



## Town of Mammoth Lakes

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### Plastic Bag Ban FAQs

#### 1. What is the Plastic Bag Ban?

The Plastic Bag Ban prohibits the use of “single-use plastic carryout bags” as of March 1, 2016. A single-use carryout bag is a bag with handles, other than a reusable bag, provided at the check stand, cash register, point of sale, or other point of departure within a store, for the purpose of transporting food or merchandise out of the establishment.

#### 2. What is the purpose behind the Plastic Bag Ban?

Eliminating the use of plastic bags will reduce negative impacts on the environment, including reducing the use of natural resources and energy; reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and helping to eliminate waste in landfills, roadside litter, and pollution to lakes, streams, and soils. Most importantly it will contribute to a cleaner and more welcoming Town of Mammoth Lakes.

#### 3. What kinds of bags are allowed?

Customers are encouraged to bring reusable bags to all retail establishments in Mammoth Lakes. Reusable bags are defined as any bag with handles made of cloth or machine washable fabric, or a durable plastic bag with handles that is at least 2.25 mil thick and is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse. Paper bags containing a minimum of 40% post-consumer recycled content are also permitted.

Businesses may sell reusable bags and paper bags to their customers. Additionally, businesses may provide a reusable bag at no charge if it is distributed as part of an infrequent and limited time promotion.

#### 4. Why do I have to pay for paper or reusable bags?

The minimum fee of 10¢ is in place to help businesses pay for the additional cost of recycled content paper bags or reusable bags (as compared to plastic bags) as well as to encourage customers to bring their own bags in order to avoid paying the fee.

#### 5. I'm a business owner. Am I required to charge a minimum of 10¢ for paper bags?

Yes, the ordinance does require all business owners to charge this fee.

**6. Are there any exemptions?**

Yes, restaurants, take-out food establishments, and any business that receives 90% or more of its revenue from the sale of prepared food to be eaten on or off its premises are exempt from complying with the Plastic Bag Ban. Additionally, bags used for items such as produce, meat, small hardware items, or bulk food and dry cleaning bags are permitted.

**7. I'm a business owner. Am I required to keep any records regarding sales of bags?**

Yes, the ordinance requires all businesses to keep records of the sale of any paper bag for a minimum of three years.

**8. Is the Plastic Bag Ban a local or a state mandate?**

The Plastic Bag Ban was adopted by local Ordinance 15-06. In September 2014, California passed a statewide bag ban. However, there was opposition to the ban and a referendum will be on the ballot in November 2016 for voters to choose whether or not to repeal the statewide ban. If the statewide plastic bag ban is not repealed as part of that referendum, the statewide plastic bag ban will supersede the local ordinance. If the statewide bag ban is repealed, the local ordinance will remain in place.

**9. I still have more questions!**

Please contact Pam Kobylarz, Assistant to the Town Manager, at (760) 934-8989 x223 or [pkobylarz@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov](mailto:pkobylarz@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov).