Wal-Mart, the nation’s largest private company, is putting in cheaper, more durable cloth workwear to replace the expensive but often temporary T-shirts that most of its 1.3 million workers have worn since the chain opened its first store in 1962.

The change comes two years after Wal-Mart announced that it would pay its workers $1 an hour more than the minimum wage and increase the base pay of its workers in a move that would cost the company about $700 million a year.

Wal-Mart said that it has spent more than $3 billion on the new uniforms since it announced the plan two years ago, and that it is now testing different uniforms across the country to determine which is the most comfortable and durable.

"We’re putting our money where our mouth is," said a Wal-Mart spokesman. "We believe that our workers deserve to be treated with respect, and we’re taking steps to make sure that happens."