

To: Regional and Corporate Services Committee  
From:Carolynn Lane, Environmental Services Coordinator  
Vanessa Hart, Environmental Services Technician

Date: 2024-07-11  
File No: 5365-28-22007

**Subject: Provincial Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation**

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## INTENT

This report is intended to advise the Fraser Valley Regional District Board of information pertaining to new requirements within the Province of British Columbia's Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation. Staff is not looking for a recommendation and has forwarded this information should members want more clarification or to discuss the item further.

## BACKGROUND

In British Columbia, over 2.5 million tonnes of waste are disposed of each year – an average of 500 kg per person<sup>1</sup>. Of this waste, an estimated 10-20% is plastic, including plastic packaging, food containers, beverage containers, bags, overwrap and other durable plastic items<sup>2</sup>.

In December 2023, the Province introduced the Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation of the *Environmental Management Act* to phase out single-use plastics as part of the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan. New restrictions under this Regulation come into effect July 15, 2024. A summary of these changes to the sale and distribution of single-use plastics in B.C. is provided below.

## DISCUSSION

Beginning on July 15, 2024, further restrictions will be placed on the sale, distribution, and provision of plastic shopping bags, food service ware (i.e. disposable take-out containers and some packaging used to hold food or drinks), biodegradable and compostable plastics province-wide. Minimum fees will also apply to alternative shopping bags offered at checkout. A breakdown of these changes is provided below:

- Shopping Bags
  - Businesses will no longer be able to provide customers with single-use plastic checkout shopping bags
  - Customers must be charged at least \$2.00 for new reusable shopping bags or \$0.25 for paper shopping bags

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<sup>1</sup> [Municipal Solid Waste Disposal in B.C. \(1990-2021\)](#) (Environmental Reporting B.C.), 2021.

<sup>2</sup> [Preventing Single-Use and Plastic Waste in British Columbia Intentions Paper](#) (Province of B.C.), 2022.

- Plastic produce bags are not considered “shopping bags”
- Food Service Accessories
  - Disposable plastic utensils can no longer be offered to customers
  - Wooden or bamboo cutlery may only be provided by request or at self-serve areas
- Food Service Ware
  - Certain hard-to-recycle plastic takeout containers and utensils can no longer be sold or distributed by businesses including:
    - Biodegradable plastics and oxo-degradable plastics<sup>3</sup>
    - “Compostable” plastics<sup>4</sup>
      - Compostable liners for municipal compost collection are exempt
    - Polystyrene foam (Styrofoam)
  - Plastic food wrap may still be sold and distributed up until 2028, and polystyrene foam meat trays will not be prohibited until 2030
- Exemptions under the Regulation exist for places such as care facilities to support necessary medical, health or accessibility needs.

Additional details on each type of plastic being prohibited under the Regulation and alternatives are attached to this memo. Compliance concerns can be reported to the Province by email to [plastics@gov.bc.ca](mailto:plastics@gov.bc.ca).

The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) and the City of Chilliwack’s upcoming Reusable Food Packaging Pilot Project, aimed to provide reusable food containers for participating restaurants, will assist with implementation of this new provincial regulation.

## CONCLUSION

The upcoming additions to the provincial Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation seek to restrict the sale and distribution of several different problematic single-use plastic materials. The Regulation supports efforts to prevent single-use and plastic waste of these hard-to-recycle materials, divert more waste from landfills, and shift to more of a circular economy.

## COMMENTS BY:

Stacey Barker, Director of Regional Services/Deputy CAO: Reviewed and supported.

Kelly Lownsbrough, Director of Corporate Services/CFO: Reviewed and supported.

Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer: Reviewed and supported.

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<sup>3</sup> Oxo-degradable plastics are plastics that contain additives that break down through oxidation into potentially harmful microplastics.

<sup>4</sup> “Compostable” plastics are only compostable under specific conditions, conditions which are not met during most commercial composting processes. As a result these plastics often end up in a landfill.