

2023



# Annual Report



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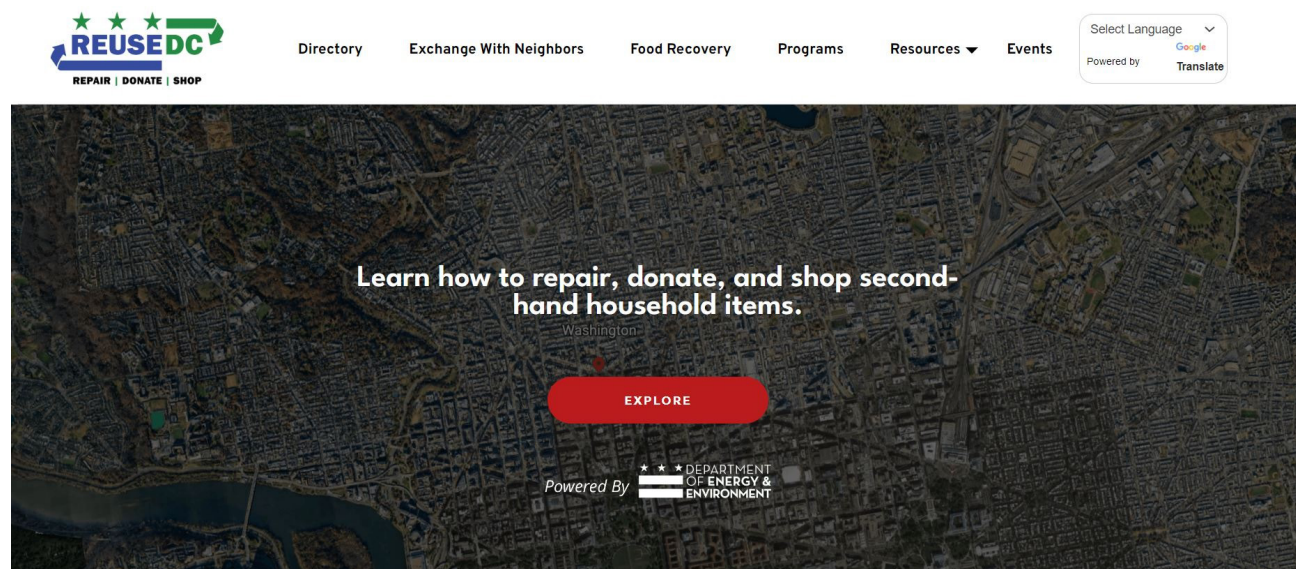
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# Introduction

Reuse DC is the District of Columbia Government's Donation and Reuse program. The Program, which was established in 2022 pursuant to the Zero Waste Omnibus Amendment Act of 2020 ("the Act"), is housed in the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE). Reuse DC aims to increase waste diversion from landfills and incineration by advancing donation and reuse infrastructure, programs, services, and public awareness. Reuse DC recognizes that donation and reuse are preferred over other forms of waste diversion because not only do these methods prevent waste, but can also provide valuable resources to those in need. The program's broad mandates were outlined in the Act, and include website creation, public awareness, infrastructure, food recovery, emergency response, and grants.

In the second full year of the program (2023), Reuse DC focused on connecting residents to resources. Outreach and advertising led to a steady increase in traffic to reuse.dc.gov, as more people discovered useful information on the website. The team also created new resources, such as the Reuse DC Moving Guide and Holiday Shopping Guide, to promote sustainable options during times when a lot of waste is created. Earlier programs, such as the University Green Move-Out, Fix-It DC, and Donation and Reuse Grants, were continued as Reuse DC strengthened its programing and services.

DOEE is required to report Reuse DC's accomplishments and activities annually under the Act. This report covers calendar year 2023, the program's second year of activities.



Reuse.dc.gov homepage.

# Reuse.dc.gov Growth

A key element of the Donation and Reuse program is reuse.dc.gov, the District's hub for learning where to repair, donate, and shop for second-hand household items. At the beginning of 2023, the Program's website, [reuse.dc.gov](https://reuse.dc.gov), was averaging less than 1,000 unique visitors per month. Through our outreach campaigns on WMATA stations and buses and online advertisements through DCist, the program saw growth over the summer to nearly 4,000 unique visitors per month. Even with those outreach campaigns ending, the website now receives more than 2,000 unique visitors each month.

**23,000+**  
unique visitors

**57,000+**  
page views

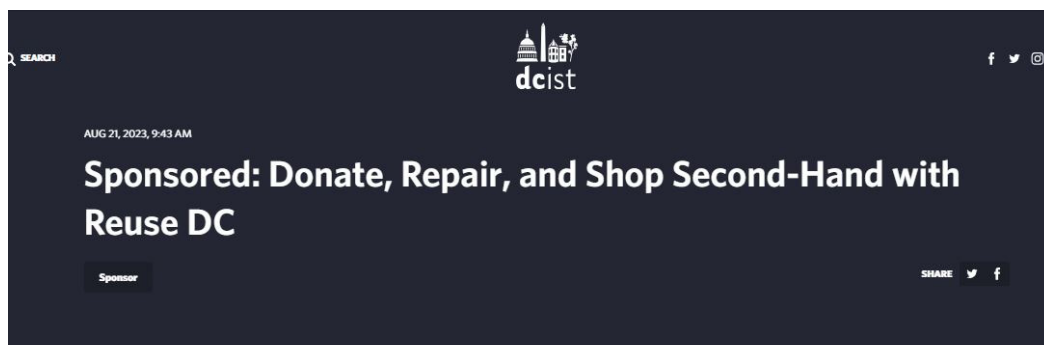
Usage up  
**100%**  
from January 2023 to  
December 2023



Reuse DC's WMATA bus tail light ad.



DOEE's Reuse DC outreach campaign featured ads in WMATA stations.



Through a sponsored post on DCist.com, reuse.dc.gov was able to reach a broader audience.



#### TRENDING

JAN 2, 12:00 PM  
D.C. Council Could Sue  
Mayor Bowser For Refusing  
SNAP Increase



JAN 2, 11:28 AM  
D.C.'s Emergency Rental  
Assistance Application



## Events Page

The Events Page at [reuse.dc.gov](https://reuse.dc.gov) is a one-stop-shop for residents and visitors to learn about the many repair, donation, and reuse events happening in the District. Program staff manage the site to ensure it's up-to-date. The events page includes Fix-It DC events, Reuse DC-partnered swaps, workshops supported by the Donation and Reuse Grant Program, community-hosted clothing swaps, and more. The webpage featured 67 events from January 2023 to December 2023.

Know of a reuse event happening in the DC area? Let the Reuse DC team know by visiting [reuse.dc.gov/page/events-api](https://reuse.dc.gov/page/events-api).



Directory

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## Reuse Events

### Art Supply Swap

Tue Jan 23 2024, 6:00 PM—8:00 PM

716 Monroe Street Northeast, Washington, District of Columbia 20017

MORE INFO

### Fix-It DC Community Repair Event

Wed Jan 24 2024, 5:30 PM—7:30 PM

901 G Street Northwest, Washington, District of Columbia 20001

MORE INFO



# Guides and Tips

In 2023, Reuse DC focused on creating new resources for residents, which included the Reuse DC Moving Guide, Reuse DC Holiday Guide, and plastic-free tips. These resources, and more, can be found at [reuse.dc.gov/page/resources-13](https://reuse.dc.gov/page/resources-13).

## Moving Guide

The [Reuse DC Moving Guide](#) encourages residents to use sustainable moving practices, providing easy actions to incorporate donation, reuse, and repair throughout your moving day. Tips include how and where to donate items and how to sustainably pack items with towels, reused boxes, and rented crates.

## Holiday Guide

In anticipation of the holiday season, the [Reuse DC Holiday Guide](#) offered recommendations for sustainable shopping and gift-wrapping practices. The handout encouraged residents to save money by shopping at local thrift stores for second-hand gifts, suggested the gift of repair to a cherished item, and provided sustainable gift-wrapping ideas. The guide also featured a list of thrift stores and non-profit shops in the District that sell second-hand home décor and clothing to gift. This guide was accompanied by a social media campaign from late November to December 2023.

## Single-Use Plastic Reduction

New single-use plastic reduction tips were added to [reuse.dc.gov](https://reuse.dc.gov) in July to provide easy actions that individuals can take to reduce plastic waste. These simple tips include how to remember to bring reusable bags to grocery stores and how to make a zero-waste kit for on the go. The information also highlighted District policies and efforts to reduce plastic waste, such as Foam Free DC (banning disposable food service ware made from expanded polystyrene) and “Skip the Bag, Save the River” (Bag Law).



DOEE's Donation and Reuse program published a moving guide to encourage residents to use sustainable moving practices.



Sharing resources on how to have a more sustainable holiday season.

# Donation and Reuse Grants

Reuse DC makes grants available for donation and reuse projects through a partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Trust and DOEE's Small and Accessible Grant Program. In 2023, Reuse DC awarded \$58,674 in grants to the following seven organizations:

## Community Forklift

**\$10,000** to expand outreach efforts targeted to low-income communities to participate in the HELP program (Home Essentials Program) by encouraging higher-income communities to donate quality home materials to be used for low-income residents, which helps divert construction materials from the landfill.

## Common Good City Farm

**\$10,000** to continue support for Preservation Workshops, a series of adult education classes that focused on reducing waste and maximizing dollars through the practice of food preservation and mending.

## The Salvation Army National Capital Area Command

**\$10,000** to expand food storage capacity for edible food recovery to provide immediate relief for DC residents experiencing food insecurity.

## George Washington University Office of Sustainability

**\$5,000** to launch a Reuse Market on campus to provide donated items (food, clothing, household items) from the previous semester's Green Move Out drive at no cost to students in need.

## Food Rescue US

**\$7,500** to recruit volunteers to support the growing number of food donors interested in edible food donation.

## Swap Universe

**\$7,174** to expand clothing swaps to younger DC audiences through a partnership with local after-school programs to foster community engagement through swaps.

## The Outrage

**\$9,000** to expand mutual aid efforts through the District by increasing staff capacity to coordinate drives and organize donations.



*GWU's Reuse Market kept common dorm items out of the trash.*



*Common Good City Farm's Preservation Workshops taught residents how to preserve food instead of throwing it away.*

# Fix-It DC and ReThread DC

## Fix-It DC Hits the Road

**Fix-It DC** continued to hold events at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library and expanded to four new locations. Events were held at Southwest Library and Mount Pleasant Library and Fix-It DC started a new partnership with the DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to hold events at Lederer Community Gardens and Twin Oaks Community Gardens. During the October 21<sup>st</sup> event at Twin Oaks, Fix-It DC also partnered with three volunteer-run community organizations: Green Neighbors launched their tool lending library, the Bikehouse offered free bike repair, and Zenith Community Arts Foundation held demonstrations with their mobile woodworking shop. In total, DOEE held 10 events, reaching 194 attendees and diverting 468 pounds of materials from the trash. Find future Fix-It DC events at [doee.dc.gov/service/fix-it](https://doee.dc.gov/service/fix-it).



*Fix-It DC flyer for summer events.*

## ReThread DC

Reuse DC continued DOEE's ReThread DC initiative, which gives residents and visitors resources for decreasing the impact that their clothing (and other textiles) have on the environment. ReThread DC partnered with the community for the following three events:

### Swap DC at DC State Fair

ReThread DC once again partnered with Swap DC on September 10<sup>th</sup> to host a clothing swap at the DC State Fair, located at Franklin Park in downtown DC. With 419 visitors to the swap tent, the swap quadrupled attendance over the previous year. After the event, 200 pounds of clothes were donated.



*Preloved Bazar hosted at the Black Cat music venue.*

### Preloved Bazar

DOEE participated in a Preloved Bazar led by DC Goodwill, Femme Fatale DC and Finding Your Good on October 25<sup>th</sup> at the Black Cat music venue in Ward 1. The event provided a second-hand shopping experience for clothing and accessories and promoted sustainability in fashion. ReThread DC offered free textile repair assistance with a coach in addition to information about Fix-It and ReUse DC.



*Climate Classes DC hosted the Holiday Swap at Treehouse DC.*

### Holiday Swap

DOEE partnered with Climate Classes DC on a Holiday Swap on December 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Treehouse DC in Ward 2. The event featured a clothing swap as well as tips for more sustainable gift-giving for the holidays. ReThread DC again offered free textile repair assistance focused on hand sewing repair in addition to information about waste reduction programs.



# Preventing Wasted Food

Reuse DC expanded its activities in food recovery in 2023. This is an important area of focus for the program because more than one third of food produced in the United States is never eaten. By recovering food, you are not only helping the environment, but also helping to feed those in need of a healthy meal.

## Bread to Tap

In support of National Food Waste Prevention Week in April 2023, DOEE joined the DC Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD), Food Rescue US, Eat or Toss, Urban Garden Brewing and Right Proper Brewing to produce a beer made from the grain of leftover bread from RavenHook Bakehouse. An event serving the special brew offered a chance to educate the public about food recovery opportunities alongside other local food waste experts.



DOEE staff participating in the Rescued Bread into Beer demonstration for food recovery week.

## Food Waste Preservation Ads

During the months of April to June 2023, DOEE ran food waste prevention ads with the Natural Resources Defense Council's Save the Food campaign in several local publications. The ads ran in English in the *Hill Rag*, *East of the River* and *MidCity DC* publications, and in Spanish in the publication *El Tiempo Latino*. In total, the English ads were in 135,000 print copies of publications, e-blasted 25,000 times and had 346,762 web views. The Spanish language ad had 625,000 impressions while *El Tiempo Latino* newsletter had 24,740 total opens.



Reuse DC partnered with NRDC in a food waste ad campaign.

## Ride Along with Food Recovery Network

In June 2023, Reuse DC joined Food Recovery Network (FRN) to see their pilot food recovery program with the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center in National Harbor. Through a six-week pilot program, FRN supported the Gaylord in donating 9,922 pounds of surplus food, equivalent to 8,268 meals, to Central Union Mission, a hunger-fighting organization in DC. The pilot was so successful that it is now a year-round program. FRN's work with the Gaylord is just one example of how the recently passed federal *Food Donation Improvement Act* has encouraged more food businesses in the District and across the United States to recover and donate their surplus food to mitigate food waste while supporting local community members experiencing hunger.



DOEE staff joined the FRN for the food recovery pilot with Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center.

## Commercial Food Donation Webinar

In partnership with DOEE's Sustainable Business Program, Department of Public Works, and Destination DC, Reuse DC held a Commercial Food Donation webinar on October 24<sup>th</sup>. With 49 registrants from a variety of businesses, including hotels and restaurants, the webinar covered the basics of food donation and introduced attendees to organizations that can help food businesses recover food, such as Food Recovery Network and Food Rescue US. View a recording of the webinar at [doee.dc.gov/node/1331356](https://doee.dc.gov/node/1331356).



### Commercial Food Donations: An Overview and Introduction

October 24, 2023



Food Waste Innovation Grants supported businesses in reducing their food waste.

## EPA Releases New Wasted Food Scale

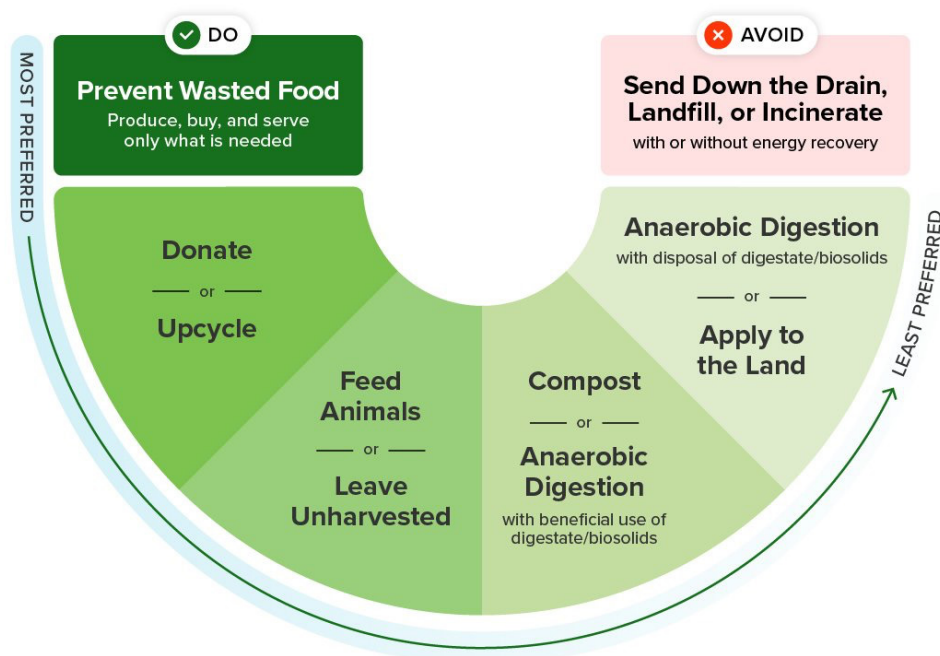
In October, Reuse DC welcomed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) release of *From Field to Bin: The Environmental Impacts of U.S. Food Waste Management Pathways*, which found that "The most preferred pathways – prevent wasted food, donate and upcycle food – offer the most benefits to the environment and to a circular economy."

These "top" pathways prioritize using food for its intended purpose: to nourish people. As part of the report, the EPA released an updated Wasted Food Scale to illustrate the most preferred options for wasted food. Learn more at [epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/wasted-food-scale](https://epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/wasted-food-scale).



### Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food



October 2023

EPA's Wasted Food Scale published in October 2023.



# University Green Move-Out

During college student move-outs, countless items are hastily discarded and students often see the trash can as the only option for items they are not taking with them. Green Move-Outs help to solve this problem by establishing places on college and university campuses where students can donate their unwanted but still usable items. Since 2022, DOEE has supported District colleges and universities in establishing or re-establishing their Green Move-Outs by hiring temporary staff to assist in the management of donated items.

## University Participants

### American University

Collected 4.7 tons of clothing for donation and 4.5 tons of homegoods, which were distributed during move-in fall 2023.

### Catholic University

Diverted approximately 3,500 pounds of clothing and dorm room essentials, much of which was used to restock the Cardinal Closet (on-campus thrift store) and Cardinal Cupboard (on-campus food pantry) or distributed to students during move-out.

### Georgetown University

Partnered with 17 non-profits to collect and donate more than 35,000 pounds of clothing, furniture, and household goods valued at \$340,000.



American University green campus move-out.



Catholic University's temporary green move-out location on campus.



American University green campus move-out.





**REPAIR | DONATE | SHOP**

Contact Reuse DC at [reuse@dc.gov](mailto:reuse@dc.gov)  
or (202) 535-2600

