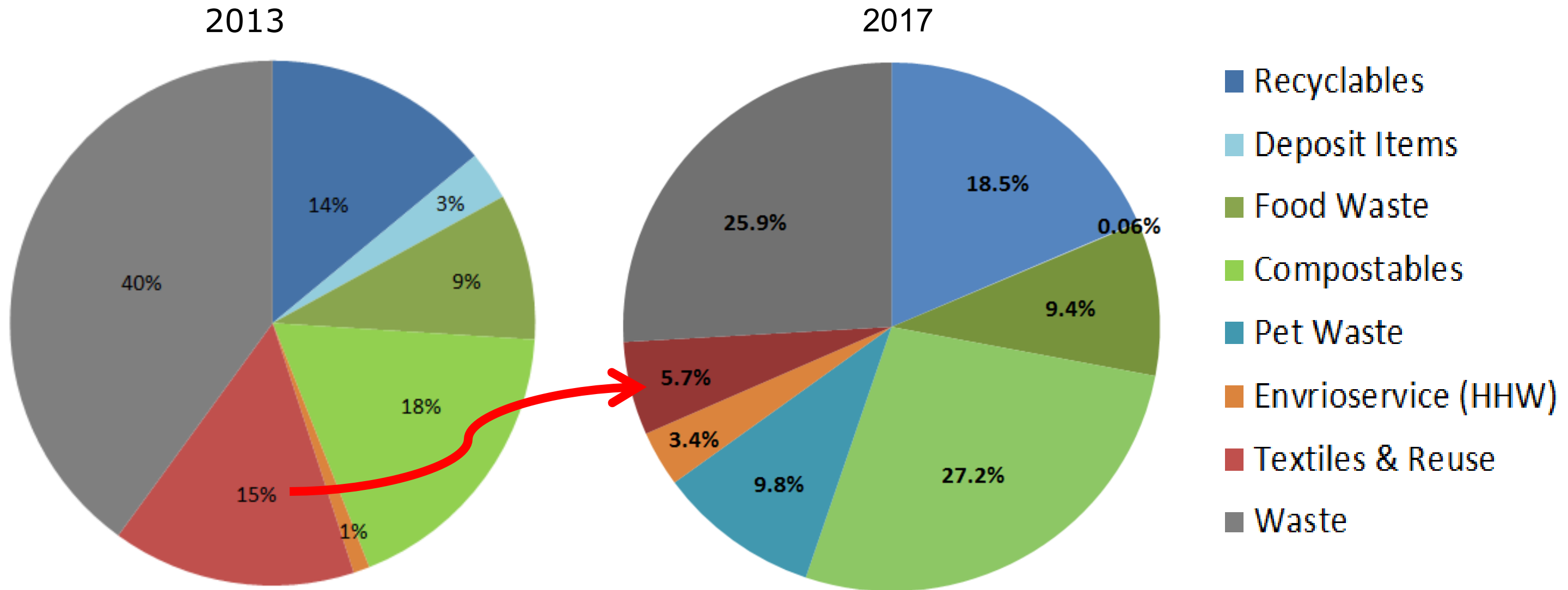
Random samples of waste and organics are sorted and characterized into a number of different categories. This provides valuable information for programming.



WE FOUND TEXTILES

Residents of Strathcona County are throwing away textiles and household goods that could be donated for reuse. The amount fluctuates between household types.

Auditing Data



Textiles and reuse items found in the waste cart declined from 15% to an overall 5.7% from 2013 to 2017. In 2017, the disposal rate varied from 5.6% in the urban area to 5.0% in the rural area and 7.9% from multi-family households.



What's happening in the County?

Although there have been some long existing local options for textile donations, in the last few years more options have popped up in the community.

Retail & Collection Stores



County Clothes-Line



Salvation Army Thrift Store



Value Village



Goodwill Industries

Drop Bins

There are a number of drop bins that have popped up throughout the community. They are typically a fundraising opportunity for charities, however there is no administrative process to monitor or track these bins.



Other Options

ALTERNATIVES | IN THE COMMUNITY

- A Safe Place – household goods, new clothing
- St. Vincent De Paul – Winter clothing only, household goods, furniture.
- IVC (Elks) – Coats for the County
- Strathcona County Utilities – permanent shoe collections, Waste Reduction Week shoe drive in partnership with schools (Soles4Souls).
- Canadian Diabetes offers house collection.

Recycle your shoes

Reduce
your footprint

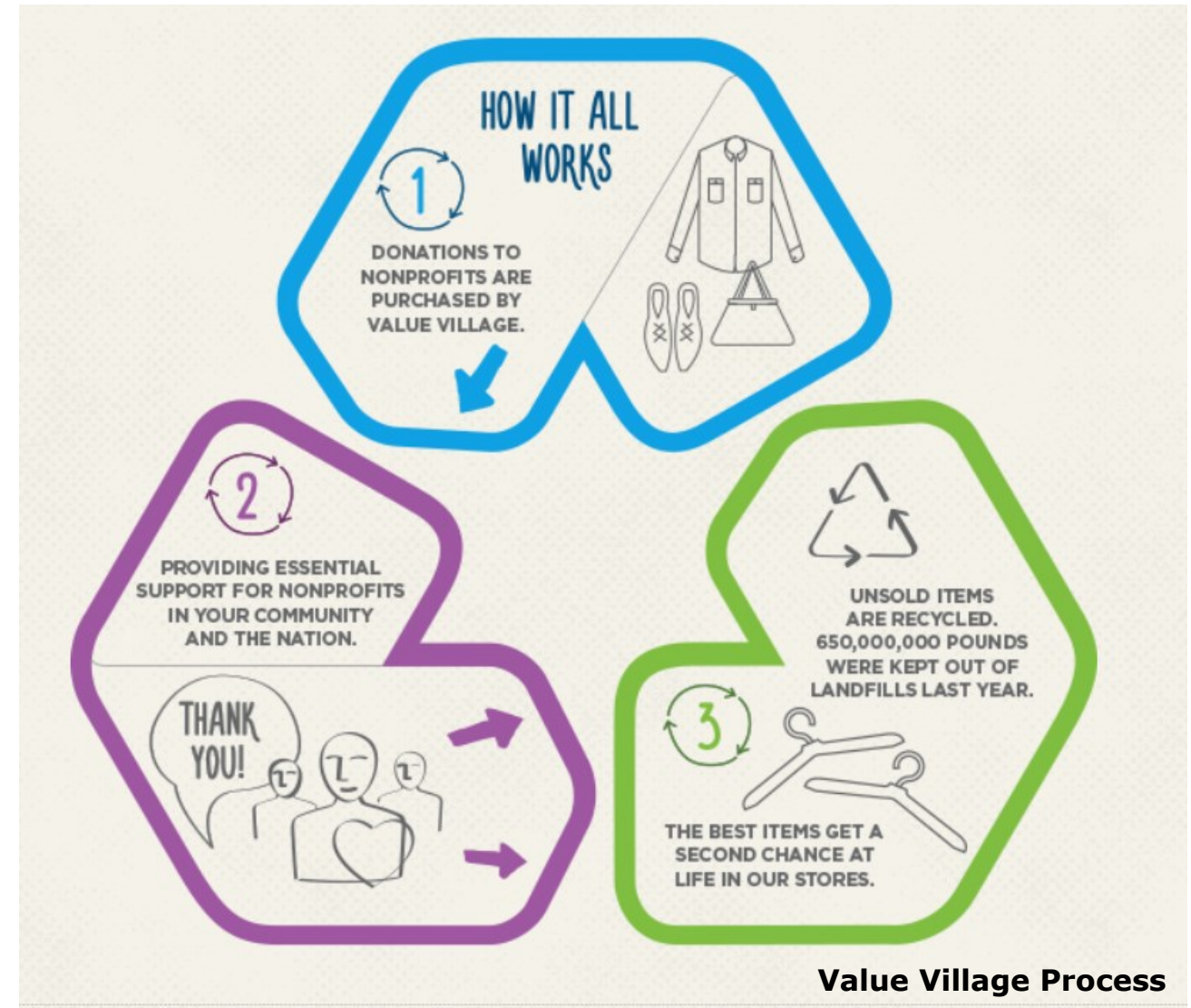


give your old shoes new life

What happens to textiles here?

REUSE & RECYCLING | DOOR TO FLOOR

- Donated clothes that are received through the local collection sites are sorted by type and quality and often hit the floor right away for retail.
- Some clothes that are not suitable for this market are sent to warehouses for further separation or baling.
- Some materials are sent by the pound to international organizations for resale in developing countries.
- Soiled and ripped textiles may be sent for ragging or shredding processes to further recycle into new products.
- It is unknown what happens in the retail industry.



What's happening elsewhere?

CANADA WIDE| ACTION PLAN

- The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment have developed an action plan for extended producer responsibility (EPR) that requires all provinces to take steps to implement programs.
- Phase 2 of requires that all jurisdictions work towards a textiles and carpet EPR program by 2017.



NOVA SCOTIA| PROVINCIAL APPROACH

- Nova Scotia takes a provincial approach to its waste management programs.
- It is a leader in Canada in terms of successful diversion rates, with the lowest per capita of waste disposal to landfill
- Consulting on a textiles ban province wide.



What's happening elsewhere?



MARKHAM | TEXTILES DIVERSION STRATEGY

- Partnered with Salvation Army and Canadian Diabetes Foundation to provide collection bins at City owned buildings and multi-residential sites.
- Created a standardized program to ensure consistency.
- Informal vetting process created trust with residents.



What's happening elsewhere?

CAMPAIGNS | GENERATING AWARENESS

There are a number of education campaigns and special events that are occurring throughout North America to generate awareness about the textiles industry and the need to keep clothing out of the landfill.



Is there room for improvement?

- On May 29, 2017, Utilities met with the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC)
- EAC was supportive of the Green Routine program focusing on a textile strategy that would increase diversion of textiles from landfill and generate greater support for the local goodwill community.
- Through discussion with the EAC, it was determined that Administration should focus on textile reuse and develop a program for 2017-18.



Textile Reuse Program

To be commenced in Q4 2017, Q1 2018 and implemented within existing program resources:

- Engagement

- Further consultation with the public to determine where barriers exist and how to encourage more reuse.
- Bring together the goodwill community to discuss how a connected strategy could support their efforts. Better understand the outcomes on local, national and international textile reuse.
- Potentially engage the retail sector to better understand their practices for disposing of textiles.



- Education

- Develop an education campaign that raises awareness about textile reuse in Strathcona County.
- Launch the campaign with a fun and creative community challenge.



Textile Reuse Program

Further exploration and evaluation is required. Administration will bring forward another recommendation in Q2 of 2018.

- Standardized Textile Bin Collection Program
 - Research the implementation of a standard County approved program for collection bins that could create consistency and transparency for residents.
 - Develop an evaluation process to determine the success of these programs, and capture measurement of materials being diverted from landfill.
 - Further consultation with EAC may be required regarding specifics to this program.



Recommendation

THAT Administration return in Q2 of 2018 with a recommendation for Council's consideration regarding a standardized textile bin collection program for Strathcona County.