

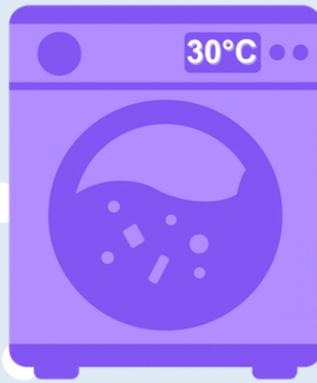
# Microplastics from textiles

## How should we tackle this challenge?

### Recommendations<sup>4, 5, 8</sup>

#### For consumers

- Washing clothes less often
- Choose liquid detergent over powder, as it reduces friction and minimizes fiber shedding.
- Using short wash cycles, lower temperatures, fabric softeners, and avoiding tumble drying can also help decrease microplastic release.
- Front-loading washing machines release significantly fewer microfibers than top-loading models.



#### For the industry

- Create stronger, low-shedding yarns and sustainable bio-based fibers.
- Equip washing machines with filters to capture between 60 to 80 % of fibers during washing.
- The Ecodesign Directive (EU policies) is moving toward mandatory filters in washing machines.

*Smaller washing loads result in a higher release of microfibers from polyester fabrics.<sup>9</sup>*

### Pathways to prevent the release of microplastics<sup>1, 4</sup>



#### Design and Production

- Use natural fibers instead of synthetic.
- Adopt alternative manufacturing processes
- Implement pre-washing at the manufacturing stage.



#### Use and Caretaking

- Integrate efficient filters in washing machines.
- Develop milder, less abrasive detergents.
- Provide guidelines to extend the lifespan of textile products.
- Enable consumers to use textile products for longer.

#### Disposal and End-of-life Processing

- Enhance textile waste management.
- Clean up existing microplastics in the environment.
- Effectively manage wastewater treatment sludge.
- Ensure proper wastewater treatment.



### The EU Policies

- The EU Strategy for Plastics (2018) and the Circular Economy Action Plan (2020) identify textiles as a priority sector in addressing microplastic pollution.
- The EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles addresses the unintentional release of microplastics from synthetic textiles, as well as seeks to curb fast fashion, extend the lifespan of garments, and reduce textile waste.

#### References:

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