

Eliminating/Minimizing Use of Single-Use-Plastic at City of North Port Government Buildings and Functions

Why?

1. Every piece of plastic that was ever made still exists. Any newly made plastic purchased merely adds to this overload of plastic.
2. Single use plastic bottles leach carcinogenic chemicals into the liquid they hold.
3. Single use plastics are the worst offenders in the marine environment. [72.4% of plastic pollution](#)
4. [Nine reasons to refuse single use plastic infographic.](#) This infographic was created by a non-profit organization in Devon England.
5. [Alternatives to Single Use Plastic/](#) (earth911.com). Shows pros and cons of items used to replace single use plastic bottles.

Suggested actions to take

1. Plastic in kitchens/staff lounges/ or used for hospitality:
 - a. Plastic straws. Encourage staff to use paper straws, reusable metal straws,* or other kinds of reusable straws. Eliminate any potential use of plastic straws for public use at City functions.
* Sarasota County distributes these free to the public at events,
 - b. Plastic stirrers. Replace with metal spoons or wooden stirrers.
 - c. Plastic cutlery. Replace with wood cutlery or make inexpensive metal cutlery available.
 - d. Encourage staff to bring their own cutlery.
 - e. Discourage use of plastic wrap for leftover food in staff lounges. Encourage use of reusable containers. Collapsible/reusable food containers are available from many sources.
 - f. Assure the drink vending machines on city sites do not use single use plastic bottles.
 - i. Consider water coolers with paper cups for employees.
 - ii. Consider replacing drink vending machines with MYX type vending machines when current contracts expire. <https://www.myxdrinks.com/>
These vending machines fill staff's own bottles, cups, or tumblers with carbonated or non-carbonated drinks.



2. Plastic use at city events/functions:
 - a. Prohibit all food vendors hired by the city from providing prepared food in disposable food serviceware that uses any forms of polypropylene or polystyrene. (San Anselmo, California bans these city-wide, but this action is doable on the local government level. <https://www.townofsananselmo.org/1229/Single-Use-Food-Serviceware>)
 - b. Assure all vendors hired by the City use wooden stirrers, wooden cutlery or other reusable types of cutlery.
 - c. Assure all vendors hired by the City do not supply plastic straws at City functions. Paper straws and other biodegradable straws are readily available.
 - d. Assure vendors and city staff use only re-usable tablecloths (fabric or oilcloth) instead of single use plastic tablecovers.
3. Plastic drinking bottles:
 - a. Use durable glass tumblers, paper cups, or hard plastic (e.g. Turvis Tumbler)
 - b. Possibly present Tervis Tumblers with city seal imbedded to recognize staff, to welcome new City Commissioners, to welcome new hires. Could also be made available for purchase by citizens???
4. Plastic bags used in promotions/marketing: Use promotional paper bags if this kind of bag is necessary.
5. Pet waste disposal bags: Replace current pet waste disposal bags used in pet-friendly city parks with biodegradable pet waste bags. Many are readily available: BioBag Pet Waste Bags (priced) and Earth's Rated Poop bags come highly recommended by many environmental sources.
6. Plastic garbage bags: Replace plastic garbage bags with compostable garbage bags. Compostable garbage bags are regulated, biodegradable bags are not.
<https://www.plasticplace.com/blog/5-surprising-secrets-of-biodegradable-plastic-bags>

Links to more resources with additional information:

<https://www.thejournal.ie/single-use-plastic-ireland-4422871-Jan2019/> Government and schools in Ireland will no longer buy single-use plastic cups, cutlery and straws.

<https://www.myflowater.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FloWater-Infographic.pdf> Infographic on plastic bottle use from Flow Water – Water supplier.

<https://www.townofsananselmo.org/DocumentCenter/View/23494/Related-Articles-Background-Resources> Series of links on plastic pollution and health effects of chemicals in disposable foodware.

<https://www.waterdocs.ca/water-talk/2017/12/19/8-single-use-plastic-items-you-can-quit-right-now> Ideas for products to use in replacing common single use plastic items.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2018/07/ocean-plastic-pollution-solutions/>

Running list of actions on plastic pollution by world governments and by local governments in the United States from National Geographic.

<https://www.rethinkingplastic.org/> A Sarasota group working to research, educate, and collaborate with individuals and companies, specifically zeroing in on Single Use Plastics.