



Official Notice of West Norriton Township

Ordinance 2022-757 Ban of Single Use Plastic Carry Out Bags



**SINGLE-USE PLASTIC
CARRY OUT BAGS**



**PAPER BAGS MADE FROM
AT LEAST 40%
POST-CONSUMER RECYCLED
CONTENT**



REUSABLE TOTE BAGS

Beginning on Saturday April 22, 2023 commercial establishments in West Norriton Township are prohibited from providing single use plastic carry out bags and non-compliant paper bags to customers.

West Norriton Township
1630 West Marshall Street, Jeffersonville, PA 19403
Learn more at: <https://www.westnorritontwp.org/471/Single-Use-Plastic-Carry-Out-Bag-Ordinan>

Ordinance 2022-757

Ban of Single Use Plastic Carry Out Bags

On November 9, 2022, the West Norriton Township Commissioners passed an ordinance prohibiting retail establishments from providing single-use plastic bags and non-recycled paper bags to their customers beginning on April 22, 2023. Retail establishments may provide customers a recycled paper bag if the bag is provided to the customer for a charge of not less than \$0.15 per bag. These recycled bags must contain a minimum of 40% post-consumer recycled content.

The use of single-use plastic bags has numerous severe environmental impacts, including increasing greenhouse gas emissions. It is estimated that by 2030, plastic production will surpass coal for climate change impact. Plastics also contribute to litter, add to ground level ozone formation, acid deposition, and solid waste generation, as well as harm wildlife. Microplastics can enter the human body through ingestion and inhalation where they may be taken up in various organs and can affect health. The goals of the Commissioners in passing this ordinance are to conserve resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce waste, litter, and water pollution, and to protect the public health and welfare.

Enforcement of this ordinance will not occur until 6 months after enactment, to allow establishments to prepare for this change and use up any old inventory of plastic bags.

You can do your part to help the environment by bringing your own reusable bags when you go shopping.

Retail establishments are required to post signs informing customers that single-use plastic bags and non-recycled paper bags will no longer be provided. These signs should also explain what type of bags and purchases are impacted by the ordinance. To help you meet this requirement, we have designed a sign suitable for your use. You can access it by going to the West Norriton Township plastic bag ban webpage (insert link to webpage here). There will also be a limited supply of printed signs available at the Township building.

A list of vendors providing compliant bags can be found on our webpage, and frequently asked questions are answered below.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When does the ordinance go into effect? The ordinance was passed in November 2022 and goes into effect on April 22, 2023.

2. Why was the ordinance passed? Single use plastic bags are harmful to the environment and wildlife and are costly to taxpayers. This ordinance will help minimize litter and environmental impacts and reduce waste management costs.

3. What is banned by this ordinance? Single use plastic bags – any bag made predominately of plastic regardless of thickness, and non-recycled paper bags are banned by this ordinance.

4. I have a stock of plastic bags can I use these before making the switch? Existing supplies of plastic bags and noncompliant paper bags can be used up to the enforcement date of April 22, 2023 without repercussions.

5. Which type of businesses does this affect? This ordinance affects Retail establishment, which includes any store, commercial establishment, or any other location that sells perishable or nonperishable goods, including, but not limited to, clothing, food, and personal items, directly to the customer and is located within or doing business within the geographical limits of West Norriton Township. Retail establishments include:

- drugstores
- pharmacies
- supermarkets
- grocery stores
- farmers markets
- convenience food stores
- food marts
- food trucks
- commercial entities engaged in the retail sale of a limited line of goods such as milk, bread, soda and snack food
- public eating establishments (i.e., a restaurant, take-out food establishment, or any other business that prepares and sells prepared food to be eaten on or off its premises)
- business establishments that sell clothing, hardware, or any other nonperishable goods.

6. How do I know if the paper bags I am using are Acceptable? Bags distributed to customers must contain a minimum of 40% post-consumer recycled content, contain no old growth fiber, and are labelled in a highly visible manner as recyclable with the post-consumer recycled content of the bag.

7. Does the 40% recycled content requirement apply to all paper bags? Yes – the 40% requirement applies to all paper bags regardless of size.

8. Can businesses charge customers for reusable bags? Yes – retail establishments may provide reusable bags to customers if the reusable bag is provided to the customer for a charge of not less than \$0.15 per bag. A reusable bag means a reusable, carryout polypropylene bag that has stitched handles or a reusable bag made of cloth, other machine-washable fabric, or other material that is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse.

9. What is the fine for violating this ordinance? Retail establishments that violate this ordinance, after an initial written warning notice has been issued for that violation, will be liable for a violation. Fines are set at \$50.00 for the first offence; \$100.00 for the second offence; and \$200.00 for the third or any subsequent offence.

10. What are the signage requirements? Retail establishments are required to post signs at all points of sale informing customers that single-use plastic bags and non-recycled paper bags will no longer be provided as of April 22, 2023.

11. Who do I contact if I have additional questions? More information can be found at <https://www.westnorritontwp.org/471/Single-Use-Plastic-Carry-Out-Bag-Ordinan> or by calling West Norriton Township at 610-631-0450.



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