

# Eco-friendly clothing sports catchy name

BY JOHN DAYBERRY

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## HICKORY

If you think it takes a special kind of person to comfortably wear a T-shirt with the word "Dirtball" emblazoned across the front, Joe Fox may agree with you.

"It's about being the kind of person who likes to get out and get active, maybe get a little dirty in the process," said Fox, founder of Dirtball Fashion.

## DETAILS

**Business:** Dirtball Fashion  
**Offers:** Eco-friendly clothing for active people  
**Owner:** Joe Fox  
**Location:** 246-F Trade Alley  
**Phone:** 304-1286  
**Web:** [www.dirtballfashion.com](http://www.dirtballfashion.com)

The new company, based in downtown Hickory, offers stylish, eco-friendly clothing for active people.

Made largely with recycled

or organic materials, all Dirtball clothing is produced in the United States.

"It's important to keep manufacturing jobs here and to shorten shipping distances, thus reducing our carbon footprint," Fox said.

"It all works together."

Currently offering short-sleeved and long-sleeved T-shirts, hats and knit caps, Dirtball will soon add board



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Joe Fox displays some of the products in his Dirtball line.

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shorts and shirts made of 100 percent recycled (and recyclable) polyester. A denim jeans line is to be added by fall.

All items feature a "Dirtball" or "Db" logo. Prices range from \$12.95 for a knit cap to \$24.95 for a long-sleeved T-shirt.

Fox will introduce the clothing this month at the Atlanta Apparel Market.

So far, Dirtball has found success with independently owned urban apparel stores and boutiques along with snowboarding, skateboarding and bicycling shops. Dirtball

Fashion has sales representatives in nine states.

Among local stores carrying the brand is Hometown Sports of Hickory on Main Avenue, NE, and The Freckled Frog and The Sally Company on Union Square. The Sally Company is owned and operated by Joe Fox's mother, Sally Fox.

It isn't Joe Fox's only tie with downtown Hickory. Dirtball Fashion shares work space with Apparel Technology, owned by brother Addison Fox.

This is 37-year-old Joe Fox's first venture in the clothing business.

An Elon College graduate who studied history and political science, he started racing in 1995 and saw action with the Grand American Road Racing Series, the American Le Mans Series and the NASCAR Nationwide Series.

Deciding it was time to slow down a bit, Fox looked into buying a racing school.

"But nothing intrigued me as much as starting something from scratch, so that's what I did," he said.

"This is a lot different from racing, but it's no less entertaining.

"It's still something new every day."