



## *Frequently Asked Questions about the Ordinance*

### **BAN ON THE USE OF PLASTIC CARRYOUT BAGS AND IMPOSING A CHARGE FOR RECYCLABLE PAPER BAGS**

The Hermosa Beach City Council adopted a ban on single-use carryout shopping bags on September 1, 2015. The effective date of the ordinance is October 1, 2015.

#### **What does the Ordinance do?**

This Ordinance prohibits any retail establishment in the City of Hermosa Beach from providing plastic single-use carryout bags to customers for the purpose of carrying goods away from the point of sale. Retail establishments are encouraged to educate staff to promote reusable bags and to post signs encouraging customers to use reusable bags, and may provide incentives to customers to encourage the use of reusable bags.

#### **Why did the City ban Single-Use Plastic Bags?**

Plastic bags have detrimental effects to our environment and are the second-most common type of ocean refuse found during beach clean-ups, after cigarette butts. A single plastic bag can take up to 1,000 years to degrade. The ban was undertaken in order to reduce the number of plastic bags that end up in the marine environment, to encourage customers to bring their own bags to the store, and to reduce waste.

#### **What businesses and individuals must comply with the ban?**

This ban applies to **any retail establishment** located within or doing business within the geographical limits of the City of Hermosa Beach, including vendors at City-sponsored events, City-owned facilities, and events held on City property, but excluding dry cleaners.

#### **When does the Ban go into effect?**

The plastic bag ban will be carried out in two phases:

- The First phase of the ordinance will go into effect on **April 1, 2016** and affects retail establishments that meet the definition of a "supermarket" and retail establishments of at least 10,000 square feet.
- Phase two of the ordinance will go into effect on **October 1, 2016** and affects all remaining businesses and individuals listed above, including establishments smaller than 10,000 square feet.

### **What about Paper Bags?**

Paper bags still have damaging effects to the environment, requiring significant amounts of materials, energy and water for their production.

Recyclable paper carryout bags will be available for purchase for 10 cents each at retail establishments that have gross annual sales of at least two million dollars or has at least 10,000 square feet of retail space. Other affected retailers shall make reusable bags available to customers at no charge, or for 10 cents each, at the retailers' discretion.

All monies collected by a retail establishment shall be retained by the store and shall be used only for the following purposes: (1) costs associated with complying with the requirements of this Chapter, (2) actual costs of providing recyclable paper carryout bags, or (3) costs associated with a store's educational materials or education campaign encouraging the use of reusable bags, if any.

### **What are some things I should know about using reusable bags?**

Make sure to wash your bags every couple of weeks. Select bags that can be machine washed.

### **What products are banned?**

The ban includes any bag made predominantly of plastic derived from petroleum, natural gas, or a biologically-based source, such as corn or other plant sources, which is provided to a customer at the point of sale.

### **Are there any exceptions?**

There are some exemptions to the ban, including:

- Bags provided to a customer to hold prescription medication dispensed from a pharmacy;
- Non-handled produce bags used to protect a purchased item from damaging or contaminating other purchased items when placed in a single-use carryout bag, recycled paper bag or reusable grocery bag;
- Bags provided to contain an unwrapped food item; or
- Non-handled bags designed to be placed over articles of clothing on a hanger.

For customers participating in Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) or the CalFresh/Supplemental Food Program (SNAP), stores have the option of providing customers reusable bags or recyclable paper bags free of charge.

### **How will it be enforced?**

City staff are responsible for enforcement of the ordinance and will issue a written warning notice to the operator of a store that a violation has occurred and the potential penalties that will apply for future violations. After a written warning notice has been issued, further violations shall be subject to the Administrative Citation procedures in Chapter 1.10. Each violation of this Chapter shall be considered a separate offense.

### **Where can I get more information?**

For more information, Please Contact Environmental Analyst, Kristy Morris (310) 750-3603