



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of San Diego’s Second Phase of Polystyrene Foam and Single Use Plastics Ordinance Takes Effect May 24

REGULATIONS AIM TO REDUCE POLLUTION, IMPROVE ENVIRONMENT AND PROTECT ANIMALS

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego is continuing its efforts to improve the environment and achieve [Zero Waste](#) goals, by rolling out the second phase of the polystyrene foam and single use plastics ordinance just before Memorial Day weekend.

This ordinance is designed to reduce the amount of single use plastics and polystyrene entering San Diego’s environment and waterways. These products are typically only used once and if improperly discarded, litter our environment. Polystyrene foam does not biodegrade and can be mistaken as food by marine wildlife or other animals.

Beginning May 24, there will be a ban on the sale and distribution of egg cartons, food service ware and food trays made in whole or in part from polystyrene foam. This includes bowls, plates, trays, cups, lids and other similar items designed for one-time use for prepared foods, including containers for dine-in, takeout food and leftovers.

Acceptable alternatives will be allowed. This includes recyclable plastics, aluminum and recyclable paper products. Non-recyclable paper products, such as compostable products and non-recyclable paper are allowed under the ordinance but are not preferred as they have to be disposed in the landfill.

“The City’s goal is to achieve zero waste by 2040,” said the City’s Environmental Services Department Director, Mario X. Sierra. “This ordinance not only helps in achieving that goal, but also improves water quality, reduces pollution and keeps our environment healthy.”

The first phase of the ordinance began in February. It prohibits food vendors within the city limits from distributing plastic or bioplastic utensils or straws unless requested by the customer.

Plastic straws are also a significant contributor to marine pollution and are among the most common forms of litter collected on California beaches.

The ordinance was rolled out in several phases to allow businesses and other entities time to implement changes.

Businesses with a gross annual income of less than \$500,000 on their most recent federal income tax filing are exempt from the ordinance requirements until Feb. 23, 2020. Waivers are available to address financial or feasibility hardships, or if an entity has certain contractual requirements to purchase newly prohibited items.

The City has also approved a waiver for polystyrene foam meat trays used for raw meat, fish and poultry sold at San Diego grocery stores through May 23, 2021. The waiver is issued based on the required time needed by grocery stores, product producers and distributors to make the transition to alternative packaging.

Visit the Environmental Services Department's web page for specific information about the ordinance at <http://www.sandiego.gov/pf-ban>.

The Environmental Services Department provides local businesses with assistance in developing waste reduction and recycling programs with a free comprehensive waste analysis. For more information about Environmental Services' programs, call 858-694-7000, or visit www.recyclingworks.com.



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