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Hair Clippings from Salons Can Help in Oil-Spill Cleanup

If your spa has a salon arm, consider taking part in this initiative to do your part to help clean up the massive oil spill off of the Louisiana coastline. Read more to find out how.

Green oil spill cleanup is being revolutionized in an unusual way with the use of human hair collected by salons throughout the country. Joining forces to help prevent a looming ecological disaster, Michael Angelo Hair Studio located in Tampa, Florida, has joined Matter of Trust, an ecological public charity that assists in oil spill cleanup by promoting environmental sustainability. Together with the help of south Tampa community members and salon clients, Michael Angelo Hair Studio is collecting hair clippings to be donated to Matter of Trust, so they can be made into oil spill cleanup mats and containment booms. According to oceanography experts, "The oil from the current spill that sank off the coast of Louisiana last Thursday is threatening marshes and beaches across the Gulf Coast. Unless this disaster is quickly contained, it will taint the Florida Keys and perhaps the entire Atlantic coast."

Phil McCrory, a hairstylist from Alabama, first discovered how hair could help soak up oil and aid in disaster relief after he noticed the fur on Alaskan otters was completely soaked with oil during the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill. He began testing how much oil he could collect with the hair clippings from his salon and from here he invented the "hairmat" to help clean up oil contaminated waters. From this point on, Matter of Trust has been collecting hair clippings, sorting them and shipping the fibers off to nonwoven needlepunch factories to make batches of hairmats to use for oil spill relief. Matter of Trust also creates booms from loose hair that is stuffed into nylon stockings which are then doubled up and tied together to surround and soak up oil.

Matter of Trust is currently fundraising for their own needlepunch machine to make hairmats in their California-based headquarters. Not only will this help provide jobs and training for California community members, but it will also help assist in producing hairmats and booms at a higher rate.

According to Matter of Trust, "The U.S. has more than 300,000 hair salons and each one cuts an average of a pound of hair per day. By joining our relief effort and signing up for our donor program, your salon will help us make a difference in the ecosystem and to help prevent further damage from oil spills that continue to aggressively destroy coastal water ways."

According to Michael Angelo Hair Studio owners, Michael Angelo and Anthony Bellapigna, "Our studio has been spreading awareness to Southern Florida salons. In doing so, we have successfully signed up many other salons to help participate in Matter of Trust's donor program."

For more information about how your salon can participate, visit www.matteroftrust.org. If you are a salon in Southern Florida, contact Michael Angelo Hair Studio at 813-832-6650, email info@michaelangelohairstudio.com or visit online at www.michaelangelohairstudio.com.

