



Polystyrene Ban

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Effective December 3, 2022

On November 2, 2021 the City Council unanimously voted to adopt Ordinance No. 2380, banning the distribution or sale of prepared food or beverages in polystyrene containers in the City of Arcadia. Please refer to Ordinance No. 2380 for the complete regulations.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is polystyrene?
2. Why has the City banned polystyrene?
3. When does the ban go into effect?
4. Who will be required to comply with the new ordinance?
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1. What is polystyrene?

Polystyrene, is a type of plastic that can be manipulated in many ways for various uses, including food packaging. [Expanded polystyrene](#), commonly known as Styrofoam, is a form of polystyrene often found in to-go food and beverage packaging due to its low cost and insulation properties.

2. Why has the City banned Polystyrene?

The City is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and clean community, free of unnecessary waste and debris. Polystyrene is non-recyclable at most facilities and never fully biodegrades. Products made of polystyrene are often found littering streets and polluting local waterways, and ultimately end up in landfills or the ocean.

For these reasons, the City of Arcadia, along with many other cities in California, have chosen to ban the use of polystyrene containers for prepared food and beverages in favor of more sustainable materials.

3. When does the ban go into effect?

Beginning on **December 3, 2022**, food providers may no longer offer prepared food or beverages in polystyrene containers in the City of Arcadia.

4. Who will be required to comply with the new ordinance?

The Ordinance applies to all food providers that operate in the City, including restaurants, cafeterias, and 3rd party food delivery services such as Door Dash and Uber Eats.



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5. What type of containers are prohibited?

Polystyrene containers consisting of cups, plates, bowls, and clamshells and other products used primarily for to-go food use.

Polystyrene containers are often stamped with the recycle code “6,” which is typically located at the bottom of the container. All polystyrene containers, regardless of whether they contain a recycle code of “6,” would be prohibited. If you are unsure of whether or not a container is made from polystyrene, contact your supplier.

6. What type of containers are allowed?

Alternative packaging materials include recyclable plastics, coated or uncoated paper, bagasse/molded fibers, aluminum, or other products not made of polystyrene.

7. Are there any exceptions?

The Ordinance does not apply to food items packaged in polystyrene containers outside the City, polystyrene containers used for raw poultry, meat or fish, or for polystyrene containers required to be purchased under contract in the one-year period prior to enforcement of the Ordinance. Exemptions would be considered in certain emergency related situations.

The City may allow exemptions in select circumstances of hardship, for a period of one year and subject to an annual renewal. Please contact the Development Services Department for more information on the exemption process.

8. What are the penalties for non-compliance?

The goal of the Ordinance is to promote long term habits that will reduce negative impacts on the environment. Education and information is the focus, prior to enforcement. As such, warning notices will be issued first two violations, and subsequent violations would be subject to the administrative citation procedures found in Section 1200 et seq. of the Arcadia Municipal Code. Food providers and business owners are encouraged to reach out to Development Services Department who can assist with the process and provide additional resources, or visit our website at ArcadiaCA.gov/lessplastic.

9. What if I have questions?

Development Services Department Staff are available to answer any questions you may have. Please contact us at (626) 574-5415 or email us at DSD@ArcadiaCA.gov. More information is also available at ArcadiaCA.gov/lessplastic.