

Key Points of Retail Shopping Bag Ordinance

- Ordinance applies **only** to retail plastic shopping bags at the point of sale
- Exempt plastic bags:
 - Thin film, produce-type bags used for sanitary/spillage reasons (for example, to hold deli meats, cheeses, produce, soup containers)
 - Garment bags such as those typically used by dry-cleaners
 - Plastic bags measuring 28" x 36" or larger, typically used to enclose large items such as art work, architectural drawings
 - Thick, large plastic bags made of durable plastic that is at least 2.25 mils thick
- The ordinance does **not** apply to any other type of plastic, such as plastic containers, cups, utensils, bottles.
- Merchants are given six months from the date the law is passed to deplete their inventory

Summary of Discussions with Merchants in Towns (Southampton, NY, Westport, CT, Telluride, CO, Brownsville, TX, Chestertown, MD) that have Passed Ordinances

- Any food that could spill/leak is contained in paper or plastic. Some merchants choose to put the containers in paper bags (eg, #8 bag) or thin film plastic bags. They reported no change from how they previously enclosed such food items.
- Again, take-out from restaurants/fast food places, is placed in paper bags, unless the food needs to be enclosed in a plastic container (eg, salads, soups, hot food items)
- All merchants we interviewed have noticed an increase in reusable bag use
- All merchants said that there has been minimal disruption from the transition to reusable bags.
- **No** merchant said that they have suffered financially as a result of the ordinance. For eg, the Westport Trader Joe's supervisor stated that

although their store borders other towns, they have not seen any drop in business since the law was passed 3 years ago.

- City officials interviewed in Telluride, CO, Westport, CT and Southampton, NY confirmed that no citations have been issued to businesses resulting from passage of their laws.