



City of West Hollywood

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Hollywood City Council Passes Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance

WEST HOLLYWOOD – The West Hollywood City Council has passed the Single-Use Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance (Plastic Bag Ban). The ordinance bans single-use carryout shopping bags at the point of sale from all pharmacy, grocery, and retail stores in West Hollywood. The City’s Plastic Bag Ban is based on the ban currently in effect in Los Angeles County. It is similar to laws in neighboring cities, including Santa Monica, Malibu, Calabasas and Long Beach. The ordinance, which goes into effect for retail establishments of at least 10,000 square feet and all supermarkets in February 2013 and for retail establishments smaller than 10,000 square feet in June 2013.

“I am pleased that the City of West Hollywood will be joining the environmental call to ban single-use plastic bags,” said West Hollywood Mayor Jeffrey Prang. “With 600 of these bags thrown out every second, ending up on our streets, in storm drains, in our landfills, and in our oceans, these bags have become a rampant epidemic. Reusable bags or requesting biodegradable paper is a very small price to pay to help protect our earth,” added West Hollywood Mayor Prang.

“Though it was a longer process than anticipated, we can be proud that we have a solid ordinance that enjoys the support of many residents and the business community, and will make a significant impact in reducing the number of single-use plastic bags in the waste stream,” said West Hollywood Mayor Pro Tempore Abbe Land, who co-authored the ordinance.

“Estimates show that Californians use 12 billion plastic bags per year, and that Los Angeles County residents each used approximately 433 single-use bags per year, until the Los Angeles County ban took effect last year,” Land continued. “Changing out these plastic bags for reusable bags, and even paper ones, is better for the environment, and particularly for our beaches,

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oceans and marine life,” continued West Hollywood Mayor Pro Tempore Land.

The purpose of the ban on single-use plastic bags is to encourage sustainability by substituting plastic bags with durable and long-lasting reusable bags and paper bags made from recycled materials; as well as reduce costs to businesses, consumers, taxpayers and the environment. A ban on single-use plastic bags will also eliminate a major source of litter and marine debris and create local green jobs. Through this initiative, residents will have the opportunity to personally contribute toward reducing waste in the City.

Impacted retail businesses will include the following:

- Supermarkets and large retail establishments over 10,000 square feet will no longer be able to supply plastic bags within six months of the effective date of the ordinance.
- Small retail stores under 10,000 square feet will have up to 12 months to comply from the effective date of the ordinance.
- 10-cent fee for paper bags to be retained by each retailer to help cover the costs of stocking paper bags and any related outreach or promotional efforts.
- Paper bags will be required to contain 40% post-consumer recycled content.

Exemptions include the following:

- Customers who qualify for subsidized groceries will be exempt from the paper bag fee.
- Light-weight plastic bags without handles for transporting produce and raw meat products to the point of sale.
- Restaurants and other food service providers who provide plastic bags to customers for prepared take-out food intended for off-premises consumption.
- Drycleaners and farmers markets.

A series of meetings for large and small retailers were held in April to address any concerns about the proposed ban and provide information about resources available to assist businesses with compliance.

For more information, regarding the proposed Plastic Bag Ban, please visit www.weho.org/plasticbagban