



Contra Costa County Climate Leaders Program

A project of Generation Green - a 501(c)3 Non profit organization

**Find Links to Other Local Government Policy Opportunities at
www.cccclimateleaders.org**

Implement a Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance in Your City!

WHAT? "Paper or Plastic?" How about neither? Consider banning the hard-to-recycle plastic bags within your city. Many cities are considering or have already implemented such ordinances. Businesses are also taking the lead to offer alternatives for purchase. Yet, plastic bags are still being used in abundance. These bags eventually end up in the landfill or polluting our local environment. By creating a plastic bag ban in your city, you can create real change and help the efforts of your local businesses.

WHY? Has your city considered a Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance? There are many good reasons to do so:

- View this slideshow to understand the harsh reality of what happens to the six plastic bags we get on average each week and the difference we could make by switching to reusable totes.
<http://www.poonorecord.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080506/MULTIMEDIA02%20/80505016>
- View the problem, costs and solutions from Heal the Bay:
http://www.healthebay.org/assets/pdfdocs/PPI/FactSheet_PlasticBags.pdf
- Plastic bags are designed for one use. Less than 5% of plastic bags are recycled and the process is not cost effective.
- The solution is quick and easy. Bring your own bag! Many people are already bringing their own bags to stores; many stores are already offering monetary incentives. Encourage the sustainable actions that are already happening in your city by making it a city policy!
- More cities are looking into creating ordinances:
http://publicceo.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=656:more-cities-looking-towards-plastic-bag-ordinances&catid=148:environmental-issues-broad

WHO? Create a plastic bag ban ordinance for your city as a method to reduce your contribution to the landfill, to reduce the litter, and to encourage more sustainable living. Encourage the stores in your city to offer reusable options or credits for not taking the disposable plastic bag options. Promote the "Bring Your Own Bag" Campaign through local resources.

WHERE? Examples of a Plastic Bag Ordinances are abundant:

- The City of San Francisco was the first city to ban plastic bags. They required recyclable or compostable options be available for consumers: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2007/03/28/MNGDROT5QN1.DTL>
- The City of Berkeley has proposed a Plastic Bag Ban city wide:
<http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/ContentDisplay.aspx?id=44530>
- Plastic Bag restrictions in Palo Alto:
<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/environment/news/details.asp?NewsID=1024&TargetID=59>
- Tucson passed a less strict ordinance to encourage more consumer education:
http://www.azbiz.com/articles/2009/07/03/opinion/columnists/guest_opinion/doc4a4cecf9e1a2604083402.txt
- Local Ordinances: http://www.cawrecycles.org/issues/plastic_campaign/plastic_bags/local

HOW? Learn more information from the following sources:

- Read the recommendation to the City of Santa Monica regarding commercial plastic bag use:
<http://www01.smgov.net/cityclerk/council/agendas/2008/20080226/s2008022608-B.htm>
- A copy of the San Francisco Ordinance for your adoption and review:
<http://www.sfbos.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/bdsupvrs/ordinances07/o0081-07.pdf>
- Resources from Stopwaste.org including other ordinances and background studies:
<http://stopwaste.org/home/index.asp?page=1003>
- Crafting an Ordinance to withstand litigation: <http://plasticbagbanreport.com/how-to-craft-a-plastic-bag-ban-ordinance-to-withstand-litigation/>

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