

## Donating or Dumping?

These items should be disposed of properly, and **NOT** left with donations: computers, televisions, electronics, mattresses, box springs, futons, large appliances, building materials, exercise equipment, damaged or broken furniture, chemicals, tires, or used oil. Non-profits spend a lot of money removing and properly disposing of these items. Leaving them at drop-off bins, or at an organization's door, is illegal dumping and subject to fines. Bring trash and hazardous wastes to Solid Waste Services facilities. Visit [www.muni.org/sws](http://www.muni.org/sws) for more information.

## Donate a Car!

It may not be worth trying to sell but don't junk it! Consider donating your old car or truck and you can write off the donation on your taxes. Check the Car Donation Wizard at [www.cardonationwizard.com](http://www.cardonationwizard.com) for a list of local organizations and instructions for donating.



Donation is one of the easiest ways to reduce waste. Many non-profits benefit from donations, but please donate responsibly so that your gift doesn't turn into a burden.



## Drop-off bins

- Keep donation sites clean. Put items in drop-off bins, not next to or in front of them.
- Only donate items indicated on the signs, and be sure items are clean and unbroken.
- If items belong together, keep them together (e.g., pairs of shoes/socks).
- Do not put fragile items in donation bins.

## Pick-up services

- Ask about specific items when you call to schedule a pick-up.
- Package fragile items well and label them as fragile or hand them directly to a donation attendant or volunteer.
- Don't over-pack. Items are more likely to be damaged, and heavy boxes and bags require extra hands for processing.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska** ..... [www.bbbsak.org](http://www.bbbsak.org)  
Click on "Donate" ..... 563-1997

**The Arc of Anchorage** ..... [www.thearcofanchorage.org](http://www.thearcofanchorage.org)  
Click on "Donation" ..... 337-6390

## Textile Recycling

Americans discard an average of 70 pounds of textiles per person per year. In 2010, the recovery rate for all textiles, including clothing, shoes, sheets, blankets, etc., was 15%, according to the U.S. EPA, and unrecovered textiles take up almost 5% of all landfill space in the U.S. Keeping your old clothing out of the trash can help solve this problem, but how textiles are reused isn't always clear.

Most of us have some old, worn clothing items in our closets, and we may be hanging on to them because we don't know what to do with them.

We feel bad throwing them away, but fear donating them to a charity would be inappropriate since no one would want threadbare t-shirts or torn jeans.

It's important to know that some charities will accept all sorts of textiles, including those that you think are too

worn or damaged to donate, but others won't. In Anchorage, for example, Value Village will accept worn textiles and will sort and recycle those textiles not saleable or wearable. The Salvation Army, on the other hand, will only accept wearable clothing. Be sure to check with an individual donation site to determine its requirements before donating.

What happens to your textiles? Once they arrive at a charity that accepts all textiles, they are sorted based on quality. Any clothing that is still in good shape will be resold, either in local secondhand stores or in secondhand markets abroad. The rest of that clothing gets downcycled, meaning it is used for other purposes.

According to the Council for Textile Recycling, 30% of textiles not resold locally will be made into rags, which are used in many industries for cleaning and other purposes. Meanwhile, 20% of these textiles will be broken down into their fibers and made into new products like carpet, insulation, or stuffing for car seats. After all of this, only 5% of recovered clothing ends up as waste.

Cotton is a lot like paper when it comes to recycling. Paper is made up of fibers and can be recycled back into paper a finite number of times before the fibers become too short and must be used to make lower quality paper like newsprint or tissues. Cotton's fibers eventually wear out too.

## Drop-off facilities

Here are a few options for donating items to organizations that resell goods. Drop off your items during business hours. This is not a complete list. For more options, visit [www.muni.org/sws](http://www.muni.org/sws) and read the Fall/Winter 2010/2011 issue. Find other outlets for your used items at [earth911.com](http://earth911.com) or download the United Way of Anchorage's Annual Holiday Guide, available starting in November, at [www.liveunitedanchorage.org](http://www.liveunitedanchorage.org).

**Habitat for Humanity's ReStore** ..... [www.hfhanchorage.org/restore](http://www.hfhanchorage.org/restore)  
Accepts new and used building materials and fixtures ..... 743-8060

**The Salvation Army** ..... <http://satruck.org/>  
Donate a vehicle too! Get the mobile app ..... 561-4670

**Value Village** ..... [www.valuevillage.com](http://www.valuevillage.com)  
5437 E. Northern Lights Blvd. (supports Arc of Anchorage) ..... 337-2184  
501 E. Dimond Blvd. (supports Big Brothers Big Sisters) ..... 522-9090