



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **DEP Urges Residents to Recycle Household Goods and Clothing**

*PAReMaDe Circular Merchant App, Secondhand Retailers Offer Advice*

**Harrisburg, PA** – The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today, with invited presenters, reminded Pennsylvania residents that recycling unwanted, gently used items commonly found in households, such as furniture and clothing, is an effective strategy to curb pollution. The site of today's press conference was in the Midtown neighborhood of Harrisburg at NEON Vintage & Thrifts (located inside the Urban Snob building at 1006 N. Third Street, Harrisburg, Pa. 17102).

"Pennsylvanians have opportunity around them to curb pollution, and they can start by looking in their closets and around their homes," said Acting DEP Secretary Ramez Ziadeh.

DEP estimates that approximately 10% of the municipal waste stream, or approximately 500,000 tons, is made up of textiles, furniture, and other household goods.

"The potential for recovering much of this waste for recycling/reuse is great," said DEP Manager of Division of Waste Minimization and Planning Lawrence Holley.

A resource for Pennsylvanians looking for direction and insight on how to properly recycle their household items is the Circular Merchant web platform ([www.circularmerchant.com](http://www.circularmerchant.com)) and mobile application developed by the [Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center](#). Circular Merchant is an online exchange platform where interested citizens, businesses, or public officials can post recycled items and materials for others who may be interested in acquiring these items. Circular Merchant is equipped with smart device capabilities such that photos can be immediately uploaded; built-in mapping is available to locate the desired pick-up or send locations; and emails are automatically sent to notify interested parties of postings. The mobile application is available in mobile app stores. With the intent of finding real-time solutions for recycled materials and items, the Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center (PRMC), with funding from DEP, launched the Circular Merchant platform.

"We are now able to benefit from use of Circular Merchant, especially at a time when our economy favors reuse and recycling of goods and materials," said PRMC President and CEO Robert Bylone, Jr.

DEP is urging Pennsylvanians to be mindful of different ways they can reduce, reuse, and recycle household goods and clothing. One consideration could be shopping at secondhand retailers. Secondhand retailers sell previously used items.

In Harrisburg, secondhand retailers NEON Vintage & Thrifts, Stash Vintage, and The Midtown Dandy offer the following advice to Pennsylvanians who want to support secondhand retailing.

"My favorite part about being a secondhand curator is showing people how much can be found at the thrift store," said Alana Cornish, owner of NEON Vintage & Thrifts. "The thrift store, for some, can be overwhelming and intimidating to shop with aisles upon aisles of merchandise, but if you go in with a plan, it can cut down on much of the anxiety."

"A good starting place when buying secondhand clothing is, to begin with, the basics—having basics in your wardrobe maximizes flexibility when putting together an outfit. Plus, essential items such as jeans, blue or black trousers, and white button-down shirts may be of better quality depending on the date and era of the garment. Typically, the older the date, i.e., 'vintage,' are better quality than big box stores selling fast fashion. A good motto to remember is: 'if it's from the past, it will last,' which cuts down on clothing going to landfills," Cornish said.

"When purchasing secondhand items, concentrate on which type of retailer might be best equipped to help support you," said Anela Bence, owner of Stash Vintage. "If you're looking for something vintage (25 years or older), or from a specific decade with a distinct style, visit a local vintage shop or collaborative. You will save a lot of time going straight to a vendor who specializes in vintage. If you're looking for newer or modern pieces and have the time to do so, check local thrift stores or consignment shops. Apps, an online marketplace specializing in secondhand items, or popular sites like eBay are the way to go when looking for something very specific or items made by a particular designer. They can also be great for online 'window shopping.'"

"Secondhand/vintage shopping is a very environmentally-conscious way to make an impact with your dollars. First off, it keeps discarded clothing out of landfills," said Andrew Kintzi, owner of The Midtown Dandy. "By shopping secondhand, you keep these clothing items in the cycle."

"Mending/repairing is another way to keep your clothing around longer. Adding a patch or mending a torn seam or hole adds a 'battle scar' to your piece, carrying memories along with it. One thing to keep in mind regarding donation - if you donate damaged or stained clothing, the charities will likely just dispose of it. If you can mend/repair clothing, it has a better chance of lasting longer. Tailors/seamstresses are a very inexpensive way to keep your clothing looking great and lasting longer and can also be used as a way to keep your clothing longer if you grow out of them!" Kintzi said.

"Vintage clothing by and large is usually constructed better and tends to last longer. A piece that has been around since, say, the 1970s has obviously stood the test of time and will last for years to come, where as a modern, fast-fashion piece may last a couple wears before it begins to fall apart, resulting in its quick disposal," Kintzi said.

The Midtown Dandy and Stash Vintage are both located at 11 S. Third Street, Harrisburg, Pa., 17101.

Neon Vintage & Thrifts is located inside the Urban Snob building. Urban Snob, a fashion boutique, is owned by fashion maven Dimitra Diggs.

For more information on recycling programs in Pennsylvania, please visit:  
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/Recycling/pages/default.aspx>

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