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## **Plastic Bag Reduction Ordinance Effective January 1st, 2018**

Per City of Salem Ordinance dated – November 16, 2016

Information as of June 2017

Last fall, the Salem City Council passed an ordinance that restricts the use of single use plastic checkout bags, provided at the point of sale, by all retail and food establishments in the City of Salem. With this action, Salem joins 53 cities and towns in Massachusetts, including the nearby communities of Marblehead, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Hamilton, and Ipswich, in restricting the use of these bags.

This information is being provided so that businesses may prepare and use up their existing supplies of non-compliant plastic bags ahead of the **January 1, 2018** effective date.

### **1) What is the Purpose of this Ordinance?**

This ordinance seeks to reduce the number of single use plastic bags that are being used, discarded and littered, and to promote the use of reusable checkout bags by retail establishments located in Salem. It will help protect the marine environment, advance solid waste reduction, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and protect waterways.

### **2) Which Businesses Will Be Affected By This Ordinance?**

Any commercial establishment, whether for profit or nonprofit, any and all food vendors and retail stores, either year-round, seasonal, temporary or pop-up; including but not limited to restaurants, bakeries, delis, cafes, grocers, food carryout or deliveries, pharmacies, convenience, liquor stores, jewelry, clothing, and household goods stores.

### **3) What Bags Are Prohibited?**

Disposable plastic shopping bags with handles and a thickness of 4 mil or less, that are used for the purpose of carrying away goods from the point of sale.

This includes:

- Degradable plastic bags
- Bio-Degradable plastic bags whether they are compostable or not

#### **4) What Bags Are Allowed?**

- a. Reusable washable bags with a minimum lifetime of 125 uses, capable of carrying at least 22 pounds, can be cleaned 125 times, and if plastic, is thicker than 4 mil.
- b. Produce or product bags, whether plastic or not, without handles, in which loose produce, bulk products, or meats are placed to deliver such items to the point of sale. These bags are allowed because they contain moisture and prevent contamination of certain foods whether pre-packaged or not.
- c. Paper bags of any size must be marked 100% recyclable with 40% post-consumer recycled content.
- d. Newspaper bags.
- e. Laundry or dry cleaner bags.

#### **5) What Are The Penalties?**

First offenses can result in a warning notice. Subsequent offenses can incur fines. Warnings and fines can be issued by any police officer, enforcement officer or agent of the Board of Health or Licensing Department.

#### **6) Will Plastic Bags And Wrap Continue To Be Collected For Recycling?**

Stores that currently collect shopping bags, bread bags, bubble wrap, plastic wrap from paper towels and toilet paper, etc. are encouraged to continue offering this service to their customers.

#### **7) Helpful Tips for This Transition:**

- Plan to use up your supply of single use plastic bags before January 1, 2018.
- Encourage your customers to use reusable bags -- think about ways to offer an incentive.
- Stock reusable bags for purchase or to give away. They're great advertising!
- Save product boxes for customers to use to carry away purchases.
- Consider whether you wish to sell bags at check out (the ordinance does not prohibit charging for compliant bags).

#### **8) Questions? For More Information--**

Regarding environmental concerns, please contact Salem Sound Coastwatch, (978) 741-7900 or [info@salemsound.org](mailto:info@salemsound.org)

Regarding legal concerns, please contact **City's Legal Dept. (978) 619-5638.**

Link to the ordinance: [\*\*www.salem.com/sites/salemma/files/uploads/plastic\\_bag\\_ordinance.pdf\*\*](http://www.salem.com/sites/salemma/files/uploads/plastic_bag_ordinance.pdf)

Si usted necesita la traducción de esta carta por favor llame al (978)-619-5671.