

Mendocino County extends plastic bag ban to restaurants

By GLENDA ANDERSON THE PRESS DEMOCRAT on February 11, 2014, 2:37 PM

Mendocino County supervisors on Tuesday voted to extend the county's ban on plastic bags to restaurants.

The vote was 4-1, with Supervisor John Pinches dissenting.

The change will go into effect 180 days following the second reading of the ordinance.

The modification follows a December court ruling that upheld San Francisco's ban on plastic takeout bags at restaurants.

Mendocino County will be the fourth California jurisdiction to ban plastic takeout bags at restaurants, according to a staff report. Others are expected to follow in light of the court ruling.

Many fast food restaurants in Northern California, including McDonald's, Burger King, Carl's Junior and Starbucks, have stopped using plastic takeout bags, according to the staff report.

Plastic bags have been banned from Mendocino County grocery and chain drug stores since early 2012. The ban was extended to all retail stores in January. The cities of Ukiah and Fort Bragg also have adopted plastic bag bans.

Restaurants, unlike other businesses, will not be required to charge customers for paper takeout bags. Other retailers must sell paper bags for 10 cents to customers who forget their reusable shopping bags.

Bans on plastic bags have been expanding across the country and around the world. They are aimed at reducing environmental damage associated with plastic bags, including litter and harm to wildlife.

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