

Olympia Becomes 10th Wash. City to Ban Plastic Bags

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Olympia has become the tenth city in Washington to ban disposable plastic bags from retail stores.

A unanimous vote from the Olympia City Council means starting in July, shoppers will have to bring their own reusable totes or pay 5 cents for a paper bag. Olympia joins nearby Tumwater and unincorporated Thurston County in enacting the ban.

Katrina Rosen, field director with Environment Washington, says the news is evidence of the growing movement spreading in the south Sound.

"We want to see the whole state of Washington ban plastic bags. And so it's great to see more and more cities taking on a plastic bag ban and seeing city councils all across the state unanimously voting in favor of banning plastic bags," she said.

Rosen says reusable bags present a feasible alternative to plastic pollution that harms marine wildlife and is choking the oceans and precious areas such as Puget Sound.

An Olympia city staff report recently showed that Thurston County consumes about 90 million bags a year. Lacey is next in considering a ban and Rosen says citizens in Tacoma have been rallying for one as well.

Seattle passed its bag ban in 2012.

Washington cities that have banned plastic bags now include:

- Edmonds
- Bellingham
- Mukilteo
- Seattle
- Bainbridge Island
- Port Townsend
- Issaquah
- Shoreline
- Tumwater
- Olympia

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