



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

O'Leary  
AX-0100943

MAY 8 2001

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Tim Williams  
Chairman  
Textile Rental Services Association  
1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 1060  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Williams:

Thank you for your letter concerning the Office of Solid Waste's efforts to develop a federal regulation governing the handling of soiled reusable shop towels. I appreciate the information in your letter about your history of working in partnership with EPA. Partnerships with our stakeholders will be an important part of how we will do business at EPA.

We are continuing to evaluate the merits of options associated with the regulation of soiled reusable shop towels. I assure you that if the Agency proceeds with a proposed rule on this topic, we will address the concerns you identify in your letter - including balancing the environmental benefits of the rule with any burden that would be imposed.

My understanding is that Agency efforts were initiated as a result of petitions from various industries, such as the suppliers of disposable wipes, and the users of both disposable and reusable wipes, such as printers. They both have asked for consistency in requirements that currently differ from state to state and assurances that these materials will not be subject to the full waste disposal requirements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act's (RCRA) Subtitle C regulations.

The Environmental Protection Agency's goal is to ensure that solvent contaminated wipes are managed in an environmentally sound, cost-effective manner that encourages source reduction and recycling of hazardous solvents. We will continue the stakeholder outreach efforts we have pursued throughout the development of this rule as we continue to evaluate options.

The Agency looks forward to continuing to work with you and your member companies.

Sincerely yours,

Christine Todd Whitman