



New agendas for NECPA

Performance fabrics recycling is at the top of the new president's list.

As the new president of the North East Canvas Products Association (NECPA, Zone 1), Scott Massey has set performance fabrics recycling at the top of his agenda. He has already begun to pursue this mission through his awning fabrics cleaning business, in cooperation with awning and marine fabricators and Glen Raven Custom Fabrics LLC, manufacturer of Sunbrella® fabrics.

"Members of our association are certainly motivated to give something back to the community, and fabric recycling is one thing that we can all support if we work together," says Massey, owner of Awning Cleaning Industries, New Haven, Conn. "During my tenure as association president, I will encourage active involvement by our membership and joint activities that will make a real difference."

Cooperative support

During the past several months, Massey has demonstrated the power of cooperative recycling efforts by offering to pick up waste and used fabrics from his customers, who include numerous awning and marine fabricators throughout the North East region. So far he has collected more than 5 tons of fabric that he is repurposing in a number of creative ways.

"Working with Futureguard Building Products of Auburn, Maine, we have established a special relationship with AmeriCares to sew disaster relief tarps for them from waste fabric," Massey says. "Scrap fabric from Futureguard allowed us to sew and deliver 30 disaster relief tarps in October, and we have enough fabric for at least 30 more." (For information on AmeriCares, visit www.americares.org.)

Closer to home, Massey's company provided the local animal shelter with shade panels made from used fabrics to protect their animals (see "Strong business, strong communities" in the April 2011 *Review*). This community project inspired a number of new customers, who were impressed with the commitment to sustainable commerce.

Massey is convinced that through creative thinking and cooperative action, recycling can be good for awning fabricators by generating good will and helping these businesses network with community leaders. Consumers prefer to work with ecologically responsible businesses, he says, and active involvement with repurposing and recycling fabrics can place an awning fabricator in a very positive light.

Creative solutions

For fabrics that cannot be given new life as tarps, bags or shade panels, Massey has turned to Glen Raven and its Recycle My Sunbrella program, located near the Sunbrella manufacturing center in Anderson, S.C. The



Mike Cornell, northeastern marketing representative for Glen Raven Custom Fabrics, left, with Scott Massey, owner of Awning Cleaning Industries of New Haven, Conn., surrounded by used and waste fabrics collected for repurposing and recycling.

program gives used fabrics and fabric wastes new life through applications such as insulation. Recycle My Sunbrella is operated through a special partnership with the S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation Center, with the Center's clients receiving, sorting and preparing fabrics for the recycling process.

"Recycle My Sunbrella has recycled 55,000 pounds of fabric during the past three years," says Mike Cornell, northeast sales manager for Sunbrella fabrics. "Through cooperative projects such as those that Scott is advocating, we can steadily add to this total."

During the coming year, Massey's plans for promoting recycling in the Northeast include addressing seminars and training sessions, networking with the membership, encouraging central collection points for used and waste fabrics, and partnerships with nonprofits, such as AmeriCares. He will also continue to leverage support from industry leaders such as Glen Raven.

"The potential for repurposing and recycling performance fabrics is tremendous, as Scott has demonstrated," says John Gant, manager of sustainable development for Glen Raven. "We want to build on these early successes and encourage all of our Sunbrella customers to develop creative solutions that are good for the environment, and ultimately good for business."

To learn more about Massey's recycling initiatives, contact him at scott@CleanCanvas.com, or visit www.CleanCanvas.com. For information on Sunbrella fabrics recycling, visit www.sunbrella.com/recycle. For more details on NECPA, visit www.necpa.org.