

GREEN ALTERNATIVE TO TRADITIONAL DRY CLEANING



FASHION & BEAUTY

Solvents used in traditional dry cleaning are toxic. Not good for the environment or for the workers that handle them. To avoid environmental and health risks, German [Fred Butler](#) uses a new technology that replaces solvents like perchloroethylene with carbon dioxide. Their method works by placing clothes or other textiles in a cleansing machine, removing the air and letting CO2 fill the vacuum. High pressure combined with bio-degradable cleansers ensures dirt particles are removed from fabric. The carbon dioxide used is a by-product of industrial processes and once a cycle has been completed, 98% of the carbon dioxide is filtered and reused. Fred Butler claims that clothes cleaned using this procedure are less likely to lose their colour and shape than if treated with conventional methods because the cleaning is done at very low temperatures, 5–15 degrees Celsius, and with gentle detergents. The patented process has been certified eco-safe by Nordic Swan, and costs to consumers are on a par with traditional dry cleaning. Since the equipment needed requires large investments, Fred Butler works with centralized regional plants and a network of franchisees operating dedicated stores, store-in-stores and service points in office buildings—currently 19 in Sweden, 13 in Germany, 11 in the Netherlands and 11 in Denmark—and is looking to expand rapidly by signing on new franchisees. The concept was developed by Linde AG, Europe's second largest supplier of industrial and medical gases, which is making its first move to B2C through Fred Butler. If the environmental and health benefits are convincingly communicated to consumers, they could be on to something—while [greenwashing](#) is a no-no, green cleaning is a definite go. (Related: [Laundry chic](#) and [EcoHangers](#).) Spotted by: [Treehugger](#)

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