PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Clothesline Sale is an annual garage sale, now in its 60th year, that is supplied by three all-day donation events in the fall, winter and spring. Thousands of donated items are delivered, sorted and packed by more than a hundred volunteers at each event. In 2008, the Pembroke Hill School Parents’ Association decided to divert items discarded during the donation events and Clothesline Sale from the waste stream by educating parents about what items could be recycled and recovering recyclables from the trash. At that time, the parents’ association was recycling cardboard, paper, aluminum and plastic bottles.

Since that time, the parents’ association has expanded the recycling stations to include metal, glass, styrofoam, ceramic and unusable fabric. The recycling area is now the first stop during the processing of donations. The number of trash cans has been reduced and they are placed furthest away from the processing area. Volunteers drink from ceramic cups instead of disposable cups and compost food waste.

The amount of waste generated during donation events has gone from a six-cubic-yard dumpster to only three bags of trash and the waste from the four-day sale from two, 20-cubic-yard dumpsters to one, 6-cubic-yard dumpster. The parents’ association hopes to bring that number down even further this year.

PROJECT GOALS:
• Provide affordable clothing and household items to people with limited funds.
• Donate unsold items to local charities.
• Reduce the amount of trash generated during donation events and Clothesline Sale through resale, reuse and recycling efforts.
• Make the donation events and Clothesline Sale zero-landfill zones.
• Raise money for the Pembroke Hill School Parents’ Association.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS AND LESSONS LEARNED:
Items no longer needed by individuals in the Pembroke community find a new home with other members of the school or city community. Items not purchased at the end of the sale are donated to a variety of charities including Operation Breakthrough, Rose Brooks, TurnAround, Uplift, Upper Room, Women’s Employment Network, Salvation Army, Goodwill and Animal Haven. Hundreds of families depend on this event to purchase affordable basic items.

FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS:
Pembroke Hill School Parents’ Association members plan and coordinate the event. RockTenn (formerly Smurfit) donated the recycling container for the Clothesline Sale.

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