



City of Hermosa Beach – Polystyrene Food Service Ware Ban Summary

What is the purpose of the ban?

- Keep Hermosa clean! Polystyrene food containers are lightweight and easily littered. They tend to break into pieces and are hard to clean up.
- Protect our marine environment. This material gets into the ocean. It breaks down into smaller pieces, which are consumed by marine life.
- Reduce city costs. The city must reduce pollutants going into the ocean. The city pays to clean up debris and can be fined.
- Reduce, rethink! Food-soiled polystyrene containers and cups are not recyclable or compostable. Reduce use of throw-away items and packaging, Use reusable containers; seek alternatives.
- Polystyrene containers can pose health impacts to consumers & workers.



Who will the ordinance apply to?

Generally,

- Grocery stores, supermarkets, deli's, convenience stores, farmers markets.
- Restaurants, drive-thru, cafés, snack shops.
- Mobile vendors, food trucks, caterers, vendors at events, vending machines.
- Anyone conducting or supplying activities under a 'special event permit' or agreement with the City.
- Groups and organizations that regularly supply food to their members or the public.
- Official City meetings or events.

What containers are affected?

- Disposable products used for serving or transporting prepared food: plates, bowls, trays, wrappers or wrapping, platters, cartons, condiment containers, cups or drink ware, and similar items.
- Straws, cup lids, and utensils are not included.

What types of foods are affected?

Prepared food placed in polystyrene containers within the City of Hermosa Beach.

What do polystyrene containers look like?

- Polystyrene containers may be any color, or clear.
- Expanded polystyrene foam is comprised of small 'beads' and is often white
- The recycle code for polystyrene is 6 or PS.
- Before food vendors buy, please verify!

What alternatives exist?

- Items with recycle codes other than 6 or PS.
- Aluminum, coated or uncoated paper, cardboard, plastics, plastics made from corn or other plant-based materials.
- Other biodegradable, compostable, reusable food ware.
- Food vendor suppliers and the city website can provide alternatives.

Summary: Exemptions from the ban

These types of foods are exempt:

- All foods packaged or prepared outside the City. If a food provider repackages or places the food in polystyrene containers or drink ware within the City, then it is subject to the ordinance.
- Raw uncooked meat, poultry, fish or eggs, unless the food is intended to be eaten raw. For example, sushi using uncooked fish is subject to the ordinance.
- Fresh produce (fruits, vegetables and herbs). However, food packaged/repackaged or placed in polystyrene containers or drink ware within the City is subject to the ordinance.

These types of people/groups are exempt:

- All customers. You can buy or obtain whatever is being sold, given away, or provided. It is up to food providers to comply.
- People using city facilities, the beach, parks, etc. unless they are operating or conducting an activity under an event permit, lease, rental or agreement with the City.
- Food wholesalers; the School Food Service program.

These polystyrene items are exempt:

- Straws, cup lids, and utensils.
- Reusable coolers and ice chests.

Common Questions

Common Questions:

- What is a simple rule? Consumers are not subject to the ban. Commercial food providers may not serve or put food prepared or packaged in Hermosa Beach into polystyrene containers or cups. Food that was purchased prepackaged in polystyrene and is sold or provided without repackaging is exempt. There are some exemptions.
- Are egg cartons exempt? Are raw meat trays exempt? Yes
- Are items at the deli counter exempt? Yes, if the store sells the item in the original package that it was received in.
- Are raw mushrooms exempt? Yes, raw produce that has not been altered or processed is exempt.

Common Situations:

- Can my family bring food to the beach or city park in polystyrene containers? Yes
- Can I bring a polystyrene ice chest to the beach? Yes
- Can polystyrene plates or cups be provided at my child's little league team game? When the team supplies food on a regular basis, polystyrene containers and cups should not be used. Food that is prepackaged in polystyrene containers is allowable. Parents can provide snacks in polystyrene containers and cups. Commercial vendors cannot serve food in polystyrene containers.

How would I be affected? Simplified examples



Non-Commercial

Residents, Visitors

The rules do not apply to you

Special events

Food prepared, packaged, or placed in a container within the City cannot use polystyrene food containers or drink ware

When renting or leasing City facilities, parks or space at the beach

Same as special events

Groups, clubs & organizations on private property

When a commercial food vendor is used or an activity open to the public is approved by the city:
Same as special events

Regular provision of food to members or the public:
Same as special events

School facilities

The rules do not apply to the School's Food Service program

Other commercial food vendors: Same as special events

Commercial food establishments and vendors

Restaurants, cafes, bars, fast food

Food prepared, packaged, or placed in a container within the City cannot use polystyrene food containers or drink ware

Grocery, convenience, deli stores

Food prepared, packaged, or placed in a container within the City cannot use polystyrene food containers or drink ware (See exemptions)

Mobile food vendors, food trucks & carts

Food prepared, packaged, or placed in a container within the City cannot use polystyrene food containers or drink ware

Vending machines

Do not vend foods in polystyrene containers

Other retail businesses that provide or sell food items

Food prepared, packaged, or placed in a container within the City cannot use polystyrene food containers or drink ware

Food wholesalers

The rules do not affect you

Businesses that do not provide or sell food items

The rules do not affect you