Appendix B. Single Use Bag Policy Outreach and Educational Materials

Educational posters and signs:

**Per the City of Aspen’s waste reduction code:**
- To reduce waste in Aspen, grocers are not permitted to provide disposable plastic take-out bags.
- Paper bags are available for 20¢ each.
- Fees collected are ONLY used to reduce waste in our community.

Questions? Contact Liz O’Connell at the City of Aspen 970-920-5039

**Aspen’s single-use plastic bag ban**
- City of Aspen Ordinance requires grocery stores to charge $0.20 per paper bag
- Customers can bring their own bags, use a box or a bag from the bag bank (Groq Shop) for FREE.
- Plastic produce bags are ONLY for produce & deli items
- Colorado Food Assistance customers do NOT pay the $0.20 fee for a paper bag.

- Questions can go to Liz O’Connell at 429-1831 (City of Aspen)
Welcome to Aspen, a mountain town that takes pride in its environmental mindfulness.

- Per the City of Aspen’s waste reduction code, plastic bags are not available in grocery stores and paper bags can be purchased for 20 cents each.
- Please use this bag when you are shopping.
- For a list of locations where you can find free reusable bags, please visit [www.WasteFreeRoaringFork.org](http://www.WasteFreeRoaringFork.org) or call 970-429-1831

The City of Aspen, wants to make it easy for visitors to be part of our environmental stewardship. If you would like to have more of these bags to share with your guests, please contact Liz O’Connell or come by the Environmental Health and Sustainability offices at City Hall.

Liz.oconnell@cityofaspen.com OR 970-429-1831

Educational Video:

Video featuring Mayor of Aspen, Snowboarder Gretchen Bleiler, Musician John Oates, Skier Chris Davenport and other local celebrities, “Choose Reusable”: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssiSVFtTIoU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssiSVFtTIoU)

Educational Brief:
Single-use Bag Update, City of Aspen

Last Updated: March 7th, 2011

Contact: Ashley Cantrell, Environmental Health Department, AshleyC@ci.aspen.co.us

Background: Paper and plastic bags that are intended for single-use, like those commonly provided at grocery and convenience stores, are wasteful and unnecessary. The City of Aspen encourages all residents and visitors to bring reusable bags, boxes or other containers to use instead of disposable bags.

The City understands that many people make the effort to recycle these bags at our local drop-off center. While recycling is important, the cost of transporting these bags to recycling facilities around the country is very high. Both types of bags require natural resources and energy to make and transport.

Paper or Plastic:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAPER</th>
<th>PLASTIC</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>Americans consume more than 10 billion paper bags/yr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>2,511 BTU's of energy for one paper bag.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transportation, processing, cleaning, packaging and shipping of paper from trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollution</td>
<td>Air and water pollutants are associated with both types of bags. Both bags are responsible for polluting our cities, towns and waterways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycling</td>
<td>1,444 BTU's of energy to recycle 1 lb. of paper. Ten to fifteen percent of paper bags are recycled by consumers.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Policy Update:

At a City Council worksession in January, 2011, Council directed staff to draft an ordinance for first reading. The proposed ordinance requires grocery stores to charge
$0.15 for every paper or plastic bag that is used at checkout. The collected fee would be distributed into the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Fund*, a City of Aspen fund.

**Where would the money go?**

The *Waste Reduction and Recycling Fund* would have very specific and identified uses and would not, at any point, be associated with the City’s general fund.

Funds shall be used for the following projects, in the following order of priorities:

1. Campaigns conducted by the City of Aspen and begun within 365 days of the effective date of the ordinance, to:
   
   A. Educate residents, businesses, and visitors about the impact of trash on the City’s environmental health, the importance of reducing the number of disposable carryout bags entering the waste stream, and the impact of disposable carryout bags on the waterways and the environment; and
   
   B. Establish a public-private partnership to provide reusable carryout bags to residents and visitors; and
   
   C. Provide reusable carryout bags to residents and visitors.

2. Ongoing campaigns conducted by the City of Aspen to:
   
   A. Provide reusable bags to both residents and visitors; and
   
   B. Create public educational campaigns to raise awareness about waste reduction and recycling;

3. Funding programs and infrastructure that allows the Aspen community to reduce waste and recycle.

4. Purchasing and installing equipment designed to minimize trash pollution, including, recycling containers, and waste receptacles;

5. Funding community cleanup events; and

6. Maintaining a public website that educates residents on the progress of waste reduction efforts.

**The Importance of a Regional Approach:** The City of Aspen is currently working with representatives from the Towns of Basalt and Carbondale to develop a regional campaign that helps visitors and residences reduce the number of single-use bags in the Roaring Fork Valley. By working as a region, all towns and cities have a larger impact on the environment and can create stronger policies.

**What about Compostable Bags?** Although compostable bags are becoming increasingly used for programs like food waste composting and animal waste collection,
these bags are not a suitable alternative to paper and plastic bags used for grocery shopping. Compostable bags, meaning bags made from a material designed to break down completely in a commercial compost facility, are energy intensive to produce and transport. In addition, these bags must be collected and processed in a commercial compost facility. The only available facility is currently located at the Pitkin County Landfill, and around the country, compost facilities like ours are experiencing challenges with processing large quantities of these types of bags.

Don’t they break down in the landfill?

All bags, paper, plastic or compostable, use space in the landfill. Regular plastic bags never fully break down and never disappear. Compostable bags and paper bags overtime will break down completely under the right conditions with air and water present. The Pitkin County Landfill is a dry landfill, which means moisture and air are absent. The only suitable disposal options for bags are as follows:

- Plastic bags – Recycle in the plastic bag bin at the Rio Grande Recycle Center
- Paper bags – Recycle in the corrugated cardboard bin or compost in a commercial compost facility
- Compostable bags – Compost in a commercial compost facility.

Resources:

Need a reusable bag? Stop by the 2nd floor of City Hall, Environmental Health, to pick up a free reusable bag.

Comments:

The City of Aspen welcomes public comment on this topic. Please stay-tuned for updates.