

Recycled Products Holiday Buyers' Guide



Welcome to the fourth annual holiday edition of our Recycled Products column, where we highlight some of our favorite consumer products that include recycled content of some kind. Whether you want jeans made out of plastic bottles, MP3 speakers out of paper pulp, or jewelry out of skateboards, we have an item for your favorite recycling devotee on your holiday shopping list.

As always, if you make, or know of, a product you'd like to see featured in this column, please send your nominations to our Senior Writer Jake Thomas at jake@resource-recycling.com. And, of course, Happy Holidays from all of us here at *Resource Recycling*!

Company:

Geared for Imagination

(Akron, Ohio)

www.gearedforimagination.com

Product:

Toys

Recycled content:

100-percent pre-consumer recycled wood (medium density fiberboard)

Target market:

Your favorite animal mash-up expert

Geared for Imagination is the fruit of the efforts of two dads who wanted to bring toy manufacturing back to the U.S., specifically to their home state of Ohio. And their first collection is a series of three-dimensional animal puzzles called Topozoos.

Each Topozoo set includes 12 animals broken up into puzzle pieces so parts of each animal can be mixed and matched with others. All kinds of animal hybrids are possible and are only limited by your child's imagination. Different play sets include dinosaurs, aquatic beasts, safari animals and mythical creatures with unicorns and fire-breathing dragons. Also available are cardboard versions that come with markers that a child can use to get even more creative. In 2012, the company even launched an election edition, with donkeys and elephants for your little Democrat or Republican.

The animals are sturdy and made for kids three and up. The standard kits are made from 100-percent recycled medium density fiberboard and the color stains are made in Vermont from a byproduct of cheese-making.



Company:

Himane Sustainable Designs

(New York City, New York)

www.himane.com

Product:

Duffel bag

Recycled content:

100-percent recycled materials from various post-consumer and post-industrial sources

Target market:

Your favorite design-minded lover of duffel bags

Himane Sustainable Designs, founded in 2002, uses repurposed materials including canvas, leather, cotton, hemp, fish skin, denim, burlap, inner tubes and others to make hand-crafted unique fashions and accessories.

One of the items made by Himane is the Erisna duffel/travel bag, made entirely of discarded um-



brellas, zippers and Velcro. The webbing for the handle and the lining were purchased from U.S. companies that have gone out of business or had an oversupply of material following production runs.

Recycled items are deconstructed, cleaned, re-cut and completely transformed into new designs. The company believes that extending the life of an object by giving it a new form and purpose honors its previous makers, extends its value and usefulness, while also adding a new chapter to the story of each item.

Company:

Molla Space
(Monrovia, California)
www.mollaspace.com

Product:

MP3 speaker

Recycled content:

100-percent post-industrial recycled paper material

Target market:

Your favorite music/donut lover

In addition to its unique donut shape, another distinguishing feature of the Pulpop MP3 speaker is that it's made almost entirely out of recycled pulp. Despite its look and size, the speaker is extremely light and the sound is amplified by the vibration inside the hollow space of the speaker. After a series of trial-and-error processes, this speaker was designed to produce unexpected potency of sound volume and quality, particularly for something made mostly out of pulp.

The speaker system is mono, includes a 3.5mm earphone plug and is recharged via USB. It comes in both white, made from 100-percent post-industrial recycled paper and brown, made from Kraft paper sources, which also is made from 100-percent recycled content.



Company:

Weisenbach Recycled Products
(Columbus, Ohio)
www.recycledproducts.com

Product:

Pen

Recycled content:

50-percent post-consumer recycled expanded polystyrene

Target market:

Your favorite environmentally-minded scribe

The new P.S. stick pen from Weisenbach Recycled Products is made from post-consumer recycled EPS (expanded polystyrene) foam plastic.

The recycled EPS plastic material in each pen barrel is equivalent to one standard foam cup. Weisenbach uses foam cups and plates, foam lunch trays and take-out containers, as well as polystyrene foam packaging materials. The company densifies, granulates, washes and pelletizes the material into a new recycled raw material to make these pens. What was once lightweight foam is transformed into this rigid, durable recycled-content writing instrument.

In the era when most writing instruments are made overseas, this pen is both inexpensive and made in the U.S. and will soon be available at many retailers. Currently, the P.S. stick pen is custom printed and available for sale for promotional advertising, internal office use, branding and private labeling.



Company:
Levi's
(San Francisco, California)
www.us.levi.com

Product:
Clothes

Recycled content:
20 percent post-consumer PET

Target market:
Your favorite jeans-wearing, bottle-recycling fashionista

One of the newest items on this list, legendary jeans-maker Levi's recently introduced a new collection of denim incorporating post-consumer materials, specifically recycled plastic bottles and food trays. Each Levi's "Waste<Less" product includes a minimum of 20-percent post-consumer recycled content, or around eight bottles per jean.

The Levi's Waste<Less collection will utilize over 3.5 million recycled bottles. The line will feature Levi's 511 Skinny jeans, a new modern-looking Levi's 504 Straight Fit jean and the company's iconic Trucker jacket. For women, Levi's Boyfriend Skinny jeans in a progressive fit will be available in the U.S. and Europe.

Materials for the jeans – PET plastic, including brown beer bottles, green soda bottles, clear water bottles and black food trays – are collected through municipal recycling programs across the U.S. by the company's partners. The collected materials are sorted by color, crushed into flakes and made into a polyester fiber. Next, the polyester fiber is blended with cotton fiber, which is finally woven with traditional cotton yarn by Cone Denim to create the denim used in the Levi's Waste<Less jeans and trucker jackets. The color of the bottles used adds a subtle undertone to the denim fabric creating a unique finish in the final product.

Company:
Recycled Skateboards International
(Phoenix, Arizona)
www.recycledskateboardsinternational.com

Product:
Jewelry

Recycled content:
All recycled except for the hardware on the jewelry

Target market:
Your favorite grinder (skateboarder)

Recycled Skateboards International transforms broken decks into unique jewelry and accessories. The company's products seek to blend the authentic style of raw skateboard art with timeless wearables. RSI's handcrafted products range from belt buckles, earrings and necklaces to bracelets, pins and coasters.

RSI partners with skateboard shops all over the U.S. to keep skateboard decks out of landfills and this steady source of material allows the company to fill orders big and small.

The company was founded by Devin and Lisa Kelley, two Phoenix artists who share a life-long passion for skateboarding. Normally, old skateboards would be sent to the wood chipper or the trash can, but RSI hopes to breathe new lives into these once loved items. The pair hand-makes each piece, attempting to capture and pay respect to the stories behind each nick and scratch on skateboards, and preserve the thrash marks on every piece of jewelry.

