

Glendale News Press

Plastic bag ban takes effect in Glendale

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Hello Kitty popsicles, a watermelon, tamarind juice and other items bumped around in Jose Moran's shopping cart in the parking lot of Jon's International Marketplace Monday, the first day of Glendale's plastic bag ban.

He could have paid 10 cents for a paper bag, but opted not to.

"Next time, I'll bring my own bags," Moran said in Spanish.

Motivated by environmental concerns, Glendale joins dozens of cities across the state that have enacted a plastic bag ban, including San Jose, Pasadena and in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

The Los Angeles City Council approved a similar ban last month that will gradually take effect starting next year.

If customers don't bring their own bag, they will be charge 10 cents for a paper one, unless shopping at a farmer's market.

Moran was caught off-guard by the change, but said he doesn't mind because using less plastic is better for the environment. Lilit Arutyunyan was more perturbed.

She spent 10 cents for one paper bag, but let items that wouldn't fit, such as flour, sprawl out in her cart.

"It's not good. We are paying already for food," Arutyunyan said.

Next time, she plans to bring bags from home.

And it's that reconditioning of habits that city officials eventually expect to happen after customers become accustomed with the ban.

That transition may be difficult for some shoppers, but for retailers, it's becoming increasingly commonplace. .

"Because we have seen well over 70 different local bag ban ordinances across California over the last few years, Ralphs was able to easily make the transition and begin educating customers early," said company spokeswoman Kendra Doyel in an email.

A statewide ban — supported by environmentalists and grocery stores who would rather have

one universal rule instead of a patchwork of ordinances — has been unable to overcome opposition from the plastics industry.

“We remain hopeful that the state will take action on this issue and reduce confusion for consumers and help support this effort,” Doyel said.

Monday marked the first phase of Glendale’s ban, which impacted large grocers, farmer’s markets and stores of at least 10,000 square feet of retail space with a licensed pharmacy.

On Jan. 1, the ban will extend to small grocers, food markets, liquor stores, convenience stores, drug stores and pharmacies. That same day, single-use plastic bags are slated to be out of large grocers in the city of Los Angeles, where the ban will also gradually start affecting smaller retailers.

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