

Vince's Markets launches PPE recovery program

Most Canadians have adapted to the "new normal" by wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) on the job, while buying groceries, and anywhere they are likely to be in contact with others - particularly indoors. This adherence to health department protocols has undoubtedly saved many lives.

But the COVID-19 pandemic has had other unintended consequences. That being the improper disposal of these masks, face shields, gloves, and other items.

Who hasn't gone for a walk and seen discarded PPE littering the pathways and parks?

Similarly, there's no shortage of these items scattered in parking lots - or just outside a building's entrance.

Indeed, there has been an overwhelming amount of waste created as a result of efforts to keep us safe. Globally, 129 billion disposable face masks and 65 billion gloves are being thrown away each month.

Vince's has signed on with Green Circle Ideas to participate in their innovative new program to recover and sustainably dispose of single-use PPE. These items include masks, gloves, face shields, eye protection, capes, gowns, disinfectant wipes, and single use towels.

At the store level, customers will see clearly marked, free-standing PPE boxes in several high-traffic areas. Customers and staff can discard their used PPE in the bin's plastic liner, and when full, Vince's will ship everything back to Green Circle Ideas.

These sealed PPE containers will then be safely incinerated to produce clean, renewable energy. The ash can be used as filler in asphalt and other construction materials, with nothing going to waste.

"By supplying our staff with the necessary PPE, and carefully following health department protocols, we have been doing our part to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 to both our customers and staff," said Giancarlo Trimarchi, partner at Vince's. "That being said, we are pleased to be taking a positive step in reducing the environmental impact of these important safeguards."