



*Holey socks belonging to jocks, turtlenecks and mocks*

*Burp bibs and stuff from cribs, Halloween costumes from kids*

*Stained shirts, poodle skirts, just minus the dirt*

*Donate it all in a clothing drive, a charity helping others thrive or a drop off box open past five*

*They want it all, so get on the ball, and forget the mall the thrift store is a great place for all*

You might be already taking your best clothing and accessories to consignment shops to make a little money, hold yard or tag sales, or donate your old blankets, towels, sheets and even a few stuffed animals to local animal shelters. At one point you will find yourself with holey socks, stained baby clothes, lonely shoes and ugly sweaters and not sure what to do with them other than throw them away; however these are a highly sought after commodity, and possibly even an export item! Forget the old rule about donating only “gently worn clothing in good condition”, **the charities now want EVERYTHING.**

Your castoffs and left over tag sale items can be dropped at the local charity, boxes or even group textile drives which are sorted in the US and locally with the usable and newer items going to thrift shops and charities for them to sell or give to the needy according to their program. The remainder of these useful textiles are sold by bulk to be graded into 3 levels with almost 100% of the textiles being used as either “usable clothing”(45%), “wiping cloth” (30%) and “fiber conversion” (21%) in which it is shredded and made into carpet padding or insulation.

According to the EPA and Mass DEP between 60-70 pounds of textiles per person are thrown in the trash every year; these goods can be reused or recycled. You say, “well of course what else can be done with that white belt from the 1970’s, undergarments, one Spiderman sandal, or the sheets with stretched out elastic, clothing with stains, rips and holes, really old ugly curtains, towels, worn out, stuffed pillows or stuffed animals?” Drop it in a charity box, give it to a local charity or a collection! They really want it all! New 21<sup>st</sup> century rule: “**ANYTHING** can be donated, reused or recycled as long as the items are not wet, or smelly”.

There is a huge worldwide demand for American’s unwanted stuff, yes your holey socks, stained baby clothes, lonely shoe and ugly sweater is a highly sought after commodity, and possibly even an export item! Yes you are part of the world economy

You have surely noticed the collection bins and boxes popping up all over in every parking lot, some are supporting local organizations and charities, some you have never heard of before, some are clean and neat and others have trash and junk all around them. Rest assured that what you drop in those bins will be treated like the valuable commodity it has become, the lovely baby dress and baby blankets that your children have outgrown will be reused as clothing, it has value. Notice the instructions on the boxes about what they do not accept and please do not leave items outside the boxes, your great donations can get ruined. Many towns are considering laws about the occasional mess and dumping grounds these boxes sometimes create, so please do not add to the problem.

Don’t forget the swaps, yard or tag sales, animal shelters or requests from schools, churches or other organizations for your unwanted textiles. **The most important thing to remember is the Good, the Bad and the Ugly can all be donated and that it must NOT be wet or smelly.** Don’t trash it; someone locally or on the other side of the world wants your castoffs.