

## Carpet recycling facts that may floor you

Dear Wally Waste-Not,

I cannot fit all of the carpeting and padding that I pulled out of my house in our garbage rollout cart. Should I cut it all up in small pieces with my lawnmower and place into our bin over the next 7 or 8 months, or burn it, or leave it on the street?

Is there anywhere in Salinas that accepts this type of material, and can it actually be recycled?

Thank you,  
Carpet Clue-Seeker

Dear Clue-Seeker,

Thank you for considering recycling your old carpet and padding!  
The disposal options you suggested are highly creative, though none are recommended.

As you likely realized in the removal process, carpeting and padding is bulky so it takes up considerable space in the landfill. That's one reason why the non-profit Carpet America Recovery Effort (CARE) was formed, as an extended producer responsibility (EPR) effort that requires manufacturers of problematic products to share in responsibility for disposal when it reaches the end of its useful life.

CARE administers the [California Carpet Stewardship Program](#), which helps California meet the requirements for carpet recycling set by the state law AB 2398 to increase the diversion and recycling of carpet throughout the state. Through this program, carpet and padding is collected at authorized carpet recycling centers and recycled into new products such as carpet padding, moisture barriers for under flooring, and products for the transportation industry. One such authorized recycling center is in Salinas at the [Sun Street Transfer Station](#).

Almost any carpet and padding can be recycled as long it is dry. [Preparing carpet and padding for recycling](#) is simple and makes it easier to transport. Start by removing carpeting in strips or runners 3-5 feet wide, and roll up carpet strips separately from padding. Tie or secure the rolls with tape to keep them from unrolling. Stack carpet tiles. Keep the materials dry and free from debris, such as tack strips, nails, dirt, trash and other construction materials.

If the load of recycling or disposal is not entirely carpet and padding, keep the carpet and padding separate from other recyclable materials, and separate from trash. The easiest way to do this is to put the trash materials on the bottom or back of your load, and put the rolls of carpet and padding on top for easy access, along with any other separated recycling. Cover your load and you're ready to transport!

The Sun Street Transfer Station is located at 139 Sun Street in Salinas. Upon arrival, let them know at the scales that you have carpet to recycle and they'll direct you to the trailer for unloading. If you are working on a project with a permit, recycling your carpet and padding will be important to document to fulfill diversion requirements, so be sure to get a receipt.

When it is time to buy new carpeting, take your recycling to the next level by buying carpet made of recycled materials. If you're working with a contractor or new carpet installer, request that they recycle the old carpet and padding as part of the job. Taking care of carpet to make it last longer between replacements also helps extend the life of your landfill.

Recycling carpet and padding is an important step toward a future without landfills!

Sincerely,  
Wally Waste Not

*Ask Wally* is presented by Salinas Valley Recycles to answer waste, recycling and disposal questions for the Salinas Valley. Residents and businesses of the Salinas Valley are invited to submit questions via [www.SalinasValleyRecycles.org](http://www.SalinasValleyRecycles.org).



Prepare carpet for recycling by rolling in three- to five-foot strips, separate from padding. Credit: powerofforever

Properly prepared carpet and padding is ready for recycling. Tape or tie rolls closed and keep dry, free from other trash or debris. Credit: aoldman

