

June 1, 2010

Support AB 1998 (Brownley) a ban on disposable plastic carry-out bags

Clean Water Action Supports Switching To Re-Usable Bags In California

San Francisco
111 New Montgomery Street
Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94105
Tel: 415.369.9160
Fax: 415.369.9180

www.cleanwateraction.org/ca

Bags are a Leading Source of plastic marine pollution

- International Coastal Cleanup data shows that bags are one of the leading causes (#4) of marine wildlife entanglement
- Plastics in the ocean degrade into micro-plastics and are ingested by marine wildlife, replacing food sources for many marine species - causing them to become part plastics - or to choke or suffocate
- Trash deprives marine ecosystems of oxygen and degrades water quality- it chokes shorelines and wetlands, degrading habitat

Disposable bags represent a huge waste of resources

- Approximately 8 million barrels of oil are used each year to manufacture the 19 billion plastic bags used in California.
- All bags, whether made from oil, corn or trees, creating a heavy environmental burden in the extraction of resources and manufacturing
- Since less than 5% are recycled, most are littered or land-filled

Disposable bags contribute to global warming

- 13.4 pounds of CO₂ are emitted from the number of bags an average shopper uses annually

Disposable plastic bags cost California taxpayers significant dollars each year

- 19 billion plastic bags are used annually in California
- According to LA County, each person uses 600 plastic and 300 paper bags per year

- Stores pass on to consumer bag cost of 3 cents for plastic and 10 cents per paper bag - a total of \$48 per person per year.
- Billions in \$ of costs to taxpayers each year for state, cities and counties managing waste going to landfills/cleaning litter off streets, beaches parks
- According to CA Integrated Waste Management Board, each year local government spends \$25 million sending 533,000 tons of bags to landfill
- SF estimated it cost them \$0.17 per plastic bag to manage as waste

The proposed law considers impacts on those who can't afford to buy reusable bags

- WIC participants (food aid for single women with dependent children) will get free reusable bags and paper bags
- There's a ramp-up period so people have time to adjust
- Some of the poorest countries in the world do this - Bangladesh, parts of India, all of China- people are creative

Inland communities care about this issue

- Californians take their coastal areas seriously - 9 out of 10 of Californians state that the quality of the beach and ocean is just as important to them personally as for the overall welfare and economy of the state - so it's not just coastal residents that feel strongly about the beach.
- Bags litter everywhere - not just in coastal areas.
- Inland communities have taken and are considering taking action to ban bags.

There's a wave of public demand for action!

- With many countries, including China and parts of India, banning bags - 25% of the world's population lives in places where bags are banned or taxed
- Ireland implemented a 21 cent fee in 2002 (increased to 33 cents in 2007) resulting in 90% decrease in bag consumption
- Businesses are getting on board. WalMart and Whole Foods are implementing policies not to give

Banned in

- Palo Alto
- San Francisco
- Malibu
- Santa Monica
- Berkeley
- Fairfax

Trying to ban

- Oakland
- Manhattan Beach
- Los Angeles
- City of San Jose
- Santa Clara County

Considering ban

- Berkeley
- Burbank
- Chico
- Dana Point
- Desert Hot Springs
- Huntington Beach
- Humboldt County
- Glendale
- Encinitas
- Long Beach
- Laguna Beach
- San Juan Capistrano
- San Mateo County
- Santa Barbara

- out disposable bags. Ikea now charges 5 cents for bags at the checkout counter
- Several jurisdictions have already passed bag bans: many more considering it

What Businesses are Covered and When Does it Take Effect?

- Convenience stores have until 2013 to comply
- Supermarkets have until 2012 to comply
- Retail pharmacies have until 2012 to comply

Contact Miriam Gordon, CA Director, Clean Water Action:
mgordon@cleanwater.org or 415-902-5196