

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning GreenWeaver Regalia

1. How is the process achieved?

- ♦ Recycled plastic bottles are processed to remove impurities such as labels and caps.
- ♦ The bottles are then chopped into fragments called “flakes.”
- ♦ Flakes are melted, then solidified into uniform pellets called “chips.”
- ♦ Chips are melted again and extruded into continuous filament yarn.
- ♦ The yarn is woven, dyed and finished using procedures similar those used with regular polyester.

2. In addition to keeping plastic bottles from winding up in landfills, are there any other advantages of this process over weaving virgin polyester?

- ♦ Yes, CO₂ gas emissions are reduced by 54.6% in the process of manufacturing fabric from plastic versus virgin polyester.
- ♦ Using thermal recycled energy (like used to produce GreenWeaver fabric) saves energy use by 52.6% over petroleum based, helping to preserve the Earth’s natural resources.

3. What does Post Consumer and Post Industrial Recycled really mean and what is the difference?

- ♦ Post Consumer means that a product has already gone through its life cycle and has made its way into a recycling bin.
- ♦ Post Industrial means left over waste from a product being made that has not made its way into the consumers’ hands.
- ♦ Both are extremely important, but Post Consumer allows the greatest use of “used” waste that would otherwise end up consuming space in a landfill.
- ♦ In most cases Post Industrial requires more fossil fuel to break down than Post Consumer.

4. Is the gown made completely from recycled products?

- ♦ The fabric is made from 100% recycled plastic bottles. The pellon used to line the yoke area is biodegradable, and we are using a “tag less” size label with soy ink. The zipper is not recycled, but once those are available we will be looking to move in that direction as well.

5. Is the cap also recycled?

- ♦ Yes, with the exception of the tack that holds the button in place. GreenWeaver fabric, recycled cardboard, and biodegradable pellon are all used in the construction of the caps.

6. What about the hood? Is that recycled?

- ♦ The hoods will not be made from recycled materials. While the small amount of “shell” fabric could be made from recycled plastic, the majority of the hood (lining for school colors and velvet edging) is made from fabrics not yet available as recycled products.

7. Are your shipping cartons from recycled products?

- ♦ Yes, our shipping boxes are produced from recycled cardboard.
- ♦ Also, the plastic bags used to store the caps and gowns are made from recycled plastic.

8. Isn't renting regalia a better alternative?

- ♦ No, for several reasons.
 - i. Dry cleaning chemicals are extremely ***unfriendly*** to the environment.
 - ii. The amount of fossil fuel used is double when transporting rental regalia to and from the school versus souvenir regalia.
 - iii. Once rental gowns reach their life expectancy they will end up in a landfill.

9. Are you replacing a plastic bottle with a gown in our landfills?

- ♦ Graduation is, without question, one of the most memorable and important events in a person's life. In our "unofficial" surveys, taken by talking with 1,000's of graduates, regalia does not end up in landfills. They do, though, end up in a closet at mom and dad's house, or in a box of memorabilia that gets moved from home to home throughout the years.

10. Gowns made from plastic bottles sound hot and stiff. Are they?

- ♦ No. GreenWeaver gowns are made from bottle flakes that are melted and extruded into a continuous filament yarn. We have engineered the yarn to be soft by increasing the filament count per yarn strand from 36 to 48. The result using yarn with finer filaments is fabric with a softer, more supple hand.