

FAQs – Residents

Why has the City of Long Beach banned plastic carryout bags?

- They are produced from non-renewable resources
- They are designed to be disposable, rather than reusable
- They are not likely to be recycled – less than 5% of the 19 billion plastic bags used annually in California are recycled
- They are a significant and visible component of litter
- They pollute our local waterways
- They are a hazard to wildlife

Why are reusable bags better for the environment?

Reusable bags do not pollute the environment and help reduce landfill waste because they are used again and again.

When does the carryout bag ban begin?

August 1, 2011 – Supermarkets and Large Retail Stores with a Pharmacy

January 1, 2012 – Farmers Markets, Convenience Stores, Food Marts and other Pharmacies

What kind of plastic bag is banned?

A plastic carryout bag made predominantly of plastic that is derived from either petroleum or a biologically-based source, such as corn or other plant sources, which is provided to a customer at the point of sale.

Are there any exceptions to this ban?

Yes, plastic “product bags” or “produce bags” used exclusively to carry produce, meats or other food items to the point of sale inside a store, or to prevent such food items from coming into direct contact with other purchased items.

For any customer participating either in the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) or in the Supplemental Food Program, stores are required to provide at the point of sale, **free of charge**, either reusable bags or recyclable paper carryout bags or both, at the store’s option.

Why is there a 10-cent charge for recyclable paper carryout bags?

The 10-cent charge encourages the use of reusable bags.

What is the 10-cent charge used for?

All monies collected by a store under the Long Beach Ordinance will be retained by the store and may be used for:

- Costs associated with Ordinance compliance
- Actual costs of providing recyclable paper carryout bags
- Costs associated with a store's educational materials or education campaign encouraging the use of reusable carryout bags, if any

Will stores still sell plastic garbage bags?

Yes. The Long Beach Ordinance does not affect the sale and purchase of plastic garbage bags.

Can I recycle paper carryout bags?

Yes, place them in your purple recycling cart.