

**VILLAGE OF RYE BROOK
CARRY-OUT BAG LAW
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Summary of Law
Effective June 1, 2019**

- Single-use plastic bags will be banned in **ALL stores**.
- All covered stores are required to charge \$0.10 per paper bag.
- The stores keep the bag fees to offset any bag costs.
- The following single-use bags are permitted without charge:
 - Meat and produce plastic bags
 - Newspaper bags
 - Dry cleaning bags
 - Bags used to contain unwrapped prepared/bakery goods
 - Paper prescription drug bags
- The bag fees must be displayed separately on customer receipts.
- Any covered store violating this local law is subject to a fine

Q. Why do we need a reusable shopping bag law?

A. The purpose of this law is to improve the environment in the Village of Rye Brook by encouraging the use of reusable checkout bags and banning single-use retail bags. Non-biodegradable plastic bags often end up polluting our open spaces and waterways, clogging sewers, endangering marine life and causing unsightly litter. These bags last hundreds of years in landfills and are a potential source of harmful chemicals when they do break down. This legislation continues Rye Brook's leadership in protecting our environment for our children by moving away from our "disposable" habit to a "reusable" one.

Q. What is considered a single-use plastic bag?

A. Any single-use carryout bag that is less than 2.25 mils (thousandths of an inch) thick and is made predominantly of plastic derived from petroleum or from bio-based sources, such as corn or other plant sources, that is provided by a retail establishment or a Village facility to a customer at the point of sale.

Q. Why is there a charge for paper bags?

A. The 10-cent fee will encourage residents to bring their own bags. Studies show that bag fees reduce single-use bag usage. Prior to being given a paper bag, a customer will be asked whether he/she wants a bag and be informed that it will cost 10 cents. The bag fees must be included on the customer's receipt. Merchants will keep the 10-cent fee to offset any bag costs.

Q. Is this a new concept?

A. No. Many communities, just like Rye Brook, have understood the need to solve their litter and pollution problems by passing similar laws. Hastings-on-Hudson, New Castle, Larchmont, Mamaroneck, and Rye City are all municipalities within Westchester that have passed laws. There are hundreds of towns, cities and other countries that have similar laws.

Q. Why aren't paper bags banned?

A. The objective of the law is to promote the use of reusable bags by reducing our dependence on single-use bags. Based on the experience of other communities, it is believed that this legislation will

significantly reduce the number of single-use plastic and paper bags used in Rye Brook. However, when shoppers forget their bags they will still have the option of using paper bags to carry their purchases out of the store.

Q. Won't the law hurt business owners?

A. On the contrary, national research has shown the long-term effects on stores are very positive. Reducing the number of single-use bags used by shoppers can also reduce costs for business owners.

Q. To whom does the Reusable Bag Law apply?

A. Any establishment engaged in the retail sale of consumer, personal, or household items, including but not limited to supermarkets, food service establishments, pharmacies, convenience stores, apparel stores, home or hardware stores, stationery and office supply stores, and other establishments that provide carryout bags to customers in which to place purchased items.

Q. When does the legislation go into effect?

A. The local law shall take effect on June 1, 2019 to allow retail establishments time to exhaust their existing inventory of single use carryout bags and convert to alternative packaging materials.

Q. What is the penalty for non-compliance?

A. Any covered store violating this law would receive a warning for the first violation, may be subject to a fine in the amount of \$150 for the second violation, \$200 for the third violation, and \$250 for the fourth and subsequent violations occurring within a one-year period.

Q. I use my bags as garbage bags? This just means that I will have to buy more plastic bags?

A. Consider not using plastic bags in your small wastebaskets. Using a large plastic bag for your garbage can hold significantly more garbage than plastic shopping bags. Also, some manufacturers offer garbage bags that claim a minimum 60% recycled content. You can also significantly reduce your overall trash and thus your need for plastic garbage bags by composting. Rye Brook has a Food Scrap Recycling Program that's free for residents to use. Food scraps of all types can be collected and drop off in the rear parking lot of Village Hall. For more information about the program, call (914) 939-0077.

Q. Aren't reusable bags made of plastic too?

A. Reusable bags can be made from a variety of materials such as from fabric like canvas, woven synthetic fibers, or a thick plastic that is more durable than disposable plastic bags, allowing multiple uses. Also, many times recycled plastic is used in the reusable bags. Reusable bags, even when made out of plastic, significantly reduce the environmental impact created by single-use bags.

Q. I've heard that reusable bags contain a lot of bacteria, so what do I do about that?

A. Assume that any food that you purchase at the store has bacteria and needs to be cleaned – especially if you put it in a shopping cart! Produce and deli bags are not banned and help protect against bacteria. However, we do recommend periodically cleaning your reusable bag. Canvas, recycled plastic, and nylon bags can easily be washed while insulated bags can be wiped with antibacterial wipes.

Q. How do I remember to take my bags with me?

A. Here are some ideas:

1. Keep your bags in your car or purse
2. Put something important in your bags (keyst, phone, etc)
3. Go back to the car for your bags when you realize you forgot them