

TEMPLATE

(Insert Municipality Name)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (Insert Date)

CONTACT:

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NEWS RELEASE

**(Insert Municipality Name) Prepares for Long-Anticipated NJ Plastic
Pollution Reduction Act**

Law bans plastic and paper bags, foam and limits straws

(Insert municipality, NJ) – (Insert municipality name) prepares for the implementation of the NJ’s Plastic Pollution Reduction Act which was signed into law by Governor Murphy November 2020. The state acted after more than 130 municipal ordinances were passed tackling disposable, single-use plastics.

Through the law, single-use plastic bags, as well as disposable food containers and cups made out of polystyrene foam, will be banned beginning in May 2022. Paper bags will also be banned in supermarkets over 2,500 square feet. Restaurants and food service businesses will be allowed to provide single-use plastic straws only upon request starting November 2021.

“The Plastic Pollution Reduction Act represents the strongest, most comprehensive plastic policy in the country and is an excellent step to reducing litter that threatens vulnerable wildlife,” said (insert name, title). When fish and other wildlife mistake plastic for food, intestinal blockage and death can result. What’s more is that the chemicals used to manufacture plastic transfers to fish tissue, and eventually enter the human food chain.”

New Jerseyans use 4.4 billion single-use plastic and 1,300 football fields of trees worth of paper bags every year. The law will reduce the use of these products and in turn protect the state’s 130-mile coast line and open spaces. NJ Clean Communities will be assisting municipalities with educational efforts and giveaways of reusable bags. A Plastics Advisory Council will also be created to monitor the implementation of this policy and evaluate its effectiveness for reducing single-use plastics in NJ.

“We urge all residents of (insert municipality name) to start preparing for the change **now** with simple swaps,” said (insert name, title). (Name of municipality) is dedicated to complying with the new law and looks forward to moving embracing reusable products and helping residents do the same.

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Tips to break the plastic habit:

Straws:

- If dining out, simply tell your server “no straw, please” when you order your drink. When the law takes effect, you’ll be used to your drink, sans straw!

Expanded Polystyrene Foam (commonly known as Styrofoam):

- Bring your own clean takeout containers with you, preferably glass
- Bring your own reusable thermos or water bottle with you

Bags:

Here are some great tips from Sustainable Princeton:

- **Use what you have.** If you’ve already got a closet full of bags, try them out. That may be all you need.
- **Think inside the box.** Consider reusing cardboard boxes or a crate to carry your groceries.
- **Pick a durable bag.** If you are in the market for a new reusable bag, keep in mind that they typically need to be used hundreds or thousands of times to offset the carbon footprint from their manufacture.
- **Find a bag you love.** There are many different styles out there, so be sure to prioritize a bag you’ll be proud to carry with you.
- **Consider your lifestyle.** Need one that fits in a pocket or in your trunk? Lugging your groceries home by foot or loading them into your car? Pick a bag that will serve your needs.
- **Go recycled.** Bags made from recycled plastic typically have a low carbon footprint; however, pollution is still a concern with any plastic product.
- **Understand cotton.** Canvas is a delightful natural product, but since cotton has a high carbon footprint, look for bags made from recycled material (eg, old jeans).
- **Bring it with you.** While this might seem obvious, for many of us, it’s not easy. Be sure to try out different strategies until you find a habit that sticks.

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For more information about the Plastic Pollution Reduction Act, visit www.NJNOPLASTICS.org