



San Francisco Checkout Bag Ordinance Factsheet

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Plastic bags are a problem because they...

- use dwindling natural resources and create pollution during production and distribution
- create significant litter, clogged street drains and sewers, which are costly to clean up
- harm marine life and damage aquatic ecosystems
- are difficult to recycle and are not accepted in curbside recycling

In 2007 San Francisco was the first city to ban non-compostable plastic checkout bags in supermarket and pharmacy chains. The Board of Supervisors has now passed legislation to expand the non-compostable plastic bag ban.

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The new legislation...

- expands the ban* to include all retail stores starting in 10/1/2012
- expands the ban* to include all restaurants starting in 10/1/2013
- requires a 10-cent minimum charge on allowable checkout bags (charge for compostable plastic bags starts in October, 2013), with no charge required for customers taking their left-over food from a sit down dine-in restaurant
- allows stores to keep the charge for bags, which will help offset additional costs for providing acceptable bags

*Checkout bags allowed under the ordinance:

- Certified compostable plastic bags
- Paper bags with 40% post-consumer recycled content
- Reusable bags which are designed for 125 or more uses, and are washable for cleaning

**See ordinance for further criteria

The legislation does **NOT** apply to:

- Bags used for bulk items, produce, nuts, grains, candy, meat, fish, small hardware, or bags used to separate items to avoid damage
- Bags from pharmacists used to contain prescription drugs
- Newspaper bags
- Laundry or dry cleaning bags

For more information please call visit sfenvironment.org/checkout-bag-policy-faq or call SFEnvironment at (415) 355-3700



Frequently Asked Questions Checkout Bag Ordinance

What is the purpose of the legislation?

The purpose of this new law is to encourage customers to bring their own checkout bags, in order to reduce the impact to the city and the environment of disposable bags. At least 45 other cities and counties in California have similar laws. Charging customers 10 cents per provided checkout bag has been shown to reduce the number of disposable bags used, by nearly 70-90%. This reduction in bag use also saves stores in their own checkout bag purchase costs.

This legislation will also help reduce unnecessary waste, contamination in recycling and composting programs, and litter, all of which is very costly to the taxpayers of San Francisco, as well as prevent harm to marine life.

What types of businesses does the legislation apply to?

This legislation applies to all retail establishments located within the geographical limits of the City and County of San Francisco, including convenience stores. The legislation also applies to restaurants starting October 1, 2013.

Are businesses required to charge?

Yes. The minimum charge is 10 cents per checkout bag, but if a business wants to charge more for the bags they give out they can.

When does the legislation go into effect?

Stores must charge for checkout bags starting October 1st, 2012. Due to state regulations, compostable plastic bags don't carry a required charge until October 1st, 2013, however, businesses may choose to charge for compostable plastic bags before then. Restaurants are not subject to the legislation until October 1st, 2013.

How will the legislation affect the poor and elderly in San Francisco?

Stores pass the cost of bags onto their shoppers. Low-income people and seniors will be able to avoid all bag costs by bringing their own bags to the store. SF Environment will partner with grocers and local non-profit environmental groups in a public awareness campaign promoting reusable bags, including reusable bag giveaways targeting low and fixed-income San Franciscans. Customers participating in WIC or food stamp programs are exempt from the bag charge.

Where will the money be spent?

Stores keep the entire checkout bag charge in order to offset the cost of allowable bags.

How can shoppers avoid the charge?

Shoppers can avoid the charge by bringing their own bags whenever they shop, or refuse a bag when they make a small purchase that is easy to carry without a bag.

How will the fee be monitored?

The checkout bag charge must be itemized and shown separately on the customer's receipt.

What happens to businesses that don't comply?

SF Environment will focus primarily on education and helping businesses comply. For those who are persistently out of compliance, warning can be issued, and fines can range from \$100-\$500.

Where can I buy acceptable bags?

Acceptable bags come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. Ordinance compliant bags are available at a variety of price points. SFE will provide lists of ordinance-compliant bag suppliers.



SF Environment

Our home. Our city. Our planet.



EDWIN M. LEE
Mayor

MELANIE NUTTER
Director

**Attention All Retail Business Owners and Managers
NEW LEGISLATION TAKES EFFECT ON OCTOBER 1ST 2012**

The City and County of San Francisco recently approved a new law, amending Chapter 17 of the Environment Code, extending the plastic checkout bag ban to include all retail establishments (stores) and adding a charge on allowed checkout bags. Effective October 1st, 2012, the new Checkout Bag Ordinance, #33-12, requires that: **no store shall provide a plastic checkout bag to a customer. Stores that provide a customer with an allowed checkout bag must charge at least ten cents (\$0.10) per bag.** Stores will only be allowed to provide to customers checkout bags that are: certified compostable plastic, recyclable paper with 40% post-consumer recycled content, or reusable designed for at least 125 uses. Allowed checkout bags also have other requirements such as specific labeling that are defined in the Ordinance. Stores do not have to charge for certified compostable plastic bags until October, 2013. Stores keep the 10 cent charge, which can help stores offset the cost of allowed bags. Customers participating in WIC or food stamp programs are exempt from all bag charges.

To help your store comply with this Checkout Bag Ordinance, the SF Department of the Environment will host 5 free bag vendor fairs listed below. This is a great opportunity to meet bag suppliers and see examples of acceptable recyclable, compostable, and reusable checkout bag options. Attendance to one of the fairs is highly recommended as city staff will be available to answer questions. The first 100 business owners/managers to sign in at each fair event will be eligible to receive 25 reusable high quality cloth bags (maximum per business) to give to their select customers, courtesy of the Department of the Environment.

Bag Fair Events for Stores:

- June 19th (9:30am – 11:00am) Chinatown YMCA, 855 Sacramento Street
- June 26th (9:30am – 11:00am) Women's Building, 3543 18th Street
- July 10th (9:30am – 11:00am) Bayview Opera House, 4705 Third Street
- July 17th (2:00pm – 3:30pm) Minnie @ Lovie Ward Recreation Center, 650 Capitol Ave
- July 24th (9:30am – 11:00am) Golden Gate Park @ County Fair Building, 1199 9th Ave

Enclosed with this letter you'll find a **Checkout Bag Ordinance Factsheet and FAQ** as well as **signage for the checkout area** of your shop. To find out more about the Checkout Bag Ordinance, and acceptable bags for distribution, please visit: SFEnvironment.org/checkout-bag-policy-faq or call **(415) 355-3700**.

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100% Post-Consumer Recycled

Atención a todos los comercios minoristas Propietarios y Encargados
LA NUEVA LEGISLACIÓN ENTRARÁ EN VIGENCIA EL 1 DE OCTUBRE DE 2012

La Ciudad y el Condado de San Francisco aprobaron una nueva ley, que enmienda el Capítulo 17 del Código Medioambiental, para extender la prohibición de la entrega de bolsas plásticas para compras y que incluya a todos los establecimientos de venta minorista (tiendas) y añada un cargo sobre las bolsas permitidas. En vigencia a partir del 1 de octubre de 2012, la nueva Ordenanza de Bolsas para Compras, #33-12, exige que: **ninguna tienda entregue bolsas plásticas para compras a sus clientes. Las tiendas que le ofrezcan al cliente una bolsa para compras permitida deberán cobrar al menos diez centavos (\$0.10) por bolsa.** Las tiendas únicamente podrán entregarles a los clientes bolsas para compras que sean de: plástico biodegradable certificado, papel reciclado con 40% de contenido postconsumo o de un diseño reusable que dure al menos para 125 usos. Las bolsas para compras permitidas también cuentan con otros requisitos, como un etiquetado específico, que serán definidos en la Ordenanza. Las tiendas no deberán cobrar por las bolsas de plástico biodegradable certificado hasta octubre de 2013. Las tiendas conservarán el pago de 10 centavos, que les ayudará contrarrestar el costo de las bolsas permitidas. Los clientes que participen en WIC o programas de cupones para alimentos están exentos de todo cargo por las bolsas.

Para ayudar a las tiendas a cumplir esta Ordenanza de Bolsas para Compras, el Departamento de Medioambiente de San Francisco realizará cinco ferias de proveedores gratuitas que figuran a continuación. Esta es una gran oportunidad para conocer proveedores de bolsas y ver ejemplos de opciones reciclables, biodegradables y reusables aceptables. Se recomienda la asistencia a la feria ya que el personal del municipio va a estar disponible para responder a sus preguntas. Los primeros 100 propietarios/encargados de tiendas que se inscriban en cada feria serán elegibles para recibir 25 bolsas de tela de máxima calidad reusables (máximo por tienda) para dárselas a sus clientes favoritos, cortesía del Departamento de Medioambiente.

Ferias de Bolsas para Tiendas:

- June 19th (9:30am – 11:00am) Chinatown YMCA, 855 Sacramento Street
- June 26th (9:30am – 11:00am) Women's Building, 3543 18th Street
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Adjunta con esta carta encontrará una **Hoja Informativa y Preguntas Frecuentes sobre la Ordenanza de Bolsas para Compras**, como así también la **señalización para el área de la caja** de su tienda. Para conocer más sobre la Ordenanza de Bolsas para Compras y las bolsas que puede utilizar, visite: SFEnvironment.org/checkout-bag-policy-faq o llame al (415) 355-3700.

所有零售商東主和經理敬請注意
新立法將於2012年十月一日起生效

三藩市縣政府最近通過一條新法例，即環保法第十七章修訂法，禁止使用膠袋包括所有零售商（商店）在內，並就准用的購物袋收費。由2012年十月一日起，新的購物袋法令#3312規定：商店不可以給顧客膠袋。向顧客提供准用的購物袋須每個收費至少十分錢（\$0.10）。商店只可向顧客提供以下的購物袋：認證可埋肥的膠袋、用40%回收材料做的回收紙袋、或可至少使用125次的購物袋。准用的購物袋同時訂有其他規定，例如根據該法定義的特別標籤。商店可以在2013年十月之前，無須就經認證可堆肥的膠袋收費。商店所收的十分錢可留供己用，以抵銷訂購准用袋的成本。參與WIC或糧食券的顧客，可免付購物袋費。

為幫助你的商店遵守此購物袋法令，三藩市環境局將主辦以下五個免費購物袋商展。這是一個認識購物袋商和看看可接受之可回收、可埋肥、和可再用的購物袋品種的好機會。大力建議大家出席其中一個展覽，因為市府將有職員在場回答問題。在每個展覽頭一百個登記的東主／經理，有資格收到二十五個高質素可再用的布袋（每家商業的限額），送給他們的顧客；這些布袋是由環境局送出的。

商店購物袋展：

- June 19th (9:30am – 11:00am) Chinatown YMCA, 855 Sacramento Street
- June 26th (9:30am – 11:00am) Women's Building, 3543 18th Street
- July 10th (9:30am – 11:00am) Bayview Opera House, 4705 Third Street
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連同此信附上一份購物袋法說明和常問問題，以及供你商店收銀處使用的標誌。查找有關購物袋法和可接受的購物袋詳情，請上網 SFEnvironment.org/checkout-bag-policy-faq 或致電 (415) 355-3700。