

FOOD SERVICE WARE ORDINANCE

As part of implementing the City's [Zero Waste Plan](#), the City Council adopted a Food Service Ware Ordinance to reduce the amount of single-use plastic waste and litter generated in Mountain View. These changes will take effect on January 1, 2023. Visit MountainView.gov/Foodware for more information.



BEST: Reusable food service ware is recommended



- Reusable food service ware is encouraged, though not required. A free program is available to help businesses switch to reusables for dine-in service, resulting in potential cost savings.
- Food providers should accommodate customer-provided reusable cups (in accordance with Health and Safety Code regulations).
- Consider services that provide reusables for take-out operations.



BETTER: Disposable food service ware must be compostable or aluminum



- Compostable natural fiber or recyclable aluminum required for all containers (plates, bowls, cups, wrappers, etc.). Fiber-based packaging may have a BPI certified compostable plastic lining.
- Straws, stirrers, toothpicks and food picks must be wood, paper or other natural fiber-based material.
- Compostable food service ware must be certified free of fluorinated chemicals (PFAS) by a City-approved third party.



BANNED: Plastic is not allowed for most food service ware



- All food service ware (plates, bowls, cups, wrappers, containers) cannot be made from petroleum-based or compostable plastics.
- Straws, stirrers and toothpicks cannot be made from or packaged in plastic or compostable plastic, except plastic straws provided upon request to those with medical needs.
- Polystyrene foam food service ware remains prohibited.



What's the new Food Service Ware Ordinance's purpose?

1. Reduce the amount of landfilled waste from single-use plastics.
2. Protect the health of our community members.
3. Reduce plastic pollution in waterways and the ocean.

WHICH PLASTIC ITEMS ARE BANNED?

Single-use plastic items associated with food and beverage service, such as the following:

- **Food Service Ware:** any product food is served on or in, including cups, bowls, plates, trays, cartons, boxes, wrappers or liners and hinged containers (clamshells).
- **Certain Food Service Ware Accessories:** straws, stirrers, toothpicks and food picks.

WHICH BUSINESSES ARE IMPACTED?

The requirements apply to food providers offering prepared food that operate within Mountain View.

- **Food Provider:** Anyone with a valid health permit from the County of Santa Clara to distribute prepared food to the public. Examples include restaurants, fast food, coffee or juice shops, bakeries, mobile food trucks, catering operations and private schools.
- **Prepared Food:** Food or beverages prepared on-site using any cooking or food preparation technique (mixing, heating, blending, chopping, portioning, etc.).

ARE THERE EXEMPTIONS?

Prepackaged food is exempt. Food providers may request an exemption for specific food service ware items if they believe there is not an acceptable compliant alternative, or due to financial hardship or other exceptional circumstances.

Straws, stirrers, toothpicks and food picks cannot be made from or packaged in plastic, but plastic is allowed for all other accessory items.



NEW STATE LAW: SINGLE-USE ACCESSORIES ONLY ON REQUEST

In addition to the City's Ordinance, most food providers must comply with Assembly Bill 1276 as of January 1, 2022.

- Accessories (utensils, straws, condiments, stirrers) may only be provided if requested by the customer or in certain types of dispensers.
- Items must be offered individually and cannot be packaged together.
- Online/mobile ordering platforms must have an option to request each accessory item.



City of
Mountain View

For more information:

MountainView.gov/Foodware

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