

Are there Alternatives to our Purchasing Practices that we can apply to help our Environment Rejuvenate?

Story by Ed Kolybaba on Nov 06, 2021

A story featured by CNN caught the attention of the editor of this website after watching an "Environment Moment," PowerPoint production by Rotary Club of Kelowna Sunrise club member Allison Kirkwood.

Under the caption of "Asian rivers are turning black. And our colorful closets are to blame," a journalist for CNN, described how textile dyeing has become one of the most polluting aspects of the global fashion industry, devastating the environment and posing health hazards to humans.

The story illustrates how world's textile consumption of 95.6 millions of tons in 2015 has created a deep and damaging impact on the environment with water pollution, air pollution and solid waste pollution.



The textile/fashion industry uses 93 billion cubic meters of water annually based on that the fact that to produce one kg of fabric, it takes typically 200 litres of water which are specifically used for washing the fiber, bleaching, dyeing and then cleaning the finished product.

The pollution problem comes about when often the waste waters are not treated to remove the pollutants before they are disposed in the environment. The high volume of polluted water, including formaldehyde, chlorine and heavy metals is responsible for aquatic life toxicity, water that is consumed in daily activities by a large number of people. The World Bank, for instance, has identified 72 toxic chemicals and solvents that are just used for the process of textile dyeing.

The apparel industry also produces air pollutants including nitrous oxides and sulphur dioxide produced in the energy production stages, volatile organic components (VOCs) produced in coating, curing, drying, waste water treatment and chemical storage, and aniline vapours, carriers of hydrogen sulphide, chlorine and chlorine dioxide produced in dyeing and bleaching stages.

The textile industry also produces solid waste. Globally, each year, millions of items of clothing end up in landfills. Moreover, the waste produced ends up in water bodies, causing environmental issues. Some of the pollutants that end up in landfills include fiber lint, fiber scraps, trimmings and packaging waste produced in the fiber preparation, wasted and retained sludge in waste water treatment and lock, chemical and dye containers used in dyeing and finishing of woven fabrics

This various kinds of pollution released into the environment are dangerous, both for the planet and for human being. So what can we do to help in reducing this environmental nightmare?

Club member Allison Kirkwood shared one thing we can all do. **Here is her story.....**

