

Styrofoam and Plastic Straw Bans

Styrofoam Ban

Background

Polystyrene is a petroleum-derived, thermos plastic material that can be molded into various shapes and forms. It is often mistakenly called “Styrofoam” which is a name trademarked by the Dow Chemical Company, for certain types of building materials and pipe insulation. Polystyrene has historically been used for plates, clamshell containers, hot and cold beverage cups, meat and vegetable trays, and egg cartons. Its manufacturing process generates the fifth-largest amount of hazardous wastes in the United States.

Although polystyrene breaks down into small pellets, it never fully degrades. Because it is lightweight, it can be easily carried on the wind or long distances floating in rivers and streams. It is the second-most common type of beach litter, making up as much as one-fifth of the storm-water debris recovered from waterways through stream clean ups.

Legislation

Based upon a recommendation from the Environment Commission, on December 11, 2017 the Mayor and Council ordinance amendment modifying Chapter 1 of the Rockville City Code to allow certain sections of Chapter 48 of the Montgomery County Code entitled “Solid Waste” to apply in the City. This ordinance prohibits use of polystyrene for food service products and packing materials and went into effect on January 1, 2019.

An estimated 400 restaurants, food service establishments, and shipping businesses were impacted by the ban. Those businesses must now use alternative materials that are either compostable or recyclable. The City’s polystyrene ban followed a similar ban by Montgomery County and preceded Maryland’s state-wide ban (effective July 2020).

Single-Use Plastic Straw Ban

Background

Single-use plastic drinking straws are targeted because of environmental problems they pose. Small, light, and non-biodegradable, plastic straws are easily swept into the ocean and break down into microplastic particles and frequently foul local watersheds and the Chesapeake Bay. With the support of the Rockville Environment Commission and the Human Service Advisory Commission, on June 17, 2019, the Mayor and Council adopted an ordinance to amend Chapter 20 of the City Code Entitled "Solid Waste" to establish a general prohibition on food service establishments’ ability to provide plastic straws. The amendment clarifies when these food service establishments may continue to make plastic straws available to their customers.

Legislation

This ban went into effect July 1, 2019 and aims to eliminate 70% of plastic drinking straw waste generated in the City. Under the City’s ban, the straws may not be offered by Rockville

businesses unless requested by a customer; recyclable or compostable straws are allowed. The City's plastic straw ban preceded a similar ban by Montgomery County (effective May 2021). While state government has considered legislation to ban plastic straws, no ban has yet passed at the state level.

Administration and Enforcement of Bans

One full time employee administers and implements this ordinance during routine fats, oils, and grease (FOG) inspections. Flyers in multiple languages are distributed when plastic straws are observed during inspections and a timeline is given for compliance. In addition, residents typically call to report food service establishments (FSE) that continue to use plastic straws. In such events, the FOG inspector visits the FSE and explains the reason for the prohibition.

Do You Know About Rockville's...

Ban on the Use and Sale of Polystyrene/ Styrofoam Takeout Containers?

After July 1, 2019, all food service establishments are prohibited from using polystyrene/styrofoam and are required to use compostable or recyclable disposable food service ware.

For more information, see Chapter 48, Sections 52-58 of Montgomery County code at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/code.

Prohibición del uso y venta de recipientes para llevar de poliestireno o espuma de estireno

A partir del 1 de julio de 2019, todos los establecimientos de servicios de alimentos tienen prohibido usar poliestireno o espuma de estireno y tienen obligación de usar vajillas desechables biodegradables o reciclables para el servicio de alimentos.

Para obtener más información, consulte el Capítulo 48, Secciones 52-58 del código del Condado de Montgomery en www.montgomerycountymd.gov/code.



禁止使用和出售聚苯乙烯/泡沫塑料外卖盒

自2019年7月1日起, 所有餐饮服务场所禁止使用聚苯乙烯/泡沫塑料产品, 并必须使用可堆肥或可回收的一次性餐饮用品。

有关更多信息, 请参见www.montgomerycountymd.gov/code上的第48章, 蒙哥马利县代码第52-58节。



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Environmental Management Division • Department of Public Works
environment@rockvillemd.gov • 240-314-8878

Do You Know About Rockville's...

Single-use Plastic Straw Prohibition?

After **July 1, 2019**, food service establishments are prohibited from offering single-use plastic straws or stirrers unless asked. Recyclable and compostable straws and stirrers are allowed. If your business model requires the use of straws, use and distribution is permitted. If asked, you are permitted to provide straws to customers.

For more information, see Section 20-61 of the city code at www.rockvillemd.gov/citycode.



Prohibición del uso de pajillas de plástico de un sólo uso

A partir del 1 de julio de 2019, los establecimientos de servicios de alimentos tienen prohibido ofrecer pajillas plástico o agitadores de un sólo uso, a menos que se los pidan. Si su modelo de negocio requiere el uso de pajillas, el uso y distribución están permitidos y, si lo piden los clientes, tienen permitido proporcionárselas. También están permitidas las pajillas y los agitadores reciclables o biodegradables.

Para mayor información, véase la Sección 20-61 del código de ciudad en www.rockvillemd.gov/citycode.

一次性塑料吸管禁令

自2019年7月1日起,餐饮服务场所将禁止提供一次性塑料吸管或搅拌棒,除非客户提出要求。如您的商业模式需要使用吸管,则允许吸管使用及分发,并且,如果客户要求,您可以向客户提供吸管。使用可回收及可堆肥吸管和搅拌棒也是允许的。

欲了解更多信息,请查看www.rockvillemd.gov/citycode上城市法则第20-61节内容。



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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Mayor & Council Meeting Date: December 11, 2017
Agenda Item Type: Discussion, Instructions and Possible Adoption
Department: PW - Environmental Management
Responsible Staff: Mark D Charles

Subject

Discussion and Instructions and Possible Adoption of an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 1 of the Rockville City Code Entitled "General Provisions" by Amending Section 1-8 Entitled "Application of County Law" So as to Allow Article VI Entitled "Disposable Food Service Products and Packaging Materials," Sections 48-52, 48-53, 48-54, 48-55, 48-56, 48-57, and 48-58 of Chapter 48 Entitled "Solid Waste" of the Montgomery County Code to Apply in the City.

Recommendation

The environmental staff of Public Works recommends that the Mayor and Council instruct the staff on revisions to the proposed ordinance amendment modifying Chapter 1 of the Rockville City Code to allow certain sections of Chapter 48 of the Montgomery County Code entitled "Solid Waste" to apply in the City. If no revisions are needed, staff recommends that the Mayor and Council move to adopt the ordinance at this evening's meeting.

Change in Law or Policy (remove this section if not needed)

The attached ordinance amendment to Chapter One of the Rockville City Code allows Chapter 48, entitled "Solid Waste" Article VI entitled "Disposable Food Service Products and Packaging Materials," sections 48-52, 48-53, 48-54, 48-55, 48-56, 48-57 and 48-58 of the Montgomery County Code to apply in the City. Those provisions of the Montgomery County Code prohibit the use and sale of polystyrene materials for food containers, and for packaging in the shipment of goods.

Discussion

This ordinance will extend an existing Montgomery County prohibition on the use of polystyrene materials for food and beverage containers and for fill materials for the shipment of goods. It potentially effects approximately 400 restaurants and food service establishments as well as several shipping businesses in the City.

Polystyrene is a petroleum-derived, thermoplastic material that utilizes a styrene chemical monomer that can be molded into a foam-like product through a fusion of polymer spheres, injection molding, foam molding, and extrusion-blow molding. The material has historically been used for food containers, plates, clamshell containers, hot and cold beverage cups, meat and vegetable trays, and egg cartons. The public often misidentifies the material as "Styrofoam" which is a Dow Chemical trademarked name only associated with certain types of building materials and pipe insulation.



Mayor & Council Meeting Date: June 17, 2019
Agenda Item Type: Discussion, Instructions and Possible Adoption
Department: PW - Environmental Management
Responsible Staff: Mark D Charles

Subject

Discussion, Instruction, and Possible Adoption of an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 20 of the City Code Entitled "Solid Waste" by Adding a New Article IV Entitled "Single Use Plastic Straw Prohibition" So as to Prohibit the Use of Single Use Plastic Straws and Stirrers by Food Service Establishments with Certain Exceptions

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Mayor and Council discuss the proposed ordinance and any comments received thereon. If the Mayor and Council does not want any additional changes, staff further recommends that the Mayor and Council adopt the attached Ordinance to amend Chapter 20 of the Rockville City Code through the following motions:

1. Motion to amend the ordinance as modified in Attachment B.
2. Motion to adopt the amended Ordinance to amend Chapter 20 of the Rockville City Code.

Change in Law or Policy

The amendment to Chapter 20 establishes a general prohibition on food service establishments' ability to provide plastic straws. The amendments also clarify when these food service establishments may continue to make plastic straws available to their customers.

Discussion

On May 13, 2019, the Mayor and Council introduced proposed amendments to City Code Chapter 20 to establish a new Article IV to prohibit single use plastic straws and create several exceptions to this prohibition.

City Staff have only received one comment since the amendments were introduced. The Restaurant Association of Maryland requested that *biodegradable straws* be added to the list of items that are not considered plastic straws in proposed section 20-60(4) [See Attachment A]. Staff agrees with this request and has added "polylactic acid (PLA) or other bioplastic straw recognized by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM)." The revision is included in Attachment B. This final language also includes the clarifying revision made by the Mayor and Council during introduction.