

# Getting Ready for the July 1 Plastic Bag Ban

County workers hand out hundreds of reusable canvas bags in Marina del Rey to remind shoppers about the new plastic bag ban in unincorporated parts of Los Angeles County.

- By **Paul Chavez**
- **Email the author**
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Dawn Minkin, 37, of Marina del Rey, leaves the Ralphs on Admiralty Way on June 21, 2011, with groceries in reusable canvas bags. A ban on plastic bags goes into effect at larger stores on July 1.

A pair of county workers staffed a table outside a Ralphs grocery store in Marina del Rey on Tuesday to hand out free reusable canvas bags and to remind shoppers that the "paper or plastic" option will soon no longer be available at large stores in unincorporated parts of LA County.

A ban on plastic bags at large stores goes into effect July 1, while smaller stores will be required to get rid of them starting Jan. 1. Paper bags will still be available to shoppers, but there will be a 10-cent fee per paper bag.

"We're here to give out free bags and get the word out," said Cynthia Marquez, who works with the environmental program at the county's Department of Public Works.

Marquez said she hoped to give away 400 to 500 reusable bags Tuesday as part of the county's efforts to inform residents of the plastic bag ban. Ralphs donated hundreds of green canvas bags to help educate shoppers.

The county's Board of Supervisors voted in November to ban the use of plastic bags in all unincorporated areas, including Marina del Rey.

Dawn Minkin, 37, of Marina del Rey, left the grocery store Tuesday with a shopping cart full of food and drinks inside new green canvas bags.

"I've been using reusable bags for the last five years," said Minkin, who is a personal assistant for a Marina del Rey family. "They go such a long way and it's such a great concept, eliminating waste and preserving our beautiful oceans."

A 2006 report by the environmental group Greenpeace called "Plastic Debris in the World's Oceans" found that 267 marine species are known to have suffered from entanglement or ingestion of plastic debris.

Minkin said it took awhile to get used to using reusable bags when she first started, but now she finds it comfortable.

She said it was an "easy way" to reduce trash and prevent "harmful, toxic" plastic from hurting the environment.

For more information, click **here** or call (888) CLEANLA.

What do you think of the ban on plastic bags in unincorporated parts of Los Angeles County? **Tell us in the comments.**