

Single Use Bag Reduction and Recycling Program

Letter of Support to the Ocean Protection Council
for their Master Environmental Assessment
on Single Use Plastic and Paper Bags



County of Los Angeles
Department of Public Works
Environmental Programs Division

April 16, 2009



BACKGROUND

**On January 22, 2008,
the County of Los Angeles
Board of Supervisors adopted
the County's Single Use Bag
Reduction and Recycling Program.**

PURPOSE

To reduce the environmental impacts of litter from single use bags, such as plastic and paper carryout bags.



PLASTIC BAG LITTER

- ❑ **Lightweight and easily windblown**
- ❑ **Carried by rivers to the ocean**
- ❑ **Tears apart into smaller pieces**



ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS OF PLASTIC BAG LITTER



May entangle sea life and appear as food to animals.



REUSABLE BAGS

- ❖ Reduce potential for litter
- ❖ Instill environmentally sustainable practices
- ❖ Conserve natural resources





WORKING GROUP

California Grocer's Association
American Chemistry Council
Plastic Bag Industry
Environmental Organizations
Local Government
Members of the Public

PROGRAM GOALS



- ★ Promote Reusable Bags
- ★ Increase Recycling of Plastic Bags
- ★ Increase Recycled Content of Paper Bags
(minimum 40%)
- ★ Litter Abatement



PARTICIPATING STORES

LARGE SUPERMARKETS

A full-line, self-service, retail store with gross annual sales of \$2 million or more

RETAIL STORES

Has over 10,000 square feet of retail space that generates sales tax and has a licensed pharmacy

VOLUNTARY STORE PROGRAM

STORE TRAINING

CUSTOMER INCENTIVES

PUBLIC AWARENESS





PROGRAM IMPACT

- Partner Cities
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Regional Impact

BENCHMARKS

Reduce plastic bag usage and increase recycling:
(using the total consumption for FY 2007-2008 as the baseline)

- 30% disposal reduction by July 1, 2010
- 65% disposal reduction by July 1, 2013

Falling short of these benchmarks may trigger actions towards banning single use plastic bags at affected stores.

Ordinance

If Program benchmarks are not achieved...

Board may consider adopting an ordinance to ban plastic bags at large supermarkets and retail stores in the unincorporated County areas.



OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Malibu – Ordinance to ban plastic bags

Santa Monica - Considering banning plastic bags

City of Los Angeles - Will ban plastic bags if per-bag fee legislation is not passed

Manhattan Beach – Needed to complete an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prior to passing an ordinance banning plastic bags

County of Los Angeles is preparing an EIR to accompany ordinance

California Ocean Protection Council (OPC)

- On April 23, 2009, the OPC will consider funding the preparation of a **Master Environmental Assessment** (MEA) on single-use plastic and paper bags.
- MEA would be a technical resource which could be incorporated into EIRs.
- MEA will not serve as an EIR.



TASK FORCE SUPPORT

Request that the Task Force submit a **Letter of Support** to the Ocean Protection Council for their preparation of a Master Environmental Assessment.

