



Reusable Bag Ordinance Fact Sheet

Anticipated to Begin June 6, 2013

In the City of San Mateo

**What the Ordinance Does:**

Prohibits the free distribution of single-use carry out bags.

Businesses Affected:

All retail establishments located within the unincorporated County and within cities that have adopted the Ordinance. Retailers include those that sell perishable or non-perishable goods including, but not limited to food, clothing and personal items.

Key Rules to Comply:

1. Do not provide single-use plastic carry-out bags to customers
2. Retailers may only provide customers with a recycled paper bag or reusable bag and charge a minimum of 10 cents for each one. (A waiver for WIC, EBT, and CalFresh customers is allowed.)
 - Retailers keep the fee and show the amount charged on the receipt.
 - Maintain records of the fees charged for minimum of 3 years.

Purpose:

To protect the local environment by reducing litter and promoting the use of reusable bags as an alternative to disposables.

Exemptions from Ordinance:

Restaurants and nonprofit charitable organizations.

Produce and meat bags, garment cleaning bags and pharmaceutical bags

Enforcement:

By inspectors from the County's Environmental Health Division.

- Fines begin at \$100 and increase up to \$500, per violation.
- Compliance assistance is available at no charge. Call 650.372.6200.

More Information:

www.smchealth.org/bagban

- Complete ordinance language
- Environmental Impact Report
- Updated list of cities that have adopted the ordinance
- List of recycled-content paper bag vendors
- Outreach materials to educate consumers

