



## Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance Summary

### What the Ordinance Does

- The Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance prohibits the use of single-use carryout plastic bags and the distribution of free paper bags at retail stores.

### Which Businesses are Affected by the Ordinance

- All retail establishments, including grocery stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, drug stores, clothing stores, home improvement stores, office supply stores and other retail stores.
- The exemptions are listed below and include restaurants, take-out food establishments, dry cleaners and non-profit charitable reuse organizations.

### Ordinance Start Date

- September 1, 2012.

### Paper Bag Considerations

#### Recycled Content Paper Bags

- To lessen the negative impacts to the environment for any increased use of paper bags, the following is required: if stores supply paper bags they need to contain a minimum of 40% post consumer recycled content, no old growth trees can be used, and the bags must be 100% recyclable. The paper bags need to be imprinted that they contain 40% post consumer recycled content and with "reusable" and "recyclable", or stores need to provide alternate verification.

#### Store Charge for Recycled Content Paper Bags

- Stores are required to charge a minimum of \$0.10 per recycled content paper bag to provide a disincentive for customers to switch to using paper bags and to change behavior to using reusable bags. Stores retain the per bag charge. The charge on the bags is not taxable.
- The bag charge does not apply to customers using the California Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and customers participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP - formerly food stamps).
- Record Keeping: Stores are required to itemize the paper bag charge on receipts and to keep records for 3 years. The records need to be available for inspection upon request by the City.

### Reusable Bag Considerations (If stores sell them)

- Reusable Bags can be made from cloth, or from plastic (polyethylene or polypropylene) which is 2.25 mils or greater thick and have handles. Other specifications to ensure that the bags are truly reusable include that the bags are specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse and meet all of the following requirements: (1) capable of carrying a minimum of 22 pounds a distance of at least 175 feet and can be reused at least 125 times; (2) has a minimum volume of 15 liters; (3) is machine washable or capable of being cleaned and disinfected; and (4) does not contain lead, cadmium, or any other heavy metal in toxic amounts as defined by applicable State and Federal standards and regulations for packaging or reusable bags.
- Stores are required to charge for reusable bags and can only give them away for free during time-limited promotional events.

### Exemptions

- Food vendors, including restaurants and take-out food establishments; dry cleaners; and non-profit charitable reuse organizations.
- Protective Bags: meat, produce and bakery bags, pharmaceutical bags, flat greeting card bags, and bags that hold live plants or small hardware items. The Ordinance does not include newspaper delivery bags.
- Stores may obtain an exemption for specialty use bags. Stores can demonstrate a hardship if they cannot comply with some aspects of the ordinance.