



City of Hermosa Beach Bans 'Polystyrene Food Service Ware'

Frequently Asked Questions

On September 11, 2012, the City of Hermosa Beach adopted an ordinance banning the use of polystyrene packaging and food-service ware within the boundaries of Hermosa Beach. The purpose of the new ordinance is to reduce adverse environmental and public health impacts of disposable polystyrene food containers, and promote environmentally sustainable practices in the City. This page contains information on the polystyrene ban to assist businesses and residents with compliance.

What does the ordinance do?

The ordinance bans polystyrene food service ware in the City of Hermosa Beach **beginning March 10, 2013**. In general, foods packaged, repackaged or placed in polystyrene containers or drink ware by "food providers" within the city are subject to the ordinance.

What businesses and individuals must comply with the ban?

The ban generally applies to:

- Grocery stores, supermarkets, delis, convenience stores, farmers markets.
- Restaurants, drive-thrus, cafés, snack shops.
- Mobile vendors, food trucks, caterers, vendors at events, vending machines.
- Anyone conducting or supplying activities under a "special event permit" or agreement with the City.
- Groups and organizations that regularly supply food to their members or the public.
- Official city meetings or events.

Who will NOT be affected by the ban?

Consumers are not affected by the ban and can buy or obtain whatever is being sold, given away or provided. Food providers **MUST** comply with the ban.

Other exemptions include:

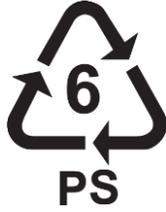
- All foods packaged or prepared outside the city. For example, produce sold in grocery stores that arrives prepackaged is exempt. If a food provider repackages or places the food in polystyrene containers or drink ware within the city, then it is subject to the ordinance.
- Food wholesalers and the school food service program.
- Packaging for raw uncooked meat, poultry, fish or eggs, unless the food is intended to be eaten raw (such as sushi).

Why did the City ban polystyrene food containers?

Banning polystyrene food containers is part of the ongoing commitment by the City to protect the environment and the health of residents. Polystyrene is made from styrene, a petroleum byproduct which is nonrenewable and a heavily polluting resource. Styrene is a known neurotoxin that is classified as reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen (meaning there is significant evidence linking styrene to human cancers.) Polystyrene is not recyclable and once discarded, can break into small pieces or beads which persist in the environment for years.

One form of polystyrene is used to make the foam cups, plates, and clamshells that are sometimes referred to as Styrofoam. Other forms of polystyrene are used to make certain clear or solid plastic cups, lids, straws, utensils, as well as other food-service ware.

How do I know if a container is polystyrene?



Polystyrene food-service ware or packaging is marked with the plastic resin code #6 (PS) somewhere on the product or on the box containing the product.

Alternatives to Polystyrene?

Alternatives to polystyrene food-service ware and packaging include items made from paper, other plant fiber (such as from sugarcane, rice, or bamboo) or recyclable products such as glass, metal or plastic types #1, #2, #3, #4 or #5.

The City has numerous resources you can use to learn more about non-polystyrene alternatives and their expected costs:

[Compostable or Recyclable Food Service Ware Alternatives and Pricing](#). Reference sheet of alternative products containing various material, cost, volume, and vendor options.

[Vendors of Compostable or Recyclable Food Service Wares](#). List of retail and online stores offering competitively priced, non-polystyrene food service wares.

How will it be enforced?

City staff are responsible for enforcement and may inspect any food provider's premises. To be in compliance, food providers should use service ware that exhibits a recycle code other than No. 6 or PS, or maintain documentation onsite for the composition of disposable food service ware to verify compliance.

City staff will work with food providers to address problems. If a food provider is found to be out of compliance, it may be issued an administrative citation and subject to fines. Fines will range from \$100 to \$500. After three citations, the city can file a criminal misdemeanor complaint.

How can I get more information?

Information is available online at **City Manager Department- Environmental Services** or Call (310) 750-3603