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Eco-friendly home improvement retailer TreeHouse is going out of business

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TreeHouse, a home improvement retailer that drew a lot of industry attention for its innovative approach to shopping and a commitment to the environment, is shutting down operations. TreeHouse's group of Dallas investors moved the eco-friendly retailer's operations from Austin to Dallas over the summer and closed the Austin store. The Dallas and Plano stores were open Thursday, and the company wouldn't say when they would close. TreeHouse was co-founded in Austin by Jason Ballard and opened its first store in 2011 with aspirations to sell the world on eco-friendly homes. Ballard found suppliers of construction materials that met standards for a safe environment and energy efficiency. It was the first retailer that Tesla authorized to sell the Powerwall, its battery for the home. It was among the first to offer Nest smart home products, and it tried to sell Dallas homeowners on installing solar panels on their rooftops. Ballard left TreeHouse, where he was CEO, earlier this year and is working on another company he co-founded called ICON, which is developing and using new construction technologies such as 3D printing to create affordable homes. The Dallas TreeHouse store opened in June 2017 at the northeast corner of North Central Expressway and Walnut Hill Lane in The Hill shopping center, which has been renovated and includes several new restaurants. When TreeHouse became an anchor of the shopping center, it served as a catalyst for the renovations to move forward. A second North Texas store opened in January in a former Sports Authority location in Plano. In response to questions posed to investor Gary Kusin and other owners of the company, TreeHouse released a statement. The statement said the store closings were "a very difficult decision" that investors made after taking "a hard look" at the company. "After careful consideration, we decided to wind down operations," the statement said. "We have made great strides towards our goals, but fell short of those needed to secure future growth." Container Store co-founder Garrett Boone was an early investor. Others included Bill Robinson, executive vice president of Southlake-based Sabre; and Justin Cox, whose father, Berry Cox, was an original and longtime board member of Home Depot. "We want to thank our TreeHouse family and customers for their support and belief in our mission helping make homes more beautiful, healthy and sustainable," said the company statement. The 25,000-square-foot Dallas store also has a large outdoor space attached to display rainwater collection and native landscaping. Just recently, Houndstooth coffee opened in a couple of small buildings on the store's patio area. On Thursday afternoon, the store was quiet. Employees said they thought it would take a few weeks to wind down the business.

Source: <https://www.dallasnews.com/business/retail/2018/12/06/eco-friendly-home-improvement-retailer-treehouse-going-business>