



What You Need to Know About the Wellesley Bag Bylaw

What does the new bylaw say about *plastic* bags?

- No thin film plastic check-out bags less than 4 mils thick
- *Still allowed:* produce bags, dry cleaning bags, newspaper bags, garbage bags, dog-waste bags, and other thin film plastic products

What does the new bylaw say about *paper* bags?

- Must be 100 percent recyclable
- Must have at least 40 percent post-consumer recycled content
- Must be labeled to show that the bag is 100% recyclable and is made of 40% recycled material

What does the new bylaw say about *reusable* bags?

- Must be sewn with stitched handles and designed for multiple uses
- Must be machine washable
- Must be made of natural fibers or durable, non-toxic plastic (not polyethylene or polyvinyl chloride) that is more than 4 mils thick

When does the new bylaw take effect?

- For stores less than 3,500 square feet, the bylaw takes effect on April 12, 2017.
- For stores 3,500 square feet or more, the bylaw will take effect on January 1, 2017, or six months from approval of the bylaw by the Attorney General, whichever date is later.

How will the bylaw be enforced?

The Board of Health will enforce the bylaw. Health Director Leonard Izzo may grant a retailer a 6-month extension for compliance if the law causes undue hardship to a business, or if a business needs more time to draw down an inventory of plastic check-out bags.

Why does the town need a new bylaw for shopping bags?

The bylaw is intended to reduce litter and to ensure that most shopping bags distributed in town can be recycled at the Wellesley Recycling and Disposal Facility. The NRC is committed to long-term public outreach and education to promote reusable bags in Wellesley. **Reusable bags** are the best solution for our environment. Twenty-nine communities in Massachusetts have now passed laws that regulate plastic bags.

Where can I find out more about the Wellesley bag bylaw?

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