

Why Washing Machine Microfiber Filters Could Soon Be Required in Europe



FILTERS CAN SERVE AS AN IMMEDIATE STOPGAP WHILE LONGER-TERM SOLUTIONS LIKE MATERIAL DESIGN ARE DEVELOPED, THE REPORT SAYS. EDOARDO VETERE /EYEEM/GETTY IMAGES

A new white paper is urging the European Commission to mandate the installation of filters in new washing machines as the only “effective, near-term solution” to reducing the release of microfibers into the environment.

Published Monday by the nonprofits 5 Gyres Institute and A Plastic Planet, along with filter manufacturers Matter, PlanetCare and [Xeros Technologies](#), the report says that the [European Union](#) must seize this route if it's to deliver on its [Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles](#), which includes, among its measures, action to address the unintentional release of microplastics from synthetic textiles such as polyester, acrylic and nylon. It presents Matter, PlanetCare and Xeros Technologies' innovations as tested to high

standards and available for commercial or industrial use. Garments can shed hundreds of thousands to millions of tiny textile flecks in a single laundry load, studies have found. Inundating rivers, lakes and oceans, they can pose serious ecological and public health risks due to their inability to break down.

Paul Servin, chief sustainability officer at Xeros Technologies, said that long-term changes such as reducing production and consumption and changing material design are important, but the “reality” is that these solutions are many years away. Filters, in the meantime, can serve as an immediate stopgap.

“The best point to deal with an issue is at the source of generation,” he said. “Microfibers are released during clothes washing and need to be dealt with before it gets further diluted with all other effluent waste streams arriving at the wastewater treatment plants.”

While organizations such as [The Microfibre Consortium and ZDHC](#) have rallied clothing purveyors such as C&A, Nike, Lululemon and Calvin Klein owner PVH Corp. to tackle the problem, the urgency to act isn't universally felt.

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Fashion Revolution's [2022 Fashion Transparency Index](#) found that just 24 percent of the 250 largest fashion brands it reviewed disclosed what they are doing to minimize the impact of microfibers and microplastics—despite textiles accounting for more than one-third of microplastics in the world's waterways, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature. In addition, less than one-third of the companies have published a time-bound, measurable target for the reduction of textiles deriving from fossil fuels and just 24 percent disclose progress on these targets.

[Cotton and natural textiles](#), as well as manmade cellulose, can also slough bits that might be covered in toxic dyes and finishes. Even so, reducing the production and use of synthetic textiles, which flake off plastic, should be a “critical focus of any policy and regulatory action when looking at the fashion industry's impact on [microplastic pollution](#),” said Liv Simpliciano, policy and research manager at Fashion Revolution, an advocacy group. “There is no fashion on a dead planet.”

So far only France will require microfiber catchers in all new laundry appliances beginning in 2025, though lawmakers in Ontario and California have introduced bills with a similar goal.

Arguments that consumers won't want to pay more for filters are specious, the white paper said. An internal study conducted by Trinity

McQueen in September 2021 of 2,500 adults in Germany, France and the United Kingdom, showed that 95 percent would be willing to pay for the feature, with nearly half willing to cough up an additional 79 euros (\$86.52). PlanetCare's own 2021 [microfiber pollution](#) survey of 32,000-plus people worldwide found that more than 96 percent thought washing machines should already have microfiber filters, with nearly 85 percent willing to pay extra, though most shied at anything more than 100 euros (\$109.52).

Currently, options are a bit ad-hoc. Though [Patagonia and Samsung](#) have created a washing machine with a Less Microfiber Filter that they have hailed as a “breakthrough in the fight against microplastics,” most conscious consumers have to settle for DIY means like Guppy Bags and Cora Balls. There's also Lint LUV-R, a wall-mounted trap designed to forestall septic system failure by stripping washing machine discharge of lint and untreatable synthetic solids. Lint LUV-R captured an average of 87 percent of microfibers, and Cora Ball picked up 26 percent, according to one 2019 study. Guppy Bag claims to reduce microfiber pollution by more than 90 percent, as do Matter's Gulp filter, PlanetCare's cartridge and Xeros Technology's XF filter.

Sian Sutherland, co-founder of A Plastic Planet, said that the EU is in a “unique position” to lead the world in protecting ecosystems from this invisible yet insidious scourge. By setting standards across its single market of 500 million consumers, it can “at a stroke” make filters the norm. The United Kingdom would have to follow, as well as the large American and Asian markets.

“If the European Commission introduces regulations requiring filters on all new washing machines, it will be only a couple of years before people ask why it wasn’t done sooner,” she said. “There also needs to be incentives for people to retrofit their old machines with a filter.”

“Voluntary agreements and voluntary targets for this won’t work,” Sutherland added. “You only need to look at the paltry progress big brands have made against their voluntary agreement to phase out single-use packaging to see that.”

Link

<https://sourcingjournal.com/sustainability/sustainability-news/eu-legislation-microfiber-pollution-washing-machine-filter-patagonia-samsung-xeros-430732/>

Provided by Sourcing Journal

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FITI Launches Recycled Polyester Verification & Microfiber Release Testing Service

Recycled Polyester Verification Testing Service

Recycled polyester is increasingly used by many brands as an eco-friendly marketing of apparel and footwear products. FITI help our customers create sustainable products by verifying the recycled polyester used in yarn, fabric, and garments, among other things.

[Test Information]

Category	Content		Testing Fee
Test Item	Recycled Polyester Verification		\$ 300
Applicable Item	Textiles (Yarn, Fabric)		
Test Method	FITI TM A-0006		
Specimen Size	Yarn	Min. 20g	
	Fabric	Min. A4 Size	
Turnaround Time	7 working days		

[Notice]

Content	Note
Only Applicable for 100% Recycled Polyester Verification [ex 1]Cotton 60% Recycled Polyester 40% → Applicable [ex 2]Cotton 60% Polyester 40% (Recycled 50%/Conventional 50%) → Not Applicable	Not applicable when used in a mixture of Recycled PET and Conventional PET
Only Applicable for Mechanical Recycle(Physical Recycling) Polyester	Chemical Recycling Polyester is Not Applicable
Additional Charge per Warp/Weft of Woven Fabric	-
Additional Charge per Yarn of Pattern Fabric	-

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Microfiber Release Testing Service

FITI recently have joined the microfiber consortium(TMC) and became authentication testing institute. We will do our best to reduce microfiber with global companies so that the fashion industry can be transformed into the sustainable eco-friendly industry through 'Microfiber Release' test.

[Test Information]

Category	Content		
Test Item	Microfiber Release		
Applicable Item	Textiles (Fabric)		
Test Method	AATCC TM212	ISO/FDIS 4484-1	TMC Test method
Specimens Size	200mm × 340mm Diagonal 4pieces	150mm × 290mm warp/weft 4pieces	150mm × 290mm warp/weft 8pieces
Required sample	80cm × 80cm		90cm × 90cm
Testing Fee	\$ 150		\$ 300
Turnaround Time	4 working days		

[Test Procedure]

Weighing > Laundering > Rinse and Filtration > Oven-dry filters > Weighing



For more information, please contact:

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California lists solvent, dye as Prop 65 carcinogens

Warning requirements take effect in April 2024 for 1,1,1-trichloroethane, leucomalachite green



California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (Oehha) has listed 1,1,1-trichloroethane and leucomalachite green as Proposition 65 carcinogens.

1,1,1-trichloroethane, also called methyl chloroform, is used as a solvent and degreasing agent in commercial applications and in consumer products like cleaners, glues and aerosol sprays. Leucomalachite green is used in forensic science and as a reagent in analytical chemistry. It is also a metabolite of malachite green, a biocide and dye.

Companies must begin providing warnings by 21 April 2024 if they expose anyone to either substance, unless the exposure is low enough to pose no significant cancer risk.

Oehha added the substances to Prop 65 under the 'labour code' listing mechanism, which compels listings for substances identified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) as human or animal carcinogens.

IARC previously [determined](#) that 1,1,1-trichloroethane is "probably carcinogenic to humans" (group 2A) and leucomalachite green is "[possibly carcinogenic](#) to humans" (group 2B), based on sufficient evidence of carcinogenicity in animals.

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Oehha says it did not receive any comments in response to its [March proposal](#) to list the two substances.

Link

[California lists solvent, dye as Prop 65 carcinogens \(chemicalwatch.com\)](#)

Provided By Chemical Watch

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