

Environmental Report 2009

Over the past 10 years there have been increased efforts to encourage and support a healthier environment; focusing on **reducing the depletion of our natural resources, easing the burden on landfills, and reducing water and energy consumption.**

Maxwell Fabrics is constantly researching ways to achieve these goals in our own company as well as sourcing from companies already implementing and practicing this important ideology.

The North American Approach:

Strict industry standards have been set by McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC) for human and environmental health, environmentally preferable materials, strategies for renewable energy, and a comprehensive material reutilization program. Many of the American mills we purchase from have received the **Silver Cradle to Cradle Certification from MBDC by focusing on and implementing ways to recycle, reduce, and reuse water, energy, and waste** in their regular manufacturing processes. This is done in the following ways:

- “Post-Industrial” waste, such as left over yarns, fabric scraps, and color line samples, are used to make brand new sustainable fabrics. This process reduces the waste in the landfills and conserves our natural resources. Hundreds of thousands of gallons of gasoline is saved as additional oil is not converted to make a new fiber; therefore requiring less energy in production.
- All Bella Dura fabrics begin as a by-product of post-industrial waste (made from recycled fibers) and can be recycled at the end of their life.
- Techniques are constantly being improved in order to create softer, more luxurious fabrics from “Post Consumer” waste, like soda cans and water bottles. 16 bottles can produce 1yard of fabric.
- Undamaged fabric tubes can be returned and reused.
- Machine oil used on looms is recycled and reused.
- Performing “In house” yarn dyeing reduces packaging waste created when buying dyed yarns from other sources. This reduces energy and water waste by reusing heated water from previous dye baths for new dye cycles. Also, all chemicals used are certified to have no environmental impact, eliminating the

use of harmful chemicals. Dyes created are biodegradable as well, so there is no chance of water contamination.

- Sourcing local materials reduces energy consumption from transportation of raw goods.
- Switching from water-cooled to air-cooled equipment reduces energy and water consumption by over 7.5 million gallons. That will support 84 households for one year.
- Using cold water instead of heated water.
- Replacing lighting with energy efficient light bulbs saves enough power annually to support 37 average households for one year.

The European Approach:

In Europe, all of our major suppliers work towards the OEKO TEX STANDARD 100, developed in the early '90s in response to customer concerns regarding fabric which would pose no health risks. It is a globally uniform testing and certification system for raw textile materials, and intermediate and end products at all stages of production. Some of the regulations are as follows:

- Textiles must not contain allergenic dyestuffs and dyestuffs that form carcinogenic arylamines.
- Textiles must be tested for pesticides and chlorinated phenols
- Textiles must be tested for heavy metals
- Textiles must be free from formaldehyde
- Textiles must have a skin friendly pH, free from chloro-organic carriers.

Maxwell Fabrics is focused on continuing to provide environmentally responsible products to our clients. If there are any questions or concerns, please forward them on to us at fabrics@maxwellfabrics.com or call us at 800-663-1159.