

Single-Use Items Bylaw Guide

Business requirements to reduce single-use items in Calgary

New Single-Use Items Charter Bylaw (1H2023) starts **Jan. 16, 2024**.



For more information and support resources visit

calgary.ca/singleuse

Single-use items are a waste reduction opportunity

Single-use items such as shopping bags, utensils, straws, and napkins are designed to be used once before being thrown away. These convenience items are now part of our daily routines. Each week in Calgary millions of single-use items can be found in the garbage or discarded as litter on our streets, in our parks and rivers. Most of these items can't be or won't be recycled or composted. These products use significant raw materials and energy to make and dispose of something that is only used once.

Together, we can rethink our need for single-use items, while also benefiting Calgary businesses.

Bylaw requirements

Waste reduction is a joint effort between businesses and customers. The Single-Use Items Bylaw will reduce single-use item waste that can **easily be avoided or replaced** with reusable options. The goal is to reduce single-use items made from all types of materials, not just plastic.

Businesses will need to:

- Charge a minimum fee for new paper and reusable shopping bags.
- Provide bags and foodware accessories by request only.

Calgarians will need to:

- Bring their own reusable bag or tote when shopping.
- Ask for foodware accessories as needed, when dining in, taking out or ordering food online.

The simple behavior of choosing to use reusable options or refusing these items means fewer single-use items.

How we all benefit from these actions

Businesses will benefit by saving money. When customers use less items, it helps cut down costs.

- Charging a minimum bag fee will help offset the higher cost of having new paper and reusable bags.
- By not automatically including straws, utensils and condiments in a customer's order, businesses will use up less quantities of these items.

Communities and public spaces are more enjoyable with less single-use litter. This will also help reduce negative environmental impacts to our water bodies, land and wildlife.

How this bylaw helps reduce waste

Minimum fees on shopping bags incentivizes customers to bring their own bags instead of buying a new one.



By request options are effective nudges for customers to only take or use what they need.



Single-use Items Reduction Strategy

Our strategy includes both bylaw requirements and voluntary programs focused on reducing single-use items.

Bylaw requirements

New paper and reusable shopping bags

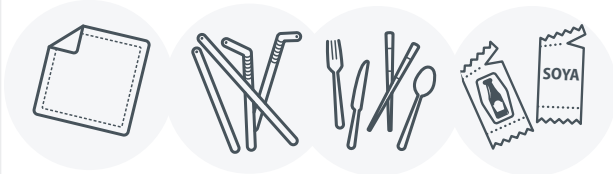
Businesses must:

- Only provide bags on request.
- Charge a minimum fee of **15 cents** for new paper shopping bags.
- Charge a minimum fee of **\$1** for new reusable bags.
- In 2025, the minimum fees change to at least 25 cents for paper shopping bags and \$2 for reusable shopping bags.



Foodware accessories

- Businesses must provide single-use foodware accessories by request only.



These apply to in-store, take-out, drive-thru and delivery orders.

Voluntary measures

Food serviceware



- Use reusable serviceware for dine-in and accept customer-provided take-out containers.
- Adopt a reusable take-out container program.
- Use locally recyclable or compostable take-out containers.

Reusable cups



- Use reusable cups for dine-in and accept customer-provided cups.
- Adopt reusable cup share program.
- Use locally recyclable or compostable single-use cups.

Who does this apply to?

The bylaw applies to any businesses providing new paper or reusable shopping bags and/or foodware accessories to customers including grocery or convenience stores, retail stores, fast food, restaurants, cafes, bars and coffee shops.

Who is exempt?

Registered charities providing **charitable services** are exempt. A charitable service means the provision of food, prepared food, clothing, or personal items for free or at low cost by a charitable organization. More details on this exemption at calgary.ca/singleuse

Shopping Bags

New paper or reusable shopping bags can only be provided on request and businesses are required to charge a mandatory minimum fee.

Bags can be requested in the following ways:

- When a customer asks for a shopping bag or selects from a self-serve area,
- When staff asks the customer if they require a shopping bag,
- When a customer answers a prompt on an ordering platform.



Minimum Fees*



Item	INCREASE ↑	
	January 16, 2024	January 16, 2025
New paper shopping bags <i>(Must contain 40% recycled material)</i>	\$0.15	\$0.25
New reusable shopping bags	\$1.00	\$2.00

**Fees will be kept by the business*

This does not apply to the following shopping bags:

- Small paper bags (400 sq cm or less when laid flat).
- Bags used to:
 - o package bulk items such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, candy, or dry goods.
 - o package loose bulk items such as hardware or fasteners.
 - o protect bakery goods that are not prepackaged.
 - o protect items from becoming dirty or unusable (e.g., newspaper bag, dry cleaning, flowers).
 - o package goods from a pharmacy.
 - o contain or wrap meat, poultry, fish, or frozen foods.
 - o wrap flowers or potted plants.
- Shopping bags that have already been used by a customer and returned to a business for the purpose of being reused by other customers.

What your business needs to do:

- Update your in-store, online, mobile app, and telephone point-of-sale systems so they:
 - o allow customers to request a bag, and
 - o charge fees on new paper and reusable shopping bags.
- Ensure bag fees are shown as a separate line item on any receipts provided to customers. Suggested wording 'paper bag' and 'reusable bag'.
- Train staff to ask customers if they need a paper or reusable shopping bag before providing one.
- Use printable posters at calgary.ca/singleuse to help inform customers and remind them to bring their reusable bags.

Foodware accessories

Foodware accessories can only be provided on request whether dining in, taking out or ordering food online.

Accessories can be requested in the following ways:

Only provide foodware accessories if:

- A customer asks for the foodware accessories or takes them from a self-serve area,
- Staff asks the customer if they require foodware accessories,
- A customer answers a prompt on an ordering platform.

Note: Only the accessories requested can be provided.

What your business needs to do:

- Update your online, mobile app and point-of-sale systems to allow customers to request the foodware accessories they need.
- Train staff to ask customers if they need foodware accessories and not to add accessories to orders unless they are requested.
- Use posters to help inform customers and remind them to:
 - o 'request' items they need,
 - o 'say no' to items they don't need,
 - o bring their own reusable items.



Foodware accessories include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Utensils: Spoons, forks, knives, chopsticks,
- Straws,
- Stir sticks, splash sticks, cocktail sticks, toothpicks,
- Napkins,
- Pre-packaged condiments such as ketchup, sugar, milk, jam, soy sauce etc.

Printable posters available on calgary.ca/singleuse



Beyond the Bylaw - Want to do more?

There are many voluntary measures you can do to reduce single-use item waste. Consider adopting some of the following actions at your business:

- **Provide reusable cups and containers** for dine-in. This can include glassware, cups, reusable plates, ramekins, trays, etc.
- **Switch to reusable utensils.** Speak with your suppliers about switching to reusable utensils, including chopsticks and other cutlery, for customers who dine-in.
- Participate in **reusable** takeout container or cup **sharing** programs.
- Accept **customer-provided** reusable containers. Train your staff to ask customers if they'd like to have their leftovers packaged in their own reusable container.
- If using single-use containers, train staff to **pack leftovers into as few containers as possible**, rather than packaging items separately.
- Consider **developing a policy** with instructions for accepting customer cups and reusable containers for takeout. You should consider provincial health and safety guidelines and the following:
 - o Guidelines for:
 - handling customer cups and containers.
 - assessing cup and reusable container cleanliness.
 - safely servicing into customer cups and containers.
 - o Whether a discount will be offered when a customer-provided containers and cups.

Reusable does cost less

While single-use foodware can be convenient for your business, the costs do add up long-term. Research has shown that buying and cleaning reusable dishes and cutlery ends up being cheaper than buying single-use foodware and waste disposal – often in as little as a year.



Suggested Alternatives Guide

We encourage you to source out reusable alternatives or single-use items that can be accepted in Calgary's residential recycling or composting programs.

Plastic containers and cups labeled or described as compostable or degradable are not accepted in Calgary residential compost or recycling bins.

These items do not break down fully at the Calgary Composting Facility and are not recyclable because they contain non-petroleum based plastic polymers that compromise the quality of the recycled plastics. Once these items reach people's homes, they must be discarded as garbage.














Most paper foodware products are either:

- Recyclable, if clean, even if lined or poly-coated.
- Compostable, if food soiled.

ITEM	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES		
	RECYCLABLE (Clean and dry)	RECYCLABLE (Clean and dry)	COMPOSTABLE (Food-soiled)
Shopping Bags	Reusable bags, paper bags, clean and dry paper bags	Reusable bags, paper bags, clean and dry paper bags	Reusable bags, paper bags, clean and dry paper bags
Utensils	Reusable utensils, clean and dry	Reusable utensils, clean and dry	Reusable utensils, clean and dry
Plates	Reusable plates, clean and dry	Reusable plates, clean and dry	Reusable plates, clean and dry
Containers	Reusable containers, clean and dry	Reusable containers, clean and dry	Reusable containers, clean and dry
Cups	Reusable cups, clean and dry	Reusable cups, clean and dry	Reusable cups, clean and dry

See full sized guide on next page.

Suggested Alternatives Guide

SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES			
ITEM	 REUSABLE Choose when possible	 RECYCLABLE In Calgary's residential recycling programs	 COMPOSTABLE In Calgary's residential composting programs
Shopping Bags	 <p>Fabric bags (cotton, canvas, Jute, burlap) Nylon/polyester bags Totes/crates</p>	 <p>Paper bags (paper/fibre handles) Cardboard boxes</p>	<p>Compostable shopping bags (checkout bags) will not be available after December 20, 2023¹</p>
Utensils	 <p>Metal Wood Ceramic Durable plastic</p>	<p>Recyclable alternatives are not available (utensils are too small to be sorted by recycling equipment)</p>	 <p>Unpainted wood utensils Unpainted bamboo utensils</p>
Straws	 <p>Metal straws Glass straws Silicone straws</p>	<p>Recyclable alternatives are not available (straws are too small to be sorted by recycling equipment)</p>	 <p>Paper straws Bamboo and sugar cane straws Wheat and pasta straws</p>
Containers, plates and bowls	 <p>Tiffins Steel trays/containers Ceramics Glass jars Reusable takeout container programs Durable plastic containers, plates, and bowls</p>	 <p>Paper containers – poly coated Aluminum (foil) containers Plastic containers Paper containers – uncoated</p>	 <p>Fibre containers, plates and bowls Bamboo and leaf plates and bowls Fibre compostable bowls (must be labelled as certified compostable) Paper plates and bags</p>
Cups	 <p>Reusable travel mugs or cup sharing program Glassware Ceramics</p>	 <p>Paper cups uncoated or poly coated Plastic cups</p>	 <p>Compostable coffee cups/paper cups (must be labelled as certified compostable)</p>

Frequently asked questions

What can my business do with the bag fee we collect?

- Fees from new paper and reusable bags will be kept by the business to help offset costs of purchasing these items. We encourage your business to use any net revenue to continue with other reduction initiatives like switching to reusable serviceware or participating in sharing programs for reusable containers and cups.

We are a registered charity, does the Single-Use Items bylaw apply to us?

- Yes, the bylaw requirements apply to registered charities except when they are providing bags or foodware accessories as part of a charitable service. Visit calgary.ca/singleuse for more details.

What if a business doesn't comply with the bylaw?

- The City will use an education-first approach to help businesses understand the requirements and how to comply. After providing the opportunity to make changes, if a business is still not in compliance, the business owner(s) will be subject to inspection by a Bylaw Enforcement Officer, who may issue a violation ticket or fine.

Will printed materials be available to help me inform my customers?

- Yes, businesses can request printed posters and till toppers for free by submitting a 311 request. Posters will also be available in a print-friendly format on calgary.ca/singleuse to help make it easier for businesses to print as many as needed.

For more information and resources, visit calgary.ca/singleuse

Bylaw definitions

Shopping bag: a bag used for transporting items sold or otherwise provided by a business. This includes, but is not limited to take-out, delivery and online ordering.

Reusable shopping bag: a shopping bag designed to be durable enough for multiple uses, and is capable of being washed or disinfected.

It can be made of any type of material excluding film plastic and paper.

