

Outside The City? No Single-Use Plastic Bags For You After Friday

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The phrase “paper or plastic” won’t be heard after Friday at several Santa

Clarita Valley grocers or variety stores. That’s when an ordinance outlawing single-use plastic carryout bags in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County goes into effect in the hopes that people will use reusable bags that are more Earth-friendly and don’t end up in landfills.

Currently, there is not an ordinance restricting single-use plastic bags within the Santa Clarita city limits; however, city officials encourage shoppers to think ‘green’ and use reusable bags whenever possible.

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The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted the ordinance in November 2010, banning single use plastic carryout bags and requiring that stores charge 10 cents for each paper bag provided to a customer. The ban goes into effect for large stores – grocers or big box stores or those with a pharmacy – on Friday; smaller stores, standalone pharmacies, convenience stores and food marts must comply beginning January 1, 2012.

Santa Clarita Valley stores affected by the ordinance that goes into effect Friday include:

- Ralphs, 24975 Pico Canyon Road, Stevenson Ranch
- Ralphs, 29675 The Old Road, Castaic
- Ralphs, 31970 Castaic Road, Castaic
- Albertsons, 23850 Copper Hills Road, Saugus
- Albertsons, 26850 The Old Road, Stevenson Ranch
- Vons, 25850 The Old Road, Stevenson Ranch
- Walmart, 25450 The Old Road, Stevenson Ranch
- Rite Aid, 31910 Castaic Road, Castaic
- Walgreens, 27983 Sloan Canyon Road, Castaic
- Walgreens, 28460 Haskell Canyon Road, Castaic
- Acton Market, 3638 Smith Road, Acton

Stores where the restrictions go into effect January 1, 2012

(ban now includes liquor stores, convenience marts, gas stations)

- Acton Unocal Market, 3807 W. Sierra Highway, Acton
- Agua Dulce General Store, 33355 Agua Dulce Canyon Road, Agua Dulce
- AM/PM Minimart, 33488 Crown Valley Road, Acton
- AM/PM Minimart, 24800 Pico Canyon Road, Stevenson Ranch
- BevMo, 26946 The Old Road, Valencia
- Bill's Place, 16374 Sierra Hwy., Canyon Country
- Castaic Truck Stop, 31611 Castaic Road, Castaic
- Chevron, 28070 The Old Road, Valencia
- Chevron, 27549 The Old Road, Valencia
- Dave's Interstate Mobil & Mini, 31785 The Old Road, Castaic
- GNC, 24933 Pico Canyon Road, Stevenson Ranch
- Hasley Canyon Liquor & Deli, 27305 Live Oak Road, Castaic
- International Food Traders, 25269 N. The Old Road, Stevenson Ranch
- Jack's Shell Station, 3820 Sierra Hwy., Acton
- Mobil Mart, 27706 McBean Parkway, Valencia
- Shell, 28120 The Old Road, Castaic
- Shell, 31428 Ridge Route Road, Castaic
- Sweetwater Farms, 33301 Agua Dulce Canyon Road, Agua Dulce
- The Druggist Pharmacy, 27867 Smyth Drive, Valencia
- Tio's Market, Liquor and Deli, 31595 Castaic Road, Castaic
- Union 76, 25357 Chiquella Lane, Newhall
- Unocal 76, 31786 The Old Road, Castaic

Some handy tips from L.A. County regarding carryout bags:

Can I use my own carryout bag? Yes

What can I use as a carryout bag? Anything you can safely carry your groceries with, including: reusable bags, backpacks, baskets, buckets, and boxes, for example.

What if I don't want to buy/bring a reusable bag or purchase a paper bag? If you can comfortably carry your paid purchases out by hand or in your purse/backpack, that is one option; or you can repackage your goods into a shopping cart or basket and unload them directly into your vehicle (and then return the cart or basket).

Won't buying all these paper and reusable bags be a burden on me and my family during these hard economic times? Based on the Socio Economic Study done as a part of the Environmental Impact Report, the estimated increase in overall cost due to this ordinance is \$5.72 per capita annually. This includes stores switching from plastic bags to paper bags (the cost of "free bags" are normally hidden and passed on to consumers); customers buying more trash bin liners; and increased sales tax incurred from the new purchases. However, potential savings or added value to customers, in the form of reduced taxes for litter abatement, increased property values, and the value of other environmental benefits associated with the proposed ordinance were not calculated in this study.

Are reusable bags recyclable? Where can I bring them to be recycled? Depending on the material, it may be recyclable. Visit Earth911.com for more information on recycling locations.

What is the 10-cent charge used for? All monies collected by a store from this ordinance will be retained by the store and may be used for compliance with the ordinance.

Does the 10-cent charge per paper bag apply to everyone? Who is exempt? All affected stores authorized to accept WIC or SNAP purchase payments must provide at the point of sale, free of charge, either reusable bags or recyclable paper carryout bags or both, at the store's option, to any customer

participating either in the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) or in the CalFresh/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Is the 10-cent charge per paper bag taxable? Yes, initial discussions with the Board of Equalization indicate that the 10-cent charge on paper bags would be subject to State sales tax.

Tips for remembering your bags:

With so many billions of bags being consumed each year, addressing the issue of plastic bag litter may seem like a daunting task. The good news is that single use plastic bag litter is caused by individual actions, and individual actions can and will make a huge difference in stemming the tide of single use plastic bag litter. Below are some simple but important things you can do to protect our environment:

- Keep one or two reusable bags in your car, and put a sticker on your keys to remember to bring your bags into the store.
- Place your reusable bags by the door, near your car keys, or with your store coupons.
- Jot a reminder down on your shopping list.
- Put a reminder note on your refrigerator.
- Have some reusable bags at the office.
- If you do forget your bag while in the store, simply walk back to the car to get it (although this is not advisable when you are in the checkout line).