



OLD NORTH BRIDGE

TOWN OF CONCORD

TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE
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CHRISTOPHER WHELAN, TOWN MANAGER

Dear Concord Business Owner,

You are likely aware that Concord residents voted at Town Meeting last April to enact a plastic bag reduction bylaw. The new bylaw, which goes into effect on January 1, 2016, bans the use of thin-film, single-use checkout bags at retail stores and grocery stores in Concord. A copy of the bylaw is attached along with a flyer that can be posted or distributed to notify customers of the plastic bag reduction bylaw and to encourage them to utilize reusable bags. I have asked my staff to schedule an informational meeting(s) in the near future, and below are some highlights of this new bylaw and some key definitions:

Highlights:

1. Thin-film single-use plastic bags shall not be distributed, used, or sold for checkout or other purposes at any retail or grocery store within the Town of Concord starting January 1, 2016.
2. Retail and grocery stores are strongly encouraged to make reusable checkout bags available for sale to customers at a reasonable price.
3. Thin-film plastic bags used to contain dry cleaning, newspapers, produce, meat, bulk foods, wet items, and other similar merchandise, typically without handles, are still permissible.
4. Customers are encouraged to bring their own reusable or biodegradable shopping bags to stores.

Key Definitions:

1. *Thin-film single use bags:* Typically with plastic handles, these are bags with a thickness of 2.5 mils or less and are intended for single-use transport of purchased products.
2. *Checkout bag:* A carryout bag provided by a store to a customer at the point of sale. Checkout bags shall not include bags, whether plastic or not, in which loose produce or products are placed by the consumer to deliver such items to the point of sale or checkout area of the store.
3. *Grocery store:* A retail establishment where more than fifty percent (50%) of the gross floor area is devoted to the sale of food products for home preparation and consumption, which typically also offers home care and personal care products.
4. *Retail store:* An establishment that offers the sale and display of merchandise within a building.
5. *Reusable checkout bag:* A bag, with handles, that is specifically designed for multiple use and is made of thick plastic, cloth, fabric, or other durable materials.

Thank you for your attention to this new bylaw and for your assistance. You can stay informed by visiting www.concord.ma.gov. The informational meeting date(s) will be posted when scheduled. For questions, you can contact Rod Robison, Environmental Services Program Administrator at (978) 318-3241 or via e-mail: rrobison@concordma.gov.

Sincerely,

Christopher Whelan
Town Manager