

## Plastic Bag Reduction Bylaw - Best Practices for Businesses

The Ashland Sustainability Committee offers you these best practices to assist business owners to comply with the **Plastic Bag Reduction Bylaw** effective July 26, 2018. Please contact [sustainability@ashlandmass.com](mailto:sustainability@ashlandmass.com) if you need assistance. We appreciate your help making Ashland a sustainable community!

To be compliant, ensure your retail establishment has discontinued the use of thin-film plastic checkout bags. To play a visible leadership role you can actively encourage your customers to use reusable bags, which are generally the most environmentally sustainable option. **When shoppers bring their own bags, stores save money.**

### Suggestions for Stores regarding Plastic Bag Reduction Bylaw

- **Signage**
  - Signs can encourage and remind your customers to bring reusable bags.
  - Text suggestion: "Remember your reusable shopping bags."
- **Employee Education:** The success of the transition depends on many things, but employee education regarding the use of reusable bags is one of the most important.
  - Cashiers could ask: "Did you bring a reusable bag?"
    - If the answer is no, cashiers could offer to sell reusable bags to customers. This is a best practice in other cities with bylaws. The statement will remind customers to bring reusable bags.
  - Baggers could ask customers with their own reusable bags if they have a preference about how they would like them to be used.
    - Many reusable bags can hold quite a bit of weight, and often times that is more than some customers would like to carry. Baggers could ask: "How heavy would you like your bags?"
    - Baggers could ask if customers designate specific bags for various types of purchases, particularly at grocery stores (e.g., meat, produce, dry goods, etc.).
- **Sale of reusable bags:** Stores are strongly encouraged to make reusable checkout bags available for sale to customers at a reasonable price. Reusable bags are great for your store advertising.
  - Be sure to have a sufficient supply of reusable bags at all registers
  - Try to offer different types and sizes of reusable bags, if space allows.
  - Reusable bags that the store supplies should preferably be made of cloth, fabric, or unwoven, washable materials with stitched handles.
- **Incentives:** Businesses are encouraged to offer special incentives so that customers bring their own reusable bags.
  - Consider offering 5 cents off for each reusable bag a shopper uses.
  - Consider offering raffle tickets for shoppers who bring reusable bags.
  - Consider offering an incentive for repeat users of reusable bags (punch cards)
- **Use of paper bags:**
  - Paper bags offered shall be made from at least 40% post-consumer recycled materials.