



OFFICE OF  
SUSTAINABILITY  

---

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO



# County of San Mateo's Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Public Workshop

Eun-Soo Lim, Senior Sustainability Coordinator  
County of San Mateo's Office of Sustainability

# What We'll Cover Today

| Agenda Item   | Time        |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Welcome and introductions  | 2:00-2:15pm |
| 2. Overview of the County's proposed draft Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) <b>What</b> is this ordinance about?</li><li>2) <b>Why</b> is this important?</li><li>3) <b>Where</b> will this ordinance impact?</li><li>4) <b>Who</b> will be impacted? (food facilities)</li><li>5) <b>How</b> will this impact food facilities?</li><li>6) <b>When</b> will this take place?</li></ol> | 2:15-2:45pm |
| 3. Group breakout   | 2:45-3:15pm |
| 4. Regroup and report out   | 3:15-3:25pm |
| 5. Next steps and closing   | 3:25-3:30pm |

# What Are Our Goals for Today?

1. Provide you information about the proposed ordinance
2. Answer questions
3. Collect feedback





**Please tell us more about yourself!**

Name

Organization

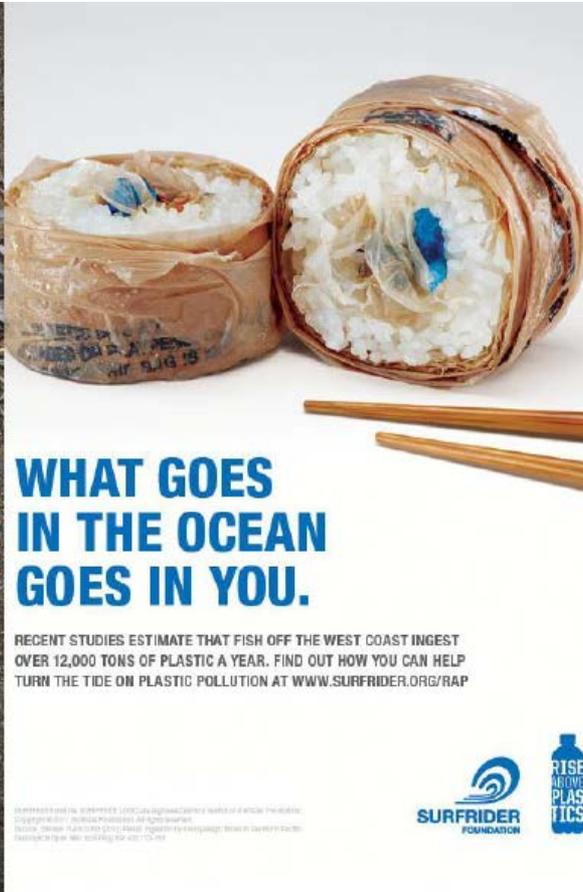
Location (food facility)



# Impact of our Throw-away Culture

- Convenience comes with a price
- 1.3 million pounds of trash enters the SF Bay every year
- **Single-use food & beverage packaging** makes up 80% of ocean plastic pollution that comes from land

# Plastic is Ending Up Everywhere



**WHAT GOES  
IN THE OCEAN  
GOES IN YOU.**

RECENT STUDIES ESTIMATE THAT FISH OFF THE WEST COAST INGEST OVER 12,000 TONS OF PLASTIC A YEAR. FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP TURN THE TIDE ON PLASTIC POLLUTION AT [WWW.SURFRIDER.ORG/RAP](http://WWW.SURFRIDER.ORG/RAP)



Plastics are in:

- Our storm drains, waterways and oceans
- Marine and wildlife
- The food that we eat
- The air that we breath
- Us



# China's Plastic Recyclables Restrictions

- Current fate of many plastics (#3-7)
  - Piling up at waste facilities
  - Landfill
  - Incinerated
- India, Vietnam, and Indonesia following suit
- CA's goal: 75% of solid waste generated be source reduced, recycled, or composted by 2020 – *Still achievable?*
- State, local governments, haulers, waste facilities and other entities working together to find short & long-term solutions



# Rethinking Single-Use Disposable Food Service Ware

- HOW do we address this?
  1. REDUCE
    - Use only what you need
  2. REUSE
    - Use reusables **first** before disposables or recyclables
  3. COMPOST the rest
    - Reduce landfill waste and plastic recyclables



# Rethinking Single-Use Disposable Food Service Ware

- HOW do we address this?
  1. **REDUCE**
    - Use only what you need
  2. REUSE
    - Use reusables **first** before disposables or recyclables
  3. **COMPOST** the rest
    - Reduce landfill waste and plastic recyclables



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Objectives

- WHAT is this about?
  - Eliminate **disposable food service ware** that is not reusable or compostable
  - Improve the health and safety of San Mateo County community members
  - Help County meet its regional stormwater permit requirement by reducing street litter (July 2022)



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

- WHO will this impact?
  - Food facilities:
    - Any vendor, business, organization, entity, group or individual that provides **prepared** food for public consumption
    - Trigger: Health permit requirement
    - Examples: Restaurants, mobile food facilities (e.g., food trucks, push carts, etc.), temporary food facilities (e.g., street fairs, etc.), farmers markets, farm stands, catering operations, some licensed health care facilities, etc.
      - Using list in California Retail Food Code



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions



## Prepared food

Food or beverage prepared on the food provider's premises, using any cooking or food preparation technique (e.g., cooked, chopped, sliced, mixed, brewed, frozen, squeezed, etc.)

vs



## Prepackaged food

Any properly labeled processed food, prepackaged to prevent any direct human contact with the food product upon preparation and distribution from the manufacturer

# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

- WHERE will this impact?
  - Unincorporated areas of San Mateo County (*green area*)
  - Food facilities in cities located in the county (*yellow area*) will **not** be impacted
- Potential countywide effort with interested cities in the county



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

- HOW will this impact food facilities?
  1. Polystyrene (aka Styrofoam) disposable food service ware still prohibited (existing policy)



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

2. Accessories (e.g., straws, stirrers, cup spill plugs, condiment packets, utensils, napkins, etc.) provided to consumers only upon request or at self-serve stations/dispensers.



STRAW UPON REQUEST ONLY



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

## 3. Straws, stirrers, utensils, and cocktail/toothpicks

- Plastics **not** allowed
  - Traditional plastics
  - Compostable plastics (aka bioplastics, PLA)



**Not  
Allowed**



# Why No to Compostable Plastics?

- Compostable plastics:
  1. Only breakdown in an industrial composting facility, but in many cases, do not break down completely
  2. When found on the street and in water, act just like plastic
  3. Look and feel like plastic, leading to confusion by general public on how to sort them properly (green or blue bin?)
  4. Inconsistency in labeling by manufacturers makes it hard for people to identify and sort properly (there's a lot of green washing out there)

# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

## 3. Straws, stirrers, utensils, and cocktail/toothpicks

- Plastics **not** allowed
  - Traditional plastics
  - Compostable plastics (aka bioplastics, PLA)



**Not  
Allowed**



K20E  
6.75"  
PLA

F20E  
6"  
PLA

SP65  
6.5"  
PLA

# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

## 3. Straws, stirrers, utensils, and cocktail/toothpicks

- Plastics **not** allowed
  - Traditional plastics
  - Compostable plastics (aka bioplastics, PLA)
- Acceptable materials
  - Fiber-based (e.g., paper, wood, bamboo, sugarcane, wheat stalk, hay, etc.)



Acceptable  
Items



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

4. Plates, bowls, cups, food trays, clamshells, and other take-out containers
- Plastics **not** allowed



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

4. Plates, bowls, cups, food trays, clamshells, and other take-out containers
  - Plastics **not** allowed
  - Fiber-based materials acceptable



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

4. Plates, bowls, cups, food trays, clamshells, and other take-out containers
  - Plastics **not** allowed
  - Fiber-based materials acceptable
  - Fluorinated-chemical free



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

4. Plates, bowls, cups, food trays, clamshells, and other take-out containers
  - Plastics **not** allowed
  - Fiber-based materials acceptable
  - Fluorinated-chemical free
    - Look for the Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) logo on fiber-based products/packaging

Acceptable  
Items



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

## 5. Exemptions

- Aluminum
- Medical accommodations
  - Small supply of plastic straws allowed to be distributed upon request only for persons that need medical accommodations
- If no reasonably feasible disposable food service ware alternative exists

## 6. A list of approved disposable food service ware sources



# Proposed Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance Provisions

- WHEN will this impact food facilities?
  1. Collecting feedback from different stakeholders, including food facilities
  2. Update Draft Ordinance
  3. Bring to County's Board of Supervisors by end of summer
  4. Provisions of ordinance go into effect a year from adoption, if adopted



**Thank you!**  
**Questions?**





# Group Breakout

- Facilitator present at each group
- Need volunteers to be *Presenters*

# Group Breakout Questions

1. Do you have any specific recommendations for modifying the draft ordinance?
2. What are some barriers and challenges that would make it difficult for food facilities to comply with the proposed ordinance?
3. How can the County help food facilities transition?
4. Do you have any additional clarification questions about the proposed ordinance?

# Group Report Out

1. Do you have any specific recommendations for modifying the draft ordinance?
2. What are some barriers and challenges that would make it difficult for food facilities to comply with the proposed ordinance?
3. How can the County help food facilities transition?
4. Do you have any additional clarification questions about the proposed ordinance?

# Next Steps

1. Collect and synthesize feedback that you all provided today and from other outreach efforts
2. Email workshop participants summary of pertinent items from today
3. Update Draft Ordinance
4. Bring Final Ordinance to County's Board of Supervisors by end of summer



**For more info:**

<https://www.smcsustainability.org/waste-reduction/reduce-reuse-recycle/#Disposables>

**Eun-Soo Lim**

**eulim@smcgov.org**

**650.599.1498**

**Thank you for  
joining us today!**



**OFFICE OF  
SUSTAINABILITY**  

---

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**