

City's innovative pilot program diverts over 1,000 pounds of cotton waste from landfills

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The Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment Department (LASAN) has successfully diverted over 1,000 pounds of cotton waste from landfills through its innovative pilot program, the department announced on October 1. The program, which launched in 2020, works with commercial partners to “upcycle” discarded fabric scraps from businesses into new clothing, bags, and other items.

“At the City, we are working every day to build a greener Los Angeles,” said LASAN General Manager Barbara Romero. “Fabric waste from businesses makes up an estimated 6% of Los Angeles’ total waste that gets sent to landfills. Through our innovative pilot program, we are successfully removing this waste from landfills and recycling it in order to combat greenhouse gas emissions and improve our local environment.”

The recently completed second phase of the pilot program saw the recycling of over 1,000 pounds of cotton waste into new cotton shirts, set to be released by the brand Outerknown in early 2025. The program has also established partnerships with the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC), a network of local governments, non-government organizations, businesses, and individuals supporting policies and projects that promote producer responsibility for product end-of-life management.

“This pilot project was a proof of concept for brands to source textile waste from LA for upcycled and recycled-content products,” said CPSC Director of Advocacy Joanne Brasch. “This is especially important for the upcoming large events like FIFA 2026, Superbowl 2027, and the LA28 Olympics.”

The LASAN pilot program encourages interested brands seeking fibers, yarn, and fabrics made from LA-sourced fabric waste to join the next phase of the pilot and contact the CPSC.

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