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City of Charleston to host Workshops for Businesses Transitioning from Single-use Plastics

Charleston, S.C.-- The city of Charleston Sustainability division is hosting two free workshops to provide businesses with tools and resources to help support a smooth transition to the city's new single-use plastic ordinance, which will go into effect on January 1, 2020.

Businesses and organizations are invited to attend one of the two free workshops:

- Monday, October 28, 2019, from 10 to 11 a.m. at 423 King Street ([Event Link](#))
- Wednesday, October 30, 2019 from 6 to 7 p.m. at 1630-2 Meeting Street ([Event Link](#))

RSVPs are requested, as space is limited.

Open to all businesses, organizations and non-profits in and around the City of Charleston, the workshops will include information on free business signage, a review of the new city code, information on best practices and creative ideas to manage implications of alternatives, tips from a business that has already made the transition and a roundtable discussion on perceived challenges and possible solutions.

Before, during and after the workshop, suppliers will showcase alternative products for businesses to test and learn about, and city staff will be on site to answer any questions about the new ordinance.

The Sustainability division will also host workshops geared toward residents later this year.

In November of 2018, City Council voted to pass an ordinance to require operations throughout the City of Charleston to eliminate use of single-use plastic carryout and merchandise bags, as well as certain plastic carryout and food packaging items. More information about the ordinance can be found here: www.charleston-sc.gov/plastic.

Click the thumbnail below to view the "Plan ahead for new single-use plastics guidelines" flyer.

CITY OF CHARLESTON
Plan Ahead for New Single-Use Plastics Guidelines

BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2020

Operations throughout Charleston will be required to eliminate use of single-use plastic carryout and merchandise bags, as well as certain plastic carryout and food packaging items.

These new measures will mean cleaner city streets and ocean waters, but we know they also will mean big changes for you and your customers.

Use this guide to learn more about alternatives that will work for your organization.

WHO NEEDS TO GET READY?

The new guidelines apply to all commercial and nonprofit operations including:

- Concession/vendor and food trucks
- Farmers markets/stands and takeout stands
- Schools and government
- Grocery and liquor stores
- Restaurants and bars
- Retail stores

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What's IN?

Establishments will be able to choose from numerous affordable alternatives and certain specialty items will still be allowed:

✓ **Reusable Bags and Recyclable Paper Bags**

✓ **REUSABLE BAGS**

- Cloth or other washable fabric or plastic bags at least 4 mils thick
- A minimum lifetime of 125 uses
- With handles and clear display of information on reusing/recycling



✓ **RECYCLABLE PAPER BAGS**

- Paper bags of all sizes
- With and without handles
- Including glossy gift bags with handles



✓ **Recyclable or Compostable Disposable Food Containers and Service Ware**

Food service ware, containers and packaging made out of materials that are compostable* or are accepted by the Charleston County recycling program** including:

- ✓ Aluminum
- ✓ Cardboard
- ✓ Glass
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Recyclable plastics



What's OUT?

AFTER JANUARY 1, 2020, operations will be required to stop using:

✗ **Plastic Single-Use Carryout Bags**

- ✗ Intended for one-time use to transport purchases
- ✗ Less than 4 mils thick
- ✗ Not included in the "Exceptions: Specialty Items" section (back page)



✗ **Non-Recyclable and Non-Compostable Disposable Food Containers and Service Ware**

Polyethylene (also known as plastic, foam or Styrofoam™) and other non-recyclable and non-compostable food service ware, carryout containers and food packaging materials including:

- ✗ Bowls
- ✗ Straws
- ✗ Clamshells
- ✗ Cups
- ✗ Plates
- ✗ Stirrers
- ✗ Straws



✗ **Operations also will be required to stop selling or renting polystyrene:**

- ✗ Bowls, cups and plates
- ✗ Coolers, containers and ice chests
- ✗ Shipping boxes and packing material

EXCEPTIONS: Specialty Items

The following specialty items are not restricted or are exempt from restrictions:

- Bags for bulk grocery items
- Bags for raw, frozen or prepared foods
- Bread bags
- Condiment packages
- Cutlery
- Deli bags
- Dry cleaning/garment bags
- Egg cartons
- Floral/plant wrapping
- Garbage bags
- Meat trays
- Newspaper bags
- Pet waste bags
- Plastic drink or soup containers (lit)
- Produce bags
- Stoves for use by customers with disabilities



WHY are we doing this?

These new measures are about cleaner streets and waterways, preserving the beauty and livability of Charleston for generations to come.

Plastic bags and containers are convenient, but they also:

- **Stain our neighborhoods and waterways.** More than 302 million tons of plastics are discarded worldwide each year! Plastic waste ends up on Charleston's streets and 7.6 tons are in Charleston Harbor alone!
- **Threaten wildlife health.** As many as 100,000 marine animals have been injured or killed by entanglement with or ingestion of plastic waste!
- **Pose risks to human health.** Plastics never fully biodegrade, but when pieces of these bags and containers are eaten by animals, the plastic enters our food chain.

WHERE can I learn more?

Detailed information is available online at www.charleston-sc.gov/plastic. For specific questions, call (843) 724-7311 or email cityservices@charleston-sc.gov

NOTES & REFERENCES:

*Use of compostable products must be combined with an active composting program to be considered acceptable. Visit the Charleston County website - www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/environmental-management/compost-program.php - for more information on materials accepted for composting and compost facilities.

**For more information about materials accepted for recycling in Charleston County, please visit www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/environmental-management/recycle-unit.php. If you have specific questions about a product not listed on their website please contact the Charleston County Recycling Center at (843) 724-7111 or recycle@charlestoncounty.org.

<https://www.willbros.com/charleston-sc/plastic-bags>

<https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/environmental-management/recycle-unit.php>

<http://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/environmental-management/compost-program.php>

This guide is for information purposes only and is by no means meant to be a substitution for the official City of Charleston Code.



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