

Recycling Milk Bags into Bed Mats

Update - A response to the Haitian Earthquake Victims

Over the last year, we have collected many hundreds of milk bags. Many thanks to Boyd & Ruth Hiscock for sorting and cutting and organizing them all into boxes! Now thanks to Wendy Morrell and her sorority group, we have some finished crocheted bedmats ready to be shipped next week to Haiti to be used as surgical beds and as regular beds for those who are still homeless and sleeping on the damp, hard ground with the insects.

We have reached out to the community and connected with several people who are interested in joining in this province-wide Recycle Milk Bag Project. People from age 8 to 80+ joined us in our efforts to help the environment while helping the homeless.

We can always use more help. If you are interesting in trying a couple hours of **Sorting, Cutting, Rolling or Crocheting** please contact Barbara Eade 613-829-7060 beade@vif.com

Here is a Summary for those who are new to the idea:

What?

- These washable, quick-dry bed mats provide an alternative to sleeping on the damp, hard ground. They are also used as surgical beds.
- The mats are crocheted from milk bag strips called plarn (plastic yarn). The milk bags can also be crocheted into tote bags and other useful items.

Why?

- To help the environment by recycling plastic milk bags – giving them a practical use since they take 40-100 years to decompose.
- To help people who are sleeping on the ground or on leaf/reed mats. It protects them from dampness, biting insects and the common 'paper cuts' from leaves/reeds. The bags are easy to wash/dry. There is a desperate need for the homeless in Haiti since the earthquake.
- To provide surgical tables and beds for medical teams in makeshift hospitals. There is a desperate need in Haiti since the earthquake.
- To provide packing material for the Aid containers which are shipped to 3rd world countries.
- To provide other helpful items like carry bags and teddy bears to 3rd world countries.

Who?

There is a province-wide network of more than 70 small groups who have been working on this project for about 6 years. The groups include schools, churches, Scouts & Guides, knitting/crochet clubs etc. Here are some of the local active groups:

- Bells Corners United Church
- Beta Sigma Phi (Laureate Phi Chapter)
- Katimavik Public School
- D.A. Moodie Public School
- Busy Hands (Brockville)

How?

- Step 1: Collect bag. Make sure it is clean. Lay flat
- Step 2: Trim off both ends to make it into a tube with clean edges
- Step 3: Cut into one long strip or cut into loops and string them together
- Step 4: Roll the plastic strips into a ball like yarn (or save in a bag)
- Step 5: Use a size 7 or 8 mm crochet hook. Chain stitch until 36" wide then single crochet until mat measures 60" long.

Read the latest news on our website is <http://recyclemilkbags.pbworks.com>