

Chapter 8.09
REUSABLE BAGS*

Sections:

- 8.09.010 Findings and purpose.
- 8.09.020 Definitions.
- 8.09.030 Implementation date.
- 8.09.040 Single-use carry-out bag.
- 8.09.050 Recordkeeping and inspection.
- 8.09.060 Administrative fine.
- 8.09.070 Severability.
- 8.09.080 Enforcement.

* Code reviser's note: Section 3 of Ordinance 571 provides, "This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force on April 22, 2013."

8.09.010 Findings and purpose.

The city council finds and determines that:

- A. The use of single-use carry-out bags by consumers at retail establishments is detrimental to the environment, public health and welfare.
- B. The manufacture and distribution of single-use carry-out bags requires utilization of natural resources and results in the generation of greenhouse gas emissions.
- C. Single-use carry-out bags contribute to environmental problems, including litter in storm drains, creeks, the bay and the ocean.
- D. Single-use carry-out bags provided by retail establishments impose unseen costs on consumers, local governments, the state and taxpayers and constitute a public nuisance. This city council does, accordingly, find and declare that it should restrict the use of single-use carry-out bags. (Ord. 571 § 1 (part), 2013)

8.09.020 Definitions.

"Customer" means any person obtaining goods from a retail establishment.

"Garment bag" means a travel bag made of pliable, durable material, with or without a handle, designed to hang straight or fold double and used to carry suits, dresses, coats, or the like without crushing or wrinkling the same.

"Nonprofit charitable reuser" means a charitable organization, as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or a distinct operating unit or division of the charitable organization, that reuses and recycles donated goods or materials and receives more than fifty percent of its revenues from the handling and sale of those donated goods or materials.

"Person" means any natural person, firm, corporation, partnership, or other organization or group however organized.

“Prepared food” means foods or beverages which are prepared on the premises by cooking, chopping, slicing, mixing, freezing, or squeezing, and which require no further preparation to be consumed. “Prepared food” does not include any raw, uncooked meat product or fruits or vegetables which are chopped, squeezed or mixed.

“Public eating establishment” means a restaurant, take-out food establishment, or any other business that receives ninety percent or more of its revenue from the sale of prepared food to be eaten on or off its premises.

“Recycled paper bag” means a paper bag provided at the check stand, cash register, point of sale or other point of departure for the purpose of transporting food or merchandise out of the establishment that contains no old growth fiber and a minimum of forty percent post-consumer recycled content; is one hundred percent recyclable; and has printed in a highly visible manner on the outside of the bag the words “reusable” and “recyclable,” the name and location of the manufacturer, and the percentage of post-consumer recycled content.

“Retail establishment” means any commercial establishment that sells perishable or nonperishable goods including, but not limited to, clothing, food, and personal items directly to the customer; and is located within or doing business within the geographical limits of the city of Foster City. “Retail establishment” does not include public eating establishments or nonprofit charity reusers.

“Reusable bag” means either a bag made of cloth or other machine washable fabric that has handles, or a durable plastic bag with handles that is at least 2.25 mil thick and is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse. A garment bag may meet the above criteria regardless of whether it has handles or not.

“Single-use carry-out bag” means a bag other than a reusable bag provided at the check stand, cash register, point of sale or other point of departure, including department within a store, for the purpose of transporting food or merchandise out of the establishment. “Single-use carry-out bags” do not include bags without handles provided to the customer: (1) to transport prepared food, produce, bulk food, or meat from a department within a store to the point of sale; or (2) to segregate food or merchandise that could damage or contaminate other food or merchandise when placed together in a reusable bag or recycled paper bag. (Ord. 571 § 1 (part), 2013)

8.09.030 Implementation date.

This chapter shall not be implemented until April 22, 2013. (Ord. 571 § 1 (part), 2013)

8.09.040 Single-use carry-out bag.

A. No retail establishment shall provide a single-use carry-out bag to a customer at the check stand, cash register, point of sale or other point of departure for the purpose of transporting food or merchandise out of the establishment except as provided in this section.

B. On or before December 31, 2014, a retail establishment may only make recycled paper bags or reusable bags available to customers if the retailer charges a minimum of ten cents.

C. On or after January 1, 2015, a retail establishment may only make recycled paper bags or reusable bags available to customers if the retailer charges a minimum of twenty-five cents.

D. Notwithstanding this section, no retail establishment may make available for sale a recycled paper bag or a reusable bag unless the amount of the sale of such bag is separately itemized on the sale receipt.

E. A retail establishment may provide one or more recycled paper bags at no cost to any of the following individuals: a customer participating in the California Special Supplement Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children, pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 123275) of Chapter 1 of Part 2 of Division 106 of the Health and Safety Code; a customer participating in the Supplemental Food Program pursuant to Chapter 10 (Commencing with Section 15500) of Part 3 of Division 9 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code; and a customer participating in CalFresh pursuant to Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 18900) of Part 6 of Division 9 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code. (Ord. 571 § 1 (part), 2013)

8.09.050 Recordkeeping and inspection.

Every retail establishment shall keep complete and accurate record or documents of the purchase and sale of any recycled paper bag or reusable bag by the retail establishment, for a minimum period of three years from the date of purchase and sale, which record shall be available for inspection at no cost to the city or San Mateo County environmental health division during regular business hours by any city or San Mateo County environmental health division employee authorized to enforce this chapter. Unless an alternative location or method of review is mutually agreed upon, the records or documents shall be available at the retail establishment address. The provision of false information including incomplete records or documents to the city or San Mateo County environmental health division shall be a violation of this chapter. (Ord. 571 § 1 (part), 2013)

8.09.060 Administrative fine.

A. Grounds for Fine. A fine may be imposed upon findings made by the director of the San Mateo County environmental health division, or his or her designee, that any retail establishment has provided a single-use carry-out bag to a customer in violation of this chapter.

B. Amount of Fine. Upon findings made under subsection A of this section, the retail establishment shall be subject to an administrative fine as follows:

1. A fine not exceeding one hundred dollars for a first violation;
2. A fine not exceeding two hundred dollars for a second violation;
3. A fine not exceeding five hundred dollars for the third and subsequent violations;
4. Each day that a retail establishment has provided single-use carry-out bags to a customer constitutes a separate violation.

C. Fine Procedures. Notice of the fine shall be served on the retail establishment. The notice shall contain an advisement of the right to request a hearing before the director of the environmental health division or his or her designee contesting the imposition of the fine. The grounds for the contest shall be that the retail establishment did not provide a single-use carry-out bag to any customer. Said hearing must be requested within ten days of the date appearing on the notice of the fine. The decision of the director of the environmental health division shall be based upon a finding that the above listed ground for a contest has been met and shall be a final administrative order, with no administrative right of appeal.

D. Failure to Pay Fine. If said fine is not paid within thirty days from the date appearing on the notice of the fine or of the notice of determination of the director of the environmental health division or his or her designee after the hearing, the fine shall be referred to a collection agency. (Ord. 571 § 1 (part), 2013)

8.09.070 Severability.

If any provision of this chapter or the application of such provision to any person or in any circumstances shall be held invalid, the remainder of this chapter, or the application of such provision to a person or in circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, shall not be affected thereby. (Ord. 571 § 1 (part), 2013)

8.09.080 Enforcement.

A. The San Mateo County environmental health division is hereby authorized and directed to enforce the provisions of this chapter within the geographical limits of the city of Foster City.

B. The authorization granted by subsection A of this section includes, without limitation, the authority to hold hearings and issue administrative fines for violations of this chapter within the geographical limits of the city of Foster City.

C. Enforcement will begin effective April 22, 2013. (Ord. 571 § 1 (part), 2013)