



For Immediate Release

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City Adopts Polystyrene Ban

South Lake Tahoe, CA (April 3, 2018) – At today’s City Council meeting, City Council approved an ordinance to regulate the use and sale of expanded polystyrene (also called EPS, white plastic foam or a.k.a. Styrofoam) food containers and products in the City. Also included in the ordinance is that food providers (restaurants and carry out providers) shall not provide plastic cutlery, plastic beverage straws, or plastic stirrers except upon request.

South Lake Tahoe joins 114 other communities in California who have also adopted similar ordinances. The purpose of this ordinance is to reduce and prevent the presence of this type of litter in the environment and to promote environmentally sustainable practices in the City of South Lake Tahoe.

The ordinance prohibits the use of EPS food and drink containers by food providers in the City and requires that a recyclable, compostable or biodegradable product be used instead. Acceptable alternative products include uncoated paper, coated paper, cardboard, aluminum foil, compostable or “bio-products” and other non-foam, plastic containers with the “chasing arrow” symbol numbers 1–7.

The ordinance also prohibits the retail sale of any EPS product not encased in a more durable material such as disposable foam coolers, cups, plates, bowls and packing peanuts.

The ordinance will be effective six months after adoption which is October 3, 2018. Warnings will be given through April 3, 2019 and citations may be issued thereafter.

A violation of the ordinance by a food provider or vendor is subject to the following administrative fines:

1. A fine not exceeding \$100.00 for a first violation.
2. A fine not exceeding \$200.00 for a second violation of this chapter within one year.
3. A fine not exceeding \$500.00 for each additional violation of this chapter within one year.

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Expanded Polystyrene (a.k.a. Styrofoam) Regulations in the City of South Lake Tahoe



On April 3, 2018, the City Council approved an ordinance to regulate the use and sale of Expanded Polystyrene (also called EPS or Styrofoam) food containers and products in the City.

Also approved was food providers (restaurants and carry out providers, shall not provide plastic cutlery, plastic beverage straws, or plastic stirrers except upon request.

The ordinance will be effective October 3, 2018.

REQUIREMENTS FOR AFFECTED BUSINESSES:

For restaurants and food providers:

The ordinance prohibits the use of EPS food and drink containers by food providers in the City and requires that a recyclable, compostable or biodegradable product be used instead. Acceptable alternative products include uncoated paper, coated paper, cardboard, aluminum foil, compostable or "bio-products" and other non-foam, plastic containers with the "chasing arrow" symbol numbers 1-7.

For grocery stores and other retailers:

The ordinance prohibits the retail sale of any EPS product not encased in a more durable material such as disposable foam coolers, cups, plates, bowls and packing peanuts.

EXEMPTIONS:

Exemptions are provided for certain products including:

- Foam trays for uncooked meats
- Food prepared or packaged outside of the City
- Packing materials which have been collected for reuse
- Products that contain EPS, but are encased in a more durable material

Please visit www.cityofslt.us/eps for more information.





City of South Lake Tahoe

Expanded Polystyrene (a.k.a. Styrofoam) FAQ

What is Expanded Polystyrene (EPS)?

Expanded Polystyrene is a white, plastic foam commonly used for disposable food and drink containers such as cups, plates and clamshell containers. EPS is also used to make disposable foam coolers and packing peanuts for shipping.

Why is EPS now regulated?

EPS products are commonly used once and are not recyclable. When discarded, EPS can be blown from trash receptacles and disposal sites. EPS breaks easily into smaller pieces, does not biodegrade, and can be ingested by wildlife. EPS comprises 15% of the litter found in storm drains and is the second most common type of litter on California beaches.

What makes food containers biodegradable, compostable or recyclable?

“Biodegradable” means a product or package will completely break down and return to nature; decomposing into natural elements within a reasonably short period of time.

“Compostable” means a product or package will break down into, or become part of, usable compost (such as mulch) in an appropriate composting program or facility.

“Recyclable” means a product can be recycled as part of the City’s Recycling Program, including uncoated paper, coated paper, cardboard, aluminum foil and other non-foam, plastic containers with the “chasing arrow” symbol numbers 1–7.

Straws and plastic cutlery available “Only on Request”

No food provider shall sell or otherwise provide plastic cutlery, plastic beverage straws, or plastic stirrers except upon request.

What are the alternatives to EPS?

Alternative products include: uncoated paper, coated paper, cardboard, aluminum foil, compostable or “bio-products” and other non-foam, plastic containers with the “chasing arrow” symbol numbers 1–7. Please consult with your packaging supplier for the alternative that is right for your business.

To whom does the ordinance apply?

All businesses in the City of South Lake Tahoe including: restaurants, bars & pubs, cafeterias, caterers & event organizers, convenience, & liquor stores, delis & coffee shops, ice cream and yogurt shops, mobile food vendors, grocery and drug stores or retail outlets. City-approved special events within the City of South Lake Tahoe must also comply with the ordinance.

What are the exemptions?

Exemptions are provided for certain products including foam trays for uncooked meats, food prepared or packaged outside of the City, packing materials which have been collected for reuse and when EPS is encapsulated in a more durable material.

When will the ordinance take effect?

The ordinance will be effective October 3, 2018. Warnings will be given through April 3, 2019 and citations may be issued thereafter.



Straws and plastic cutlery available “Only on Request”

Please visit www.cityofslt.us/eps for more information.