

City of Toronto Retail Plastic Bag By-law

The Regional Municipality Of York
Environmental Services Committee
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Vincent Sferrazza
Director, Policy & Planning
Solid Waste Management Services
City of Toronto
E-mail: vsferra@toronto.ca
Telephone: 416-392-9095



Background

- Target 70 Waste Diversion report approved by Council in June 2007 recommended review of powers under COTA to tax, ban or regulate in-store packaging.
- Support residents to minimize waste and their volume-based solid waste rate.
- Plastic retail shopping bags identified as a target in-store package.
- Policy options considered under COTA
 - Bans;
 - Financial Tools;
 - Local Deposit Return;
 - Leave Behind at Retail.
- Under subsection 8(2) of COTA, the City has the authority to pass By-laws respecting matters related to the environmental well-being of the City.



Recommendations

- Retailers must accept use of refillable bag or container and provide a discount of a minimum of 10¢ for every bag not used by customer, by June 1, 2009.
- Any single use bags distributed must be compatible with City of Toronto recycling program, by June 1, 2009.
- Recommendations approved by Public Works and Infrastructure Committee.
- Retailers unhappy with recommendations and major retailer puts forward a reasonable compromise.
- Mayor's motion results in Council resolution to modify original recommendations.



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Reduce/Reuse

By June 1, 2009:

- Retailers in City of Toronto must accept use of reusable bag or container.
- Must charge a minimum of 5¢ for each plastic retail shopping bag.
- If plastic retail shopping bags not offered, retailers must provide a free alternative (i.e., paper bag, cardboard box).
- A retailer offering and charging for plastic retail bags is not obligated to provide a free alternative.
- Must communicate the charge:
 - Prominent signage at point of sale;
 - Itemize charge on the transaction receipt if one is issued.



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Recycle

By June 1, 2010:

- Any single use bags distributed must be compatible with the City of Toronto recycling program:
 - Plastic biodegradable or compostable bags are not compatible with the City of Toronto recycling program;
 - Plastic bags with metal detailing or grommets, rope or hard plastic handles are not compatible.



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Communications

- Meetings with retail associations.
- Detailed letter and two (2) Toronto produced signs sent to all retailers in the City.
- City's website.
- 3 different sizes of signs produced and made available free of charge – postcard style, 3 ½" by 6 ¾" – sticker, 4" by 5" – poster, 8.5" by 11".
- Unlimited supply of signs made available at various Civic Centres and given to those retail associations who wanted to distribute to members. Print quality signs available on City website, for downloading.
- Print ad campaign.



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5¢ Plastic Bag Charge



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5¢ Plastic Bag Charge



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Enforcement

Offence under the Provincial Offences Act

Set Fines for Non-Compliance		
1.	Fail to allow customers to use reusable container	\$150
2.	Fail to charge customer minimum of 5¢ for each plastic bag	\$295
3.	Fail to provide prominent signage	\$100
4.	Fail to indicate charge on customer receipt	\$100
5.	Fail to provide alternative at no charge	\$150
6.	Provide non-compatible plastic bag to customer	\$295



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Enforcement

- Educational approach during first year.
- City's Municipal Licensing and Standards By-law officers responsible for enforcement.
- Warnings issued but no tickets to date.



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Plastic Bag Reduction

- Council endorsed goal of 70% reduction in distribution of plastic retail shopping bags by retailers in Toronto by 2012, using 2006 as the baseline.
- Staff reporting next year on progress.
- Loblaws reports a reduction of 1.3 billion bags in one (1) year across Canada. Donating \$3 million to World Wildlife Fund over three (3) years from corporate donation and partial proceeds from sale of shopping bags.
- Sobeys, Foodland and IGA report a 72% reduction in single use plastic bag consumption in less than six (6) months.
- Metro grocery stores across Ontario and Quebec report 70% fewer bags four (4) weeks after introducing 5¢ charge in June 2009.



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