

Styrofoam™ and Plastic Food Ware



Compostable Food Ware



Frequently Asked Questions:

Do options exist to compost the compostable food ware in Richmond?

The City of Richmond is proud to announce that a full residential organics collection and composting program will begin on July 1, 2010. Residents will be able to dispose of food scraps and compostable food ware in the green waste bin at home, thereby reducing garbage and producing compost!

Do any other cities have similar ordinances?

Many cities have enacted food ware ordinances including the cities of Berkeley, Emeryville, Millbrae, Oakland, Santa Cruz, San Francisco, Palo Alto, and Santa Monica.

Are there exemptions to the ordinance?

There are exceptions only in the case that there is no suitable alternative for a specific product.

Additional Information

Visit the Food Ware Ordinance website at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/green-to-go>.

Featured businesses

Front (top to bottom): Mississippi Catfish (12440 San Pablo Ave), Boilerhouse (1414 Harbour Way S), Hidden City Café (109 Park Place)
Inside Page: Symphonie (199 Park Place)

Compostable To-Go Ware: Food Ware Ordinance Effective July 1, 2010



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Styrofoam™ is a plastic (#6) that is made into a light weight foam. We use Styrofoam™ for takeout boxes, utensils, drinking cups, and packaging because they are cheap, light weight, and provide insulation. However, Styrofoam™ and other plastics create serious problems in the environment.

Styrofoam™ and Plastics:

- **Create a litter problem.**

Styrofoam™ blows out of trash cans, trucks, and landfills, down streets and open spaces, and into parks, waterways and the ocean. It breaks up into small pieces that are difficult to collect & represents 15% of the volume of litter recovered from our storm drains.

- **Are not easily recycled.** These items become trash in most cities.

- **May harm marine wildlife.**

Styrofoam™ and other plastics do not biodegrade. They break up into tiny pieces and may be mistaken for food by wildlife.

- **Could create health hazards.**

Styrofoam™ and other plastics are made with chemicals that may have health effects.



Food Ware Ordinance

To address these problems, the City of Richmond is enacting a food ware ordinance that will **require that food ware be compostable.**



Applies to food providers that prepare food for the public in Richmond:

- Restaurants
- Retail food vendors: mobile carts, cafes, delicatessens, grocery stores, shops, etc.
- Cafeterias, caterers, soup kitchens, and special events open to the public

Ordinance details:

- Compliance required by **July 1, 2010**
- **Assistance** from City staff to help food providers find affordable alternatives
- A warning for the first violation and fines for subsequent violations

Alternative Products

Paper, cardboard, bagasse, aluminum, plant-based plastics, and other compostable products are acceptable products under the ordinance.

See our Distributors' List to find stores and companies that provide compostable food ware. It can be found at:
<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/green-to-go>.



Do the alternatives cost more than Styrofoam™ or plastic?

Often, yes. Styrofoam™ is the cheapest of all of these materials but causes large environmental problems. Paper food ware products exist that are comparable in price to plastic products, while bio-plastics are usually the most expensive. City staff is available to help you find affordable alternatives.

