

## Society's Eyes: The Little Green Dress

Jill MaEachen, Eastern Illinois University, USA

Keywords: Design, Going Green, Recycle

Consumers have seen the advertising posted throughout local grocery stores, plastered on magazines, and printed on flyers and brochures. “Going Green” and conserving the environment is an ever increasing trend in society today. There are rising concerns on how the way we are living today will affect the quality of life for those in the future. In attempt to help raise global awareness, June 5th has become “World Environment Day”, and is run by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). Simple steps can be taken by any individual in society to help reduce the carbon footprint left on our planet.



Going Green expands beyond the walls of product packaging and resource preservation right into the textiles industry. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, “an estimated 1.3 million tons of textiles in clothing were recovered for recycling in 2009”. Donating lightly-used, undamaged clothing to second hand stores and third-world countries has become a common solution to re-using ones unwanted clothing. An issue with this is that tattered clothing is not accepted and often gets sent to landfills. However, textile recovery facilities are taking used and damaged materials to be “pulled” into a fibrous state. The fibers produced from these “unwanted” textiles can then be recycled to create stuffing used in teddy bears or seat cushions.

Positive influences of going green include, but are not limited to; reduced pollution, conservation of natural resources, forests, and wildlife, recycling of non-biodegradable products, health benefits, and saving jobs through the purchase of local goods. Although going green may initially have a higher cost at the beginning, switching to green products will end up saving consumers in the long run.

Families can easily reduce their carbon footprint by separating waste accordingly; trash, compost, and recyclables. Households can even save energy, and money by setting their thermostats a few degrees lower in the winter, and a few degrees higher in the summer. This simple change will save on heating and cooling costs. Unplugging appliances when not in use, washing clothes in cold water, and hanging garments to dry are all ways to help save energy in the home. By taking every-day products and re-using them in unconventional ways, beautiful goods can be created.

### References

- Chang, C. (2011). Feeling Ambivalent About Going Green. [Electronic Version]. *Journal of Advertising*, 40(4), 19-32.
- Parry, S. (2012), Going Green: the evolution of micro business environmental practices. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 21(2), 220-237.
- U.S Environmental Protection Agency. (2014), Textiles. Retrieved from <http://www.epa.gov/osw/conserves/materials/textiles.htm>
- World Watch Institute. (2013), 10 Ways to Go Green and Save Green, Retrieved October 2, 2013, from [http://www.worldwatch.org/resources/go\\_green\\_save\\_green](http://www.worldwatch.org/resources/go_green_save_green)