



CITY OF OJAI

Community Development Department

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May 31, 2012

Retailer
Address
Ojai, CA 93023

RE: City-wide Prohibition on Single-Use Carryout Plastic Bags

Dear City Retailer:

Starting July 1st, the City of Ojai will be going greener! On April 10, 2012, the City Council passed an ordinance that prohibits distribution of single-use carryout plastic bags by retailers, with limited exceptions. The specific new regulation is Ordinance No. 817, entitled an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Ojai, California Adding a New Chapter 13, Entitled "Single-Use Carryout Bags," to Title 5 of the Ojai Municipal Code. A copy of Ordinance No. 817 is enclosed for your reference. The Ordinance goes into effect on Sunday, July 1, 2012. We are also enclosing a Frequently Asked Questions factsheet for your information.

The Ordinance defines "Single-Use Carryout Bags" and identifies which retail establishments are subject to these new requirements. Instead of plastic bags, retailers will need to provide recyclable paper bags or reusable bags to their customers. Exemptions are noted in Section 5-13.104 of the Ordinance and are generally limited to produce bags and bags for to-go meals or meals to be consumed on the premises. "Biodegradable" plastic bags are not exempt. Nor is it permissible for retailers to distribute used plastic bags, although consumers are allowed to bring in their own used plastic bags.

If you currently do not provide paper bags, you will need to contact your distributor(s) to ensure that you have these for distribution by July 1, 2012. For "Grocery Stores", which in the Ordinance, includes supermarkets, convenience stores, liquor stores, and gasoline stations, a fee of 10 cents (\$0.10)/per bag must be charged for paper bags, except for paper bags for to-go meals. There is no grace period or phase-in period, and retailers that do not comply with these requirements will be subject to fines.

The main grocery stores (Vons, Starr Market, Westridge Market, and Rainbow Bridge) are required to maintain records of the number of reusable bags and paper bags distributed by the store, and report these numbers on an annual basis to the City Community Development Department's Permit Technician. The exact methodology for these stores to use has not yet been developed, and City staff will be contacting the managers of each of these stores in the next few weeks to work out an effective and efficient tracking method. This may be as simple as tracking the quantities of reusable and paper bags purchased during the previous year (July 1 - June 30).

We sincerely thank you for your cooperation and for doing your part to reduce plastic bag waste. Should you have any questions regarding the Ordinance please contact the Community Development Department at 805-646-5581, x112.

Sincerely,



Rhonda K. Basore, City Clerk

Enc: Ordinance No. 817
Frequently Asked Questions Factsheet