

Middletown's  
Bring Your Own  
Bag ordinance  
will take effect  
OCTOBER 1, 2019



# Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance

Learning the Basics  
For  
Middletown Businesses  
June 2019  
Kim O'Rourke  
Middletown Recycling Coordinator

# Why are we doing this?



- 
- CT uses 1 billion plastic bags a year\*
  - Single use bags are used for an average of 12 minutes.
  - Less than 5% of the bags are returned for recycling.

\* Hartford Courant  
estimate



Many marine animals can't distinguish plastic items from food.

# Plastic Bags are



Animals who eat plastic often starve because they can't digest it and it fills their stomachs



# Harmful to Wildlife



# Plastics are choking our oceans

An aerial photograph showing a vast expanse of plastic waste, including bottles, containers, and debris, covering the ground. In the center, two people are seen scavenging through the trash, with one person standing and another crouching. A cardboard box is visible in the foreground, partially filled with items. The background is a dense field of colorful plastic litter.

The amount of plastic in the ocean is set to increase tenfold by 2020. By 2050 there will be more plastic in the oceans than there are fish.

Every minute one garbage truck of plastic is dumped into the ocean.

There is more plastic than natural prey at the sea surface of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.



Plastic bags and film jam equipment at recycling facilities, forcing all operations to stop for hours.



# Middletown Ordinance

- No plastic check out bags
- Offer alternative paper bags that meet a certain spec for ten cents
- Applies to all for profit businesses and restaurants.

Use up the plastic  
bag inventory  
now.



Excess plastic bags could be donated to a non profit or recycled at a plastic film recycling location such as Price Chopper, Stop and Shop or Lowes.



# Alternative Paper Bags

*Retailers can offer alternative paper bags for ten cents.*

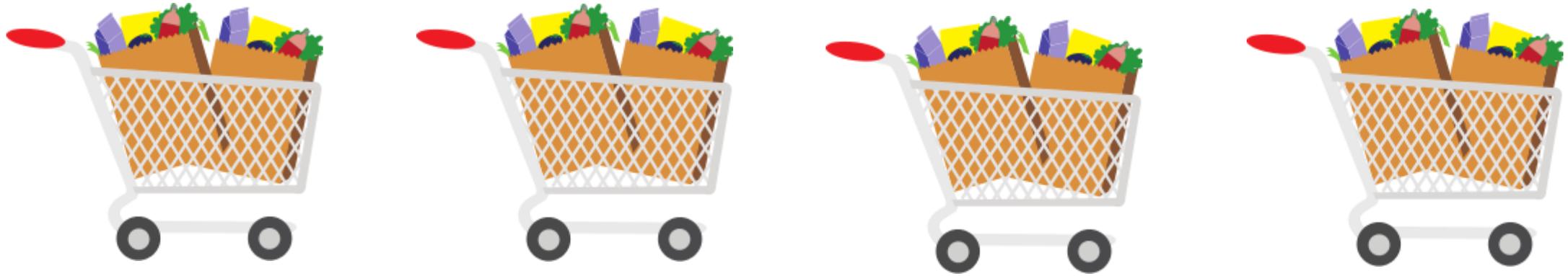
Paper bags must meet certain criteria:

- Must not contain any old growth fiber
- Must be 100% recyclable
- Must contain a minimum of 40% post consumer recycled content
- Must display the words “reusable” or “recyclable” on the outside of the bag

The charge for paper bags must be reflected on the receipt.

Signs must be posted near the point of purchase to notify customers of this ordinance.





Charge does not apply to those who purchase items with government food assistance programs, such as SNAP and WIC

# Bags which are not impacted



Gift Bags



Newspaper bags



Produce and Product bags



Bags sold in packages



Dry Cleaning and Laundry Bags



## Train Your Staff

# Retrain Your Brain

Our business wants to help Middletown reduce waste and protect our environment and we need your help:

Bagging Staff Please:

1. First ask customer if they need a bag or brought their own bag.
2. If yes, thank the customer.
3. If the answer is "I forget them in the car" ask if they want to go get them.
4. If no and they need a bag, ask if they want to purchase a reusable bag or an alternative paper bag for ten cents.

Especially for small purchases and leftovers, maybe a bag isn't necessary.



# Enforcement

- Upon notification, the enforcement officer must investigate.
- If violation, written warning and establish a plan to remedy the violation.
- Upon subsequent violations, penalty of \$45/violation.



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Kim O'Rourke  
Middletown Recycling Coordinator

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