

NEW REGULATIONS

SINGLE-USE PLASTIC STRAWS & EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE



On Dec. 13, 2018, City Council approved an ordinance which regulates plastic straws and expanded polystyrene (aka Styrofoam). 2019 is a year of transitioning away from these single-use products before the regulations will be fully enforced. City staff and volunteers will be working with businesses and partnering with organizations to identify best practices, refine definitions and exemptions, and report back to City Council as we learn. We will be researching and developing alternative product lists for business owners to reference.

PLASTIC DRINKING STRAWS

Effective Jan. 1, 2019 in St. Petersburg, FL, plastic straws can be given only upon customer request, and it is recommended that alternatives are also given only on request only to minimize waste and costs.

In 2019, drive-through food service establishments are exempt from request only requirement, and may automatically provide a straw of any kind if the drive-through business chooses to do so.

Starting Jan. 1 of 2020, no single-use plastic straws are allowed, including in drive-through food service establishments. Alternative and eco-friendly products are required, such as straws made of paper, metal, pasta, or other biodegradable material. It is recommended (not required at this time) that alternatives are given upon customer request only to minimize waste and costs.



Are there any exemptions?

Hospitals are exempt and may provide any straw as-needed. Retailers like grocery stores and convenient stores may still sell packs of plastic straws to shoppers. The intent of the exemptions is to make accessible what is needed for any medical or physical reason, and city staff and volunteers will work with businesses and community to that end.

What businesses will most likely be affected?

Businesses which pertain to food, drinks, and entertainment, such as:

- Amusement Parlor / Game Room
- Bar / Nightclub
- Caterer
- Concessionaire
- Theater
- Stadium
- Coffee Shop / Tea House
- Restaurant: Takeout, Dine-In, or Delivery

Enforcement



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EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE (EPS, AKA STYROFOAM™)

Starting Jan. 1, 2019 in St. Petersburg, FL, no EPS is allowed in City facilities, by City contractors, and on City right-of-way. No penalties will be given for the first year to make this a transition period for education. Our intent is to reach all permittees prior to the annual permit renewals on Oct. 1, 2019. Enforcement will begin Jan. 1, 2020. This does not affect grocery stores or areas of commercial business on private property – although the hope is that they will transition voluntarily upon a successful program.



The following persons would not be allowed to distribute EPS products on city-owned property or rights-of-way:

Businesses which pertain to food, drinks, and entertainment, such as:

- City contractors
- Pushcart vending permittees
- Sidewalk café permittees
- Food truck rally permittees
- Park permittees
- Outdoor public assembly permittees
- Minor easement permittees
- Mobile food establishment permittees

Are there any exemptions?

The distribution of EPS on private property is not regulated. These specific examples are exempt from the EPS regulation for city facilities and city right-of-way:

- Pre-packaged foods that food service providers distribute to their customers and that have been filled and sealed prior to receipt by the food service provider
- Expanded polystyrene products used for the storage of raw meat, pork, poultry, fish, and seafood products by a food service provider
- Any city contract, lease, or concession agreement entered into prior to the effective date

Enforcement



SINGLE-USE CARRY OUT BAGS - PLASTIC AND PAPER

City Council will continue to evaluate options for single-use carry out bags in 2019. A fact sheet about the latest options under consideration and City Council Committee dates can be found here: [Single-Use Carry Out Bag Regulations](http://www.stpete.org/sustainability/index.php) or by visiting www.stpete.org/sustainability/index.php.



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