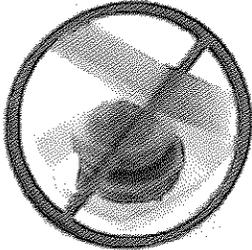




**City of Pacifica
170 Santa Maria Avenue
Pacifica, CA 94044**

**Sustainable Food
Service Ware
Ordinance**

**Use only biodegradable,
compostable, reusable
or recyclable
food containers.**



A new ordinance?

The City of Pacifica has joined several cities in San Mateo County as well as many coastal cities in Southern California in prohibiting the use of polystyrene foam food containers and plastic utensils. All food service ware must now be biodegradable, compostable, reusable, or recyclable.

To Whom Does this Ordinance Apply?

Pacifica's Ordinance #767, became effective January 1, 2010 and requires all food vendors selling prepared foods, as well as City facilities, to use biodegradable, compostable, reusable and recyclable food service ware.

Why eliminate polystyrene foam food containers?

Eliminating the use of polystyrene foam food containers and plastic service ware is intended to help further the community's efforts to reduce Pacifica's impact on the environment, while supporting the efforts of community volunteers that strive to keep our beaches and ocean polystyrene free. Removing polystyrene food containers from the waste stream helps improve our quality of life as well as the natural environment, waterways and wildlife.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is polystyrene foam and why has it been prohibited ?

Sometimes called Styrofoam™ (a Dow Chemical Company Trademark), polystyrene foam is commonly used for disposable food service containers such as cups, plates and "clam-shell" boxes. Polystyrene can be harmful to the environment and to human health.

The useful "life" of these containers is very short. Mostly, they are used once then thrown away. Even when properly disposed of these containers are lightweight, buoyant and often fly away.

Polystyrene exists in the environment for years, breaking down into small, non-biodegradable pieces that are ingested by marine life and other wildlife, harming or killing them.

Several cities in the Bay Area, as well as many coastal communities in Southern California, have adopted ordinances to restrict the use of polystyrene foam containers commonly used by food service providers.

These containers are not currently recycled at the curbside because they are too lightweight, low density and have high transportation costs and a low scrap value.

Because polystyrene foam is lightweight and low density, it is easily transported by the wind and rain to storm drains, creeks and ultimately the ocean, where it is one of the largest sources of marine debris.

What is Biodegradable or Compostable Recyclable Food Service Ware?

"Biodegradable" means the entire product or package will completely break down and return to nature, i.e., decompose into elements found in nature within a reasonably short period of time after disposal.

"Compostable" means all materials in the product or package will break down into, or otherwise become part of, usable compost (e.g. soil-conditioning material or mulch) in a safe and timely manner in an appropriate composting program or facility, or in a home compost pile or device. In the summer of 2010, compostable materials including food scraps will be collected as part of an expanded organics collection program.

"Recyclable" means the product can be recycled as a regular material accepted as part of the City's Recycling Program, including plastic containers with the symbols:



For more information on recycling options contact Pacifica's garbage and recycling provider, **Recology of the Coast**, at 355-9000 or visit their website at www.recologyofthecoast.com.

What are the alternatives?

Alternatives are widely available and used many other cities. *Alternative products include:*

Uncoated Paper

Coated Paper

Cardboard

Bio-products

Bio-products are manufactured from renewable resources such as corn starch, sugar cane, or a combination of bamboo, tapioca and water. "Bio-plastics", a subset of bio-products, are relatively new products with performance and physical characteristics of plastics but made from plant products and byproducts instead of petroleum. These products can be composted. Like plastic and paper products, many bio-plastics can be customized with business logos.

Where Are Alternative Food Service Products Available?

Most suppliers now provide a variety of biodegradable, compostable or recyclable food service ware. The City has a list of suppliers at:

www.cityofpacificacounty.org/xxxxxxx

Ask your current supplier for alternatives.

What Food Service Containers are Banned?

All polystyrene foam used for disposable food service containers and packaging, cups, plates, "clam shell" boxes, bowls, trays, cartons, cups, forks, spoons, knives and other items designed for one-time use, including items for take-out foods and/or leftovers.

Are there Exemptions?

A food vendor may be exempt if the City Manager or his/her designee finds that a suitable alternative to polystyrene does not exist, and/or that the requirements of this ordinance on that item or type of disposable food service ware would cause undue hardship.

What about Liability, Enforcement and Penalties?

If the City Manager or his/her designee determines that a violation has occurred, a written warning notice of the violation will be issued. If subsequent violations occur, penalties apply, including escalating fines.

What about if I still have questions?

For more information about Pacifica's sustainable food service ware ordinance, contact the City of Pacifica at (650) 738-7300 or visit our website at www.cityofpacificacounty.org/xxxx