

Environmentally Acceptable Packaging (Section 204 of the Food Code)



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Outline

- Ordinance history
- Why modify existing ordinance?
- Proposed modifications
- Polystyrene containers
- Impact to food establishments
- Ordinance enforcement and penalties
- Assistance available
- Notice of ordinance changes
- Questions

Ordinance History

- First introduced 1989
 - “Packaging” shall mean and include all food-related wrappings, adhesives, cords, bindings, strings, tapes, ribbons, bags, boxes, coverings and containers, cups, glasses, plates and serving trays
- Updated in 1996
 - Packaging includes commonly recycled items

Why modify ordinance?

- City goal – “Great Places: natural and built spaces work together and our environment is protected”
- Clarify language
- Allow for compostable products
- Advancements in plastics recycling
- Current ordinance is overly punitive

2014 Proposed Modifications

Food prepared for immediate consumption:

- Restaurants, grocery stores, food trucks, and event vendors
- Packaging defined as:
 - Food or beverage cans, bottles or containers used to package food and beverage products for distribution including glasses, cups, plates, serving trays, and to-go containers
 - Excludes: foods pre-packaged by the manufacturer, producer, or distributor; plastic silverware, and plastic films less than 10 mils thick

2014 Proposed Modifications (cont.)

- Environmentally acceptable packaging:
 - Reusable or returnable
 - Recyclable
 - Compostable
- Facilities must utilize a qualified recycling and/or organics management system
 - Organics collection required if using compostable plastic products only
- Effective as of Earth Day, April 22, 2015

Environmentally Acceptable Packaging

- Reusable or Refillable Packaging
- Recyclable Packaging
 - Plastics with robust recycling markets (#1, #2, #5)
- Compostable Packaging



Photo courtesy of GET 7

Environmentally Acceptable Packaging (cont.)



Photo courtesy of Water Billboards

Polystyrene Containers

- Non-commercially recyclable, nonreusable, and noncompostable
 - Robust recycling markets have not materialized
 - Only clean, dry foam can be recycled



Polystyrene Containers (cont.)

- Street, sidewalk and waterway pollution



Polystyrene Containers (cont.)

- Polystyrene packaging can leach styrene, a “reasonably anticipated human carcinogen” into food and beverages
- Restaurants don't want to expose customers



Impact to Food Establishments:

- Other cities report no complaints of financial hardship from affected businesses
- Slightly higher cost for containers initially, however the expectation is the cost should decrease as more companies purchase environmentally acceptable packaging

Impact to food establishments (Cont.):

- Recycling and/or organics stations for public use (should be in place per current ordinance language)
- Potential to reduce garbage collection costs



Ordinance Enforcement

Education and Consultation:

- Primary tool to put systems in place, work with businesses

Compliance Meetings:

- Opportunity to hear business operator's concerns

Enforcement:

- Administrative process for continued non-compliance
- Right to an Appeals Hearing

Notice of Ordinance Changes

- Minnesota Restaurant Association
- Restaurant ListServ
- Informational sheet handed out by inspectors during site visits



Notice of Ordinance Changes (cont.)

- Meet with City Business Associations
- Work with Neighborhood & Community Relations Department to arrange for interpreters as needed

Assistance Available

Free Assistance from Hennepin County:

- Free signs
- Assist with collection setup
- Evaluate potential cost savings
- Supply promotional & educational materials
- Follow-up and ongoing assistance



Assistance Available (cont.)

Funding Available:

Hennepin County Business Grants:

- Grants up to \$50,000 to start or improve recycling and organics programs
 - www.hennepin.us/businessrecycling

City of Minneapolis Loans:

- CPED loans to help businesses
 - www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/ba/businesssupport

Summary

- Proposed ordinance is easier to understand, is less punitive and expands the types of acceptable packaging to include compostable containers
- Assistance is available to help businesses make the switch to environmentally acceptable packaging
- Changes will help reduce solid waste generated and increase recycling, remove litter from our streets and waterways and reduce contact with harmful chemicals. A **win-win-win** for the environment, residents and consumers

Questions?

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