



Business Information Toolkit

**CITY OF RICHMOND SINGLE-USE PLASTIC
AND OTHER ITEMS BYLAW NO. 10000**

richmond.ca/singleuse



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Bylaw 10000 Overview	3
What Does the Bylaw Ban?	3
Bylaw 10000 at a Glance	4
Implementation Plan	5
Enforcement	6
Why Restrict Single-Use Items?	7
2. Bylaw Requirements and Exemptions	8
Part 1: Foam Food Service Ware	9
Part 2: Plastic Straws	9
Part 3: Plastic Checkout Bags	10
Compostable/Biodegradable Plastic	11
3. Frequently Asked Questions	12
Frequently Asked Questions for Businesses	12
Frequently Asked Questions from Customers	14
4. Selecting Acceptable Alternatives	16
Tips for Selecting Alternatives	16
What to Ask Suppliers When Selecting Alternatives	18
Suggested Alternatives	20
Replacement Bag Life Cycle Considerations	21
5. Preparing your Business for Bylaw Implementation	22
Business Checklist	22
Train Your Employees	22
Scenario Scripts	23



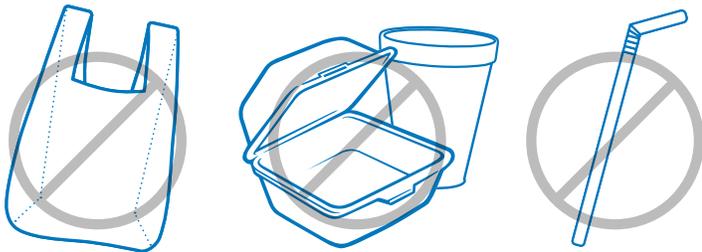


Bylaw 10000 Overview

The City of Richmond's *Single-Use Plastic and Other Items Bylaw No. 10000* bans the use of foam food service ware, plastic straws and plastic checkout bags. Phased implementation of Bylaw 10000 will take place to allow businesses time to transition to the new requirements.

Many other municipalities across the region are taking similar steps to ban single-use plastics, including the City of Vancouver and City of Surrey. Additionally, the Province of BC and Government of Canada have both announced plans to ban many single-use plastics and related items in the near future.

This information toolkit is designed to help local businesses and their employees understand the requirements under Bylaw 10000 and to assist with planning for and implementing the new requirements.



WHAT DOES BYLAW 10000 BAN?

The following items are banned under Bylaw 10000*:

- plastic checkout bags
- plastic straws
- foam (polystyrene) food service ware for prepared food (such as foam plates, clamshell containers, bowls and cups)

The ban on plastic checkout bags and plastic straws includes:

- compostable plastics
- biodegradable plastics

*Please note - some exceptions apply, see Section 2: Bylaw Requirements and Exemptions on page 8.

BYLAW 10000 AT A GLANCE



Banned Items	Exemption	Alternative
<h3>FOAM FOOD SERVICE WARE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plates Cups Bowls Trays Cartons Hinged or lidded containers 		
<h3>PLASTIC STRAWS</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic straws Biodegradable/compostable plastic 		
<h3>PLASTIC CHECKOUT BAGS</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodegradable/compostable plastic Plastic bags used for items purchased or received from business Plastic bags used for take-out or delivery food 		

- Excludes hospitals
- Charitable organizations have 18 months to adopt
- Prepared food containers filled and sealed outside of Richmond

- Fibre-based with no coating (plain paper)
- Fibre-based with plastic lining (including compostable plastic lining)
- Glass*
- Silicone*
- Bamboo*
- Reusable plastic plates, bowls and containers
- Aluminum containers
- Reusable travel mugs*
- Reusable stainless steel trays, plates and tiffins*
- Pressed leaf plates and bowls

- People with disability needs (on request)
- Packages of multiple straws for home use

- Fibre-based with no coating (plain paper)
- Edible food straws (pasta, candy etc.)
- Metal*
- Glass*
- Silicone*
- Bamboo*

- Plastic bags customer brings for reuse
- Plastic bags used for:
 - Loose bulk food items and hardware items
 - Frozen food, meat, poultry or fish
 - Flowers/potted plants
 - Non-packaged prepared foods or bakery goods
 - Prescription drugs
 - Transporting live fish
 - Protecting linens, bedding or similar large items
 - Protecting newspapers or printed materials left at customer's residence
 - Protecting clothes laundered or dry-cleaned
- Packages of multiple bags for home use

- Paper bags
- Reusable plastic (woven polypropylene, non-woven polypropylene)*
- Natural cloth (cotton, hemp)*

*Customers may bring these items to help reduce plastic waste. Please adhere to your food safety and sanitation plan.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The City’s implementation plan is designed to provide businesses with the opportunity to use up existing supplies, train employees and make any other changes needed to adapt to the new requirements. This includes a six-month delay after adopting Bylaw 10000 before it comes into effect, followed by an additional six-month grace period focused on education and awareness before enforcement begins.

To support business in the community, the City is providing the following:

- business toolkit to explain the ban and provide tips on how to prepare
- point-of-sale communication materials to help businesses inform customers about banned items under Bylaw 10000
- advice and assistance for selecting acceptable products to replace banned items

The City will also be implementing a comprehensive communications campaign to inform residents and visitors about Bylaw 10000.

The communications will highlight why the bans are important and what is included in the ban, and will promote reusable products as a good alternative to single-use items.

SEPTEMBER 2021

Bylaw 10000 is adopted by Council

Council has completed all of the steps to enact Bylaw 10000.

SEPTEMBER 2022

Bylaw 10000 is enforced

Bylaw 10000 is enforced with fines and other penalties.

MARCH 2022

Bylaw 10000 is implemented

Bylaw 10000 is implemented and applies to all businesses in Richmond. The focus will be on education and awareness about requirements.

MARCH 2023

Charitable Organizations Exemption Expires

Registered charities must now adhere to Bylaw 10000.

Did you know...

Canadians throw away 3 million tonnes of plastic waste, only 9% of which is recycled, meaning the vast majority of plastics end up in landfills and about 29,000 tonnes end up in our natural environment.

ENFORCEMENT

The City will begin the enforcement phase by continuing education and working with businesses to support their compliance efforts. This will be a staged approach to ensure that businesses have all the information and resources necessary to successfully comply.

After an initial grace period to focus on education, the City will be strictly enforcing Bylaw 10000. Penalties for non-compliance may include ticketing, starting at \$250 and increasing to \$1,000. In addition, non-compliance with the Bylaw can be prosecuted in Provincial Court with fines of up to \$10,000 per occurrence.

Examples of non-compliance include:

- packing groceries in a plastic checkout bag
- serving bubble tea with a plastic straw
- packing ready-to-eat food in foam take-out containers



WHY RESTRICT SINGLE-USE ITEMS?

Single-use items result in huge amounts of unnecessary waste, creating negative environmental and economic impacts.

The vast majority of these materials are never recycled and either end up in landfills or get dumped into the natural environment, including oceans and other waterways. These materials can take centuries to decompose and, in the meantime, cause significant damage to the ecology, pose a significant threat to wildlife and potentially contaminate the food chain. While some of these items may be labelled as reusable or recyclable, they are generally made from low quality materials, which can only be used a few times and have limited recyclable value.

Bylaw 10000 requires businesses and consumers to shift away from wasteful single-use items and instead select materials that can be composted, reused or recycled multiple times into new products.





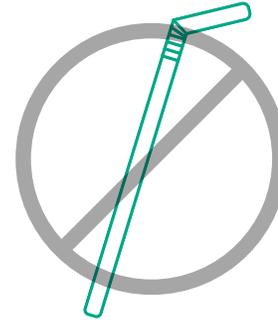
Bylaw Requirements and Exemptions

Under Bylaw 10000, if you operate a business in Richmond, including commercial, retail and food vendor/restaurants, or provide retail or food services at an event, you are required to comply with the new regulations banning plastic checkout bags, plastic straws and foam food service ware.

Some exceptions will be permitted to address health and safety considerations, accessibility requirements and bulk purchasing of these items. This section includes an overview of each category within Bylaw 10000 and the exemptions that apply.



1.1 billion single-use items are disposed of in the Metro Vancouver region each year.



PART 1: FOAM FOOD SERVICE WARE

“No business shall sell or otherwise provide Prepared Food in any Food Service Ware that contains Polystyrene Foam.”

- CITY OF RICHMOND BYLAW 10000

Businesses in Richmond must not sell or provide prepared food in any foam food service ware, which includes but is not limited to plates, cups, bowls, trays, cartons, and hinged or lidded containers. Prepared food includes any food or beverage prepared for consumption by a customer. It does not include any raw, uncooked food, including meat, poultry, fish, seafood, eggs or vegetables unless provided for consumption without further food preparation.

For example: using a foam tray for cut raw vegetables that are intended for a stir fry, or vegetables like spiralized zucchini or corn on the cob that still need to be cooked would be exempt. Using a foam tray for an orange that is peeled and sliced to be ready-to-eat, is not permitted as it is considered prepared food and banned under Bylaw 10000.

EXEMPTIONS

- This ban does not apply to hospitals or any facility licensed as a community care facility under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act as these facilities have special health safety requirements.
- Organizations incorporated and in good standing under the Society Act or registered as a charitable society or organization under the federal Income Tax Act have 18 months to comply with Bylaw 10000 (compared to 12 months for businesses).
- Prepared food containers that have been filled and sealed outside of the City of Richmond prior to arrival at the business location are permitted under Bylaw 10000.

PART 2: PLASTIC STRAWS

“No business shall sell or otherwise provide any Plastic Straws.”

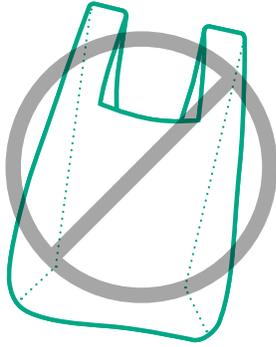
- CITY OF RICHMOND BYLAW 10000

Plastic straws are banned with some exemptions as noted below. This means businesses must not sell or provide any drinking straw made with plastic, including biodegradable plastic or compostable plastic.

EXEMPTIONS

- Businesses can provide plastic straws to people with accessibility needs when requested.
- The sale of plastic straws intended for use at a customer’s home or business is permitted under Bylaw 10000 provided that they are sold in packages of multiple straws.





PART 3: PLASTIC CHECKOUT BAGS

“Except as provided in this Bylaw, no Business shall sell or otherwise provide a Plastic Checkout Bag to a customer.”

- CITY OF RICHMOND BYLAW NO. 10000

Plastic checkout bags are banned with some exemptions as noted below. This includes any bag made of plastic, including biodegradable or compostable plastic, that is intended to be used by the customer for the purpose of transporting items purchased or received from the business, or intended to be used to package take-out or delivery food. It’s important to note that there are a number of accepted uses for plastic bags that are permitted under Bylaw 10000 as listed in the exemptions. As well, this bylaw relates to plastic checkout bags – not all types of plastic. For example, plastic wrap is not part of this bylaw.



26% of plastic created world-wide is designed to be used once and then discarded. With 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic being produced worldwide, that’s a lot of unnecessary waste.

EXEMPTIONS

- Businesses can provide a plastic checkout bag to a customer if the bag has been returned to the business for the purpose of being reused by other customers. This is intended to support charitable organizations and thrift stores who commonly use this practice to cut costs for their customers and reuse materials already in circulation.
- Plastic bags may be used as packaging for
 - loose bulk food items such as fruit, vegetables, nuts, grains or candy;
 - loose small hardware items such as nails or bolts;
 - frozen food, meat, poultry or fish, whether pre-packaged or not;
 - flowers or potted plants;
 - prepared foods or bakery goods that are not pre-packaged; and
 - prescription drugs received from a pharmacy.
- Plastic checkout bags may also be used for
 - transporting live fish;
 - protecting linens, bedding or other similar large items;
 - protecting newspapers or other printed material intended to be left at the customer’s residence or place of business; or
 - protecting clothes after professional laundering or dry cleaning.
- The sale of plastic bags intended for use at a customer’s home or business is permitted under Bylaw 10000 provided that they are sold in packages of multiple bags.



COMPOSTABLE/ BIODEGRADABLE PLASTIC

The ban on plastic checkout bags and straws includes those that are labelled compostable/biodegradable as these items cannot be recycled and are currently not accepted at local composting facilities.

Ironically, these products can only go in the garbage. This is because compostable/biodegradable plastics are not guaranteed to breakdown in industrial compost facilities. Also, these materials may further contribute to the issue of plastic pollution, as they are not designed to biodegrade if littered in the natural environment.

Required standards and certifications are needed to ensure plastic products labelled compostable/biodegradable meet the requirements needed to compost effectively at existing processing facilities, which are designed to compost food scraps and yard waste in the region. Currently, because the products do not align with these standards, they don't break down completely, resulting in problems such as small flecks of plastic remaining in the end compost product, rendering the product contaminated.

Local governments like the City of Richmond do not have the authority to control compostable packaging design and certification requirements; however, the City is reaching out to senior levels of government to advocate for broader measures that will result in consistent standards and policies for compostable/biodegradable plastics.

Here are some additional facts that dispel common myths about compostable/biodegradable plastics:

- 1** Plastic that is labelled or described as compostable, degradable (example: biodegradable, oxodegradable, photodegradable), bioplastic, or made from plants or other biological materials:
 - Contaminates existing composting and recycling streams;
 - Is not approved for composting under provincial regulation; and
 - Is not designed to biodegrade if littered in the natural environment.
- 2** Plastic that is labelled or described as compostable or biodegradable is not accepted in Recycle BC's residential recycling program.
- 3** Plastics that are labelled or described as compostable, biodegradable, or made from plants are most likely to be removed as contaminants from composting and recycling streams and then disposed to landfill or incinerator.



Frequently Asked Questions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR BUSINESSES

The following questions were raised during community engagement with business operators. For a comprehensive list of questions and answers about Bylaw 10000, visit richmond.ca/singleuse.

What types of businesses are affected by Bylaw 10000?

Any business that operates in the City of Richmond is required to abide by Bylaw 10000.

Is a bag fee required, and does the business get to keep the revenue from bag fees?

The City is not requiring businesses to charge for alternative products at this time (i.e. paper or reusable bags). If a business would like to implement fees, it will be at the businesses own discretion.

Are there any types of plastic checkout bags that can be provided – such as those that are heavier weight and can be reused?

Bylaw 10000 will ban all checkout bags made of plastic, regardless of its thickness or weight.

Where can we purchase supplies that are acceptable for use under Bylaw 10000?

It is likely that the suppliers or vendors that businesses are currently using for items that are now banned will also offer alternatives that are accepted under Bylaw 10000. It is important to ask questions noted in Section 4 (page 18) when purchasing materials. Additionally, the City of Richmond has compiled a list of vendors that carry acceptable items, this list can be found at richmond.ca/singleuse.

How is the City going to enforce Bylaw 10000?

The City will begin enforcement by continuing education and working with businesses to support their compliance efforts. This will be a staged approach to ensure that businesses have all the information and resources necessary to successfully comply. Penalties will be laid only once sufficient education and notice has been issued to the business in non-compliance.

If customers request plastic straws, can we provide them?

No, plastic straws are banned for general use. However, if the person indicates that the straw is needed due to a disability or other accessibility need, a straw can be provided. Please note that a business cannot ask for proof of disability or inquire further details under the Human Rights Code of BC.

Is it really necessary to implement Bylaw 10000? Even if the containers are recyclable, customers may end up throwing them into the garbage bin.

In Richmond, it is estimated that more than 35 million plastic checkout bags, plastic straws and foam cups and containers are disposed of in the garbage each year. Also, plastic waste can make its way into the environment and cause significant damage to the ecology, pose a significant threat to wildlife and potentially contaminate the food chain. The goal of Bylaw 10000 is to encourage the reduction of unnecessary single-use items and move towards a more circular economy. An economy where the materials we use stay in circulation to be used, reused and recycled multiple times into new products.

What are the standards for recyclable or compostable?

As a collector on behalf of Recycle BC, the City encourages businesses to source reusable alternatives or single-use packaging that can be recycled in the City's Blue Box/Blue Cart program as part of Recycle BC's residential recycling requirements, or composted in the City's Green Cart program. For more information on acceptable alternatives please visit richmond.ca/recycle or richmond.ca/greencart.

Are biodegradable or compostable plastics allowed?

No, compostable/biodegradable plastics are not allowed as they are not accepted in the City's Green Cart program or the City's Blue Box/Blue Cart program as part of Recycle BC's residential recycling requirements, nor are they guaranteed to biodegrade if littered or sent to local industrial compost facilities. This is because standards and certifications are not required or aligned with the processing requirements for existing infrastructure that are designed to compost food scraps and yard waste in the region.

Are plastic containers made out of rice, corn, sugar cane or PLA (polylactic acid) approved alternatives?

No, these items are not accepted in the City's Blue Box/Blue Cart program as part of Recycle BC's residential recycling requirements. If these items are used to make plastic they likely undergo a chemical process that effectively creates a polymer based (plastic) material. In this process, unidentified additives may be incorporated creating an unknown blend of materials. As there are no required regulations for the composition of bio-based or compostable/biodegradable plastics, they are not accepted at this time.

Why are you promoting reusable bags when they are not environmentally friendly? After repeated use they will eventually be sent to the garbage dump and they are not hygienic.

The City is not promoting one alternative material over another. The goal is to reduce unnecessary waste and make residents aware of the environmental costs of all alternatives. The City encourages residents to opt for reusable bags that are machine washable and can withstand over 100 uses.

Are reusable grocery bags, containers and cups safe to use during COVID-19?

Yes, the BC Centre for Disease Control recently announced that COVID-19 transmission from handling reusable items has not been documented and as such, is a low risk to the community. Businesses may go back to normal activities regarding these items as long as COVID-19 safety measures known to reduce overall risk are maintained. For more information please visit: bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/employers-businesses/food-businesses.

Are other plastic materials acceptable, like plastic wrap?

At this point in time, Bylaw 10000 only applies to plastic checkout bags and plastic straws. It does not apply to other uses of plastic, and there are also some types of plastic bags permitted. Please see Exemptions on page 10.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM CUSTOMERS

The following questions provide guidance when training staff and for responding to questions from the community.

What can people/customers do to help?

People/customers can say no to unnecessary plastics when able, and remember to bring their reusable items with them when out in the community.

Why is the City of Richmond undertaking the issue of single-use items?

Single-use items create unnecessary waste that pollutes the environment, is harmful to wildlife, and is not a responsible or sustainable way to manage waste. In Richmond, it is estimated that more than 35 million plastic checkout bags, plastic straws and foam cups and containers are disposed of in the garbage each year. That's a lot of unnecessary waste that could be avoided by using better alternatives that are reusable, compostable or can be recycled multiple times. In short – single-use items are not sustainable.

When will businesses need to stop providing plastic checkout bags, plastic straws and foam food service ware?

Businesses must stop providing these materials by March 2022.

Why can't I get a plastic straw anymore?

The City of Richmond has banned Richmond businesses from providing plastic straws (including compostable and biodegradable plastic) to a customer. The Bylaw does allow businesses to provide plastic straws if a customer requests for disability or other accessibility need. Note that a business/employee cannot ask for proof of disability or further details under the Human Rights Code of BC. Residents can also purchase plastic straws in bulk to use at home.

Why can't I get a foam (polystyrene) container anymore?

The City of Richmond has banned Richmond businesses from providing prepared food or beverages to a customer in foam food service ware, which includes plates, cups, bowls, trays, cartons and hinged or lidded containers. Businesses can use alternative containers that are acceptable under the City's Green Cart program and Blue Box/Blue Cart program (which are part of Recycle BC's residential recycling program).

Why can't I get a plastic checkout bag anymore?

The City of Richmond has banned Richmond businesses from providing plastic checkout bags to a customer for the purpose of transporting items purchased or received from the business – including those intended to be used to package take-out or delivery food. Businesses can provide alternative bags such as reusable or paper bags.

Is there a fee for paper or reusable bags?

The City of Richmond is not requiring businesses to charge a fee for alternative products at this time. It will be at the businesses discretion if they would like to charge their customers for bags.

Studies have shown that reusable and paper bags have high environmental impacts too, why is the City still banning plastic checkout bags?

The goal is to reduce unnecessary waste and the amount of plastics that end up in the environment harming wildlife. Paper bags break down quickly in the environment if they are littered. Additionally, the City encourages residents to opt for reusable bags that are machine washable and can withstand over 100 uses to reduce the overall environmental impact.

Why can't you supply biodegradable or compostable plastic bags instead?

Compostable/biodegradable plastics are not allowed as they are not accepted in the City's Green Cart Program or the City's Blue Box/Blue Cart program as part of Recycle BC's residential recycling requirements, nor are they guaranteed to biodegrade if littered or sent to local industrial compost facilities. This is because standards and certifications are not required or aligned with the processing requirements for existing infrastructure that is designed to compost food scraps and yard waste in the region. As a result, the plastic doesn't fully break down, resulting in plastic flecks in the compost, which contaminates it.

Can I reuse old single-use plastic bags that I have at home?

Yes, the ban only applies to new and unused bags. You are welcome to reuse old bags that you may have at home, including bringing them into the store to put your purchases in.

What should I use as a trash bin liner now?

If you are using a plastic or metal trash bin you could reduce your environmental impact by not using a liner, dumping into a large garbage bag in your cart and washing out the trash bin once emptied. Alternatively, stores will still be able to sell trash bin liners and garbage bags.

What should I use to pick up after my pet now?

In some dog-friendly parks, plastic bags are available to scoop animal waste. These bags are not affected by the ban. You can also purchase these from most pet stores or general/grocery stores.

Are reusable grocery bags, containers and cups safe to use during COVID-19?

Yes, the BC Centre for Disease Control recently announced that COVID-19 transmission from handling reusable items has not been documented and as such, is a low risk to the community. Businesses may go back to normal activities regarding these items as long as COVID-19 safety measures known to reduce overall risk are maintained. For more information please visit: www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/employers-businesses/food-businesses





4

Selecting Acceptable Alternatives

TIPS FOR SELECTING ALTERNATIVES

Businesses are encouraged to source reusable alternatives or packaging that can be recycled in the City's Blue Box/Blue Cart program as part of Recycle BC's residential recycling requirements or composted in the City's Green Cart program.

Some alternatives are better than others as they use less energy to produce and can be reused for a long time. When making choices that are the best option for the environment, it's important to note the life cycle considerations outlined below.



PURCHASING TIPS

- If choosing compostable products, ensure the product does not contain poly- and per-fluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS) which are used as moisture or oil barriers. PFAS are chemicals that linger in the environment and can have negative health impacts.
- Choose unbleached paper bags over bleached and look for recycled content.
- Look for reusable bags with recycled plastic content to reduce environmental impact.
- Look for reusable bags that can be used at least 100 times and are washable.
- For net shopping bags, hemp may be better than cotton as it requires less energy to grow and harvest.

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN ASSESSING ALTERNATIVES

- Food service ware that is recycled or has a higher recycling rate at end-of-life is frequently found to have lower environmental impacts across all impact categories.
- Materials like paper that are both compostable and recyclable often result in higher energy savings when they are recycled instead of composted.
- Compostable paper-based food service ware is often found to increase rates of food scraps recycling.
- Plastic bags and straws labelled “compostable” or “biodegradable” are not permitted under the ban as they are not accepted at local composting facilities and cannot be recycled.

Did you know...

In a recent community survey,
Richmond residents told us:

- 97% have used reusable bags;
- 63% have used reusable cups; and
- 55% were likely to choose vendors that use compostable containers instead of foam – even if it costs more.

WHAT TO ASK SUPPLIERS WHEN SELECTING ALTERNATIVES

A list of potential vendors for alternative products is maintained on the City’s website at richmond.ca/singleuse. When selecting and sourcing alternatives, ask suppliers the following questions and weigh options based on the noted considerations.



**What are the alternative products made of?
What resources are required for their production?**

Considerations:

- Look for products that take steps to reduce the amount of resources in production – increasing the amount of recycled content is a great option.



Do alternatives include recycled content?

Considerations:

- Look for products that contain recycled content as this can help reduce greenhouse gases.



Can the product be reused multiple times?

Considerations:

- Look for items that can be used as many times as possible to keep them in use as long as possible.



The product is “eco-friendly” but what is it made of? Is there a plastic lining or has a coating been applied to make it waterproof? Is it just one material or a blend?

Considerations:

- If it’s made out of paper, ask if it has a lining.
- If there is a plastic lining: ask if it is regular plastic (commonly polypropylene) or compostable plastic (commonly polylactic acid).
 - If it is regular plastic lining, this item is an acceptable alternative under Bylaw 10000 as it is accepted in the City’s Blue Box/Blue Cart program as part of Recycle BC’s residential recycling requirements.
 - If the item is lined with compostable plastic, the item will not be accepted in either the recycling or compost in Richmond and should be disposed of in the garbage.
- If there is a coating, ask if it contains poly- and per-fluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS). PFAS are chemicals that are used as moisture or oil barriers – these chemicals often linger in the environment and negatively impact human health.
- Look for products that are made from one material as it is easier to recycle correctly. Products with multiple materials are often difficult to separate and recycle.



Can the product be recycled or composted?
If composted, does it contain compostable/
biodegradable plastic (which is not accepted
in the region)?

Considerations:

- If the item uses compostable/biodegradable plastic, the item is not an acceptable alternative under Bylaw 10000 as it will not be accepted in either the recycling or compost in Richmond and should be disposed of in the garbage.



Did you know...

The average Canadian uses between 200-300 bags each year. Similarly, approximately 57 million straws are used in Canada every day - which either end up in municipal waste streams or as litter in public places and the environment.

Each year, at least 8 million tonnes of plastic leak into the ocean – which is equivalent to dumping the contents of one garbage truck into the ocean every minute.

Around the world, plastic bags are consistently listed as a top ten item found littered on beaches.

SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES

The City has compiled an initial list of alternative materials that businesses and residents can use to select items that are compostable, reusable or can be recycled multiple times.



STRAWS

Replace plastic straws (including biodegradable/compostable plastic) with:

REPLACE WITH...	REUSE	RECYCLE	COMPOST
Fibre-based with no coating (plain paper)			•
Edible food straws (pasta, candy etc.)			•
Metal*	•		
Glass*	•		
Silicone*	•		
Bamboo*	•		•
Hard plastic*	•		

*Customers may bring these items to help reduce plastic waste. Please adhere to your food safety and sanitation plan.



CONTAINERS AND CUPS

Replace foam food service ware containers and cups with:

REPLACE WITH...	REUSE	RECYCLE	COMPOST
Aluminum containers		•	
Bamboo*	•		•
Ceramic*	•		
Fibre-based with no coating (plain paper)			•
Fibre-based with polypropylene plastic lining		•	
Glass*	•		
Recyclable plastic		•	
Reusable plastic plates, bowls and containers*	•		
Reusable travel mugs*	•		
Reusable stainless steel trays, plates and tiffins*	•		

*Customers may bring these items to help reduce plastic waste. Please adhere to your food safety and sanitation plan.

CHECKOUT BAGS

Replace plastic checkout bags (including biodegradable/compostable plastic) with:

REPLACE WITH...	REUSE	RECYCLE	COMPOST
Paper bags		•	•
Reusable plastic (woven polypropylene, non-woven polypropylene)*	•		
Natural cloth (cotton, hemp)*	•		

*Customers may bring these items to help reduce plastic waste. Please adhere to your food safety and sanitation plan.



REPLACEMENT BAG LIFE CYCLE CONSIDERATIONS

PAPER BAG

(Unbleached kraft paper)

Life Cycle Considerations:

- High impacts on resource and energy use, and water contamination during processing
- Has increased effect on the quality of water and uses four times more water than conventional plastic
- Low impact if discarded in the environment

WOVEN PLASTIC BAG

(Polypropylene (PP), thin plastic strips woven together e.g. rice bags)

Life Cycle Considerations:

- Durable, strong
- Uses higher amounts of fossil fuels in production, distribution and use (due to thickness)
- If used more than 16-98 times, environmental impact is less than a conventional plastic bag
- High impact if discarded in the environment

NON-WOVEN PLASTIC BAG

(Polypropylene (PP), melted PP granules, transformed into fibres and hot pressed into a textile)

Life Cycle Considerations:

- Durable, strong
- Uses higher amounts of fossil fuels in production, distribution and use (due to thickness)
- If used more than 11-59 times, environmental impact is less than a conventional plastic bag
- High impact if discarded in the environment

COTTON BAG

(100% natural fibre)

Life Cycle Considerations:

- Durable, lightweight, easy to wash
- High amount of resources and fossil fuels used in production (land use, fertilizers, energy use)
- Replace fossil fuel-based inputs with renewable inputs
- If used more than 131 times, environmental impact is less than a conventional plastic bag
- Low impact if discarded in the environment



Preparing Your Business for Bylaw Implementation

BUSINESS CHECKLIST

- 1** Read the Single-Use Plastic and Other Items Bylaw No. 10000 for a full understanding of retailer responsibility and participation.
- 2** Phase out plastic checkout bags, plastic straws and foam food service ware: use your current supply and completely switch to acceptable alternatives before March, 2022.
- 3** Check with your current supplier for reusable products and/or recyclable/paper products to order new acceptable products.
- 4** Train your employees, including tips on how to explain Bylaw 10000 requirements and respond to customers.
- 5** Provide customers with your businesses preferred option for alternative products.
- 6** Display City-provided communication materials (see Resource Centre on page 25).

TRAIN YOUR EMPLOYEES

- 1** Train employees about Bylaw 10000 criteria (including exemptions), how your business is meeting requirements and any new procedures that will be required.
- 2** Provide employees with tips on how to respond to questions or comments from customers. (See suggested Scenario Scripts on page 23 and Frequently Asked Questions on page 14).
- 3** Place copies of the City's customer factsheet (PDF) at checkout counters for employee reference and to share with customers.
- 4** Explain that the reason for Bylaw 10000 is to reduce unnecessary plastics and negative impacts on the environment like pollution in oceans, waterways and green spaces.
- 5** Encourage employees to always ask if the customer wants to use their own bags or needs an alternative bag being offered by the business.
- 6** Prepare scenarios that staff may experience and train them on how to respond.

SCENARIO SCRIPTS

Customer: I use plastic bags for garbage at home and it's extremely frustrating to hear that you won't provide them anymore.

Response: The City of Richmond has banned plastic checkout bags as they create unnecessary waste that results in pollution in oceans, waterways and green spaces. We have alternative bag options for you to carry your items home, and still have plastic garbage bags for sale to line garbage bins.

Customer is unhappy about the ban on plastic checkout bags.

Customer inquires why plastic bags are still being used.

Customer: Why are you still using plastic bags in your store – I thought they were banned?

Response: The City of Richmond bans plastic checkout bags but still allows the use of plastic bags for other purposes at this time. This is due to a number of factors – sometimes there are no better alternatives available yet, or in other cases, a plastic bag is needed for hygienic reasons or to secure items.

Customer provides their own bag.

Cashier: Do you need a bag today?

Customer: No thanks. I brought my own reusable bag.

Cashier: That's great! Thanks for bringing your reusable bag to reduce unnecessary waste.

When customers remember to bring their own bags, always take the time to notice and thank them!

Cashier: Do you need a bag today?

Customer: Yes please.

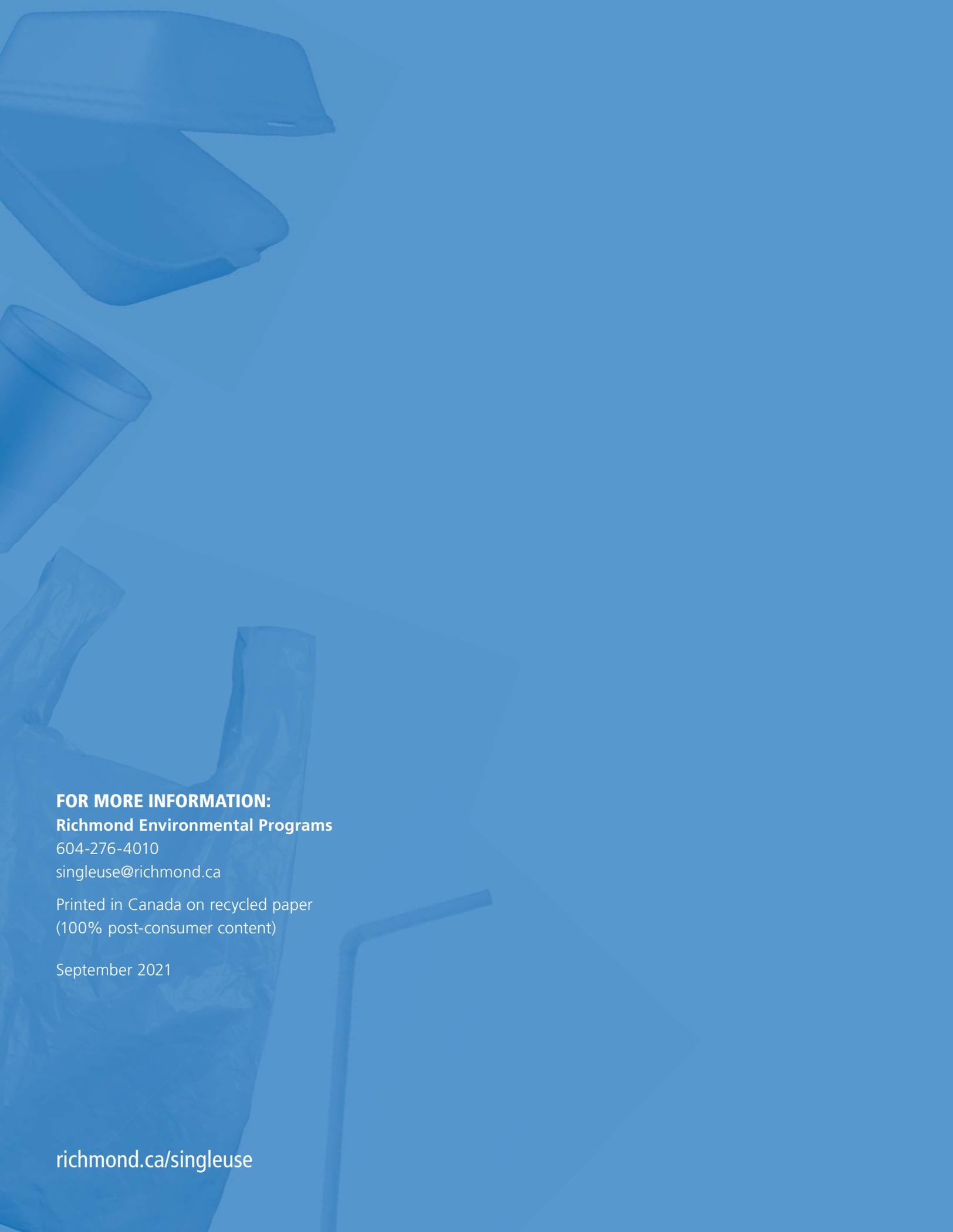
Cashier: Just want to let you know that we no longer offer plastic checkout bags; however, we do offer ... *(insert whichever option is available)*.

Customer: Why aren't you offering plastic checkout bags anymore?

Cashier: They City of Richmond has banned plastic checkout bags to reduce unnecessary plastic waste. I can offer you a ... *(insert whichever option is available)* instead if you would like? In the future, you can also bring a reusable bag from home to pack your items.

Customer: OK, thank you.

Customer without a bag.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Richmond Environmental Programs

604-276-4010

singleuse@richmond.ca

Printed in Canada on recycled paper
(100% post-consumer content)

September 2021

richmond.ca/singleuse