



Reduction of Single-use Items Guidebook

2024

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Introduction

Single-use items often end up as litter in the environment and are often difficult to recycle. In order to limit the amount of material going to landfill and positively contribute to litter mitigation, this guidebook will provide direction to staff around how to dispose and find alternatives for these materials. Along with the need to comply to new federal legislation, all City employees are expected to help minimize the City's environmental impact and meet targets in the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP).

On June 20, 2018, City Council passed a motion to request the Federal Government to development a strategy to reduce plastic pollution. Along with the request the City of Mississauga committed to:

- Make every effort to educate and promote the reduction of waste to all staff, with a focus on single-use plastic;
- Reduce the use of non-recyclable, single-use plastics from use or purchase within internal operations, where feasible; and
- Work with the Region of Peel to champion the City's single-use plastic waste reduction initiatives at City facilities.

The Federal Government implemented the Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations (SOR/2022-138) on December 20, 2022. The Regulations prohibit the manufacture, import and sale of single-use plastic checkout bags, cutlery, foodservice ware made from or containing problematic plastics, ring carriers, stir sticks and straws. Any person who manufactures, imports or sells (including to provide free of charge) any of the 6 categories of single-use plastics listed above is subject to the Regulations. On November 16, 2023, the Federal Court overturned Canada's ban on single-use plastics. The nullification of the Regulation will have little impact on this policy. City staff will continue to monitor for any future compliance requirements for single-use plastics.

According to Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), there is scientific evidence to show that plastic pollution is harmful to wildlife and the habitats that they live in. As seen in shoreline cleanups, many single use items such as food and beverage service items contribute to the large portion of the debris. Despite the convenience of single-use items, it is in the City's best interest to reduce and eliminate nonnecessity items.

Guiding Principles

The overall goal for the City is to reduce single-use items and improve the environmental footprint by setting an example. The following guiding principals help steer the path to achieve success in conjunction with the Reduction of Single-use Items in Facilities and Operations Policy:

Transparency in the City's procurement preferences and collaborate with current and future suppliers to identify appropriate alternatives to single-use items.

Influence the broader community to be less reliant on single use items by leveraging City resources, expertise and practices.

Review and consider the impacts of purchasing and using alternatives to single use items and make environmentally responsible purchasing decisions in a way that balances fiscal responsibility and social equity and contributes to a circular economy.

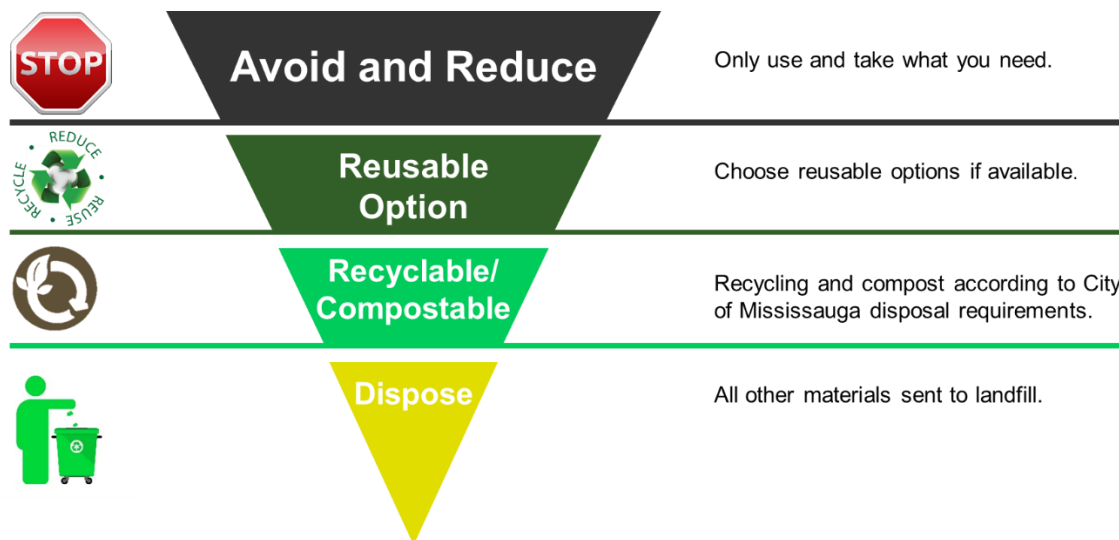
Engage in ongoing learning and development to leverage emerging opportunities and current information.

Evaluate operational activities with the intent to implement environmentally responsible processes/decisions to achieve continuous improvement.

Waste Hierachy

The waste hierarchy is a framework for managing waste in order of priority, from most to least preferred. The 4 levels of the hierarchy are:

1. **Avoid and Reduce:** Avoiding the production of waste by reducing consumption. Example: refusing a single-use carryout bag when purchasing a few items.
2. **Reusable Option:** Whenever feasible, choose the option that is reusable. Example: use reusable plates, cups and cutlery for staff meetings or choose a caterer that provides these.
3. **Recyclable and Compostable:** Choose items that are easily recyclable and compostable in the City of Mississauga? Example: Single-use waterbottles that are made from PET plastic.
4. **Dispose:** All other materials are sent to landfill. Example: All exemptions from the Single-Use Items Policy will be sent to landfill.



Key Points to Remember

1. **Plan Ahead:** identify opportunities for waste reduction by assessing the consumption needs.
2. **Budgeting:** allocate resources effectively and make informed decisions. Initial costs vs. payback period.
3. **Sharing Resources:** the Surplus Asset Solution on Inside Mississauga lists items for reuse by City staff

Federal Plastics Ban

On December 20, 2022, the Federal Government regulated the manufacturing and import for sale of the following single-use plastics: checkout bags, cutlery, foodservice ware (styrofoam), stir sticks and straight straws.

Facts

- Flexible plastic straws with hinge are not banned, but are restricted for accessibility needs
- Plastic ring carriers have a ban date six months after the other five banned items with a start date of June, 2023
- Plastic garbage bags intended for garbage use or pet waste are not banned under the definition
- Plastic lids for hot beverage cups are not part of the regulation due to no alternatives being available

Timeline

- Items can be sold until the end of 2023, one year after ban implementation
- Juice boxes can be sold until June 20, 2024 before falling under ban (due to the attached straw)
- Manufacturing industries in Canada have until Dec 20, 2025 to transition over to the ban, while exporters need additional record keeping ¹






Update

On November 16, 2023, the Federal Court overturned Canada's ban on single-use plastics. The decision nullifies the ban on plastic manufactured items, including the 6 categories of bags, straws, and takeout containers.

The nullification of the Federal ban has little impact on the proposed City's Reduction of Single-use Items in Facilities and Operations policy. The City will continue to recommend alternatives to the specified six problematic plastic items even though the regulation no longer applies and these products are still readily available for purchase by City staff.

¹ Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations – Overview: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-reducing-waste/reduce-plastic-waste/single-use-plastic-overview.html>

Recommendations and Alternatives to Commonly Purchased Single-use Plastics

	Federal Banned Plastic Items				
Recommendations	Checkout Bags	Cutlery	Expanded Polystyrene Foam Products	Stir Sticks	Straws
					
Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable bags • Paper bags • Compostable bags 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable cutlery • Wooden/bamboo cutlery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable containers and cups • Compostable containers and cups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable cutlery • Wooden/bamboo stir stick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable straws • Paper/compostable straws
Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing upon request • Adding fees • Cost or product incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using reusables • Purchasing alternative materials • Adding fees • Providing washing stations • Cost or product incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using reusables • Purchasing alternative materials • Adding fees • Providing washing stations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using reusables • Purchasing alternative materials • Adding fees • Cost or product incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing upon request • Using reusables • Using alternative materials • Adding fees • Providing washing stations
Recyclable/ Compostable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper bags recyclable in City of Mississauga • Only certified compostable bags accepted in compost program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recyclable options currently unavailable • Wood/Bamboo as compostable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #1 Plastic PET as recyclable alternative • Only certified compostable packaging accepted in compost program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recyclable options currently unavailable • Wood/Bamboo as compostable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recyclable options currently unavailable • Paper as compostable

Other Single-use Items for Reduction

Disposable Coffee Pods

Disposable coffee pods consist of several materials that need to be recycled separately but cannot be separated easily (e.g. foil lid, plastic cup, filter, used coffee grounds). This combination of materials makes it nearly impossible to recycle effectively in the City of Mississauga's recycling stream.



[Photo Credit: The District of Muskoka²]

Recommendations for reduction:

- Avoid bringing coffee pods into the office
- Use reusable coffee pods (Please note to keep reusable coffee pods washed and clean before and after use in City facilities)

Paper Towels

Excess use of paper towels is an issue in City facilities and operations according to the recent waste composition study.

Recommendations for reduction:

- Only take what you need
- Put paper towels and tissues in organics where an organics stream bin is available

² <https://www.muskoka.on.ca/en/garbage-and-recycling/where-does-it-go---put-waste-in-its-place.aspx#!rc-cpage=12401>

Hot and Cold Beverage Cups

Hot and cold single-use cups are commonly found in office break rooms, kitchens, and coffee stations where employees can bring or make their own coffee, tea, or other hot/cold beverages. These cups are typically made of paper with a plastic lining or coated with a thin layer of plastic, which makes them difficult to recycle.

Recommendations for reduction:

- Bring or use a reusable mug. Many coffee shops now accept reusable mugs, bring one from home when you go out for coffee. Additionally, consider making coffee in the office, as this can help to reduce waste and save money. You could even make a large batch to share with your co-workers and promote a sense of community in the office.

Giveaways and SWAG

Giveaways, a.k.a. SWAG, is used to help identify the City of Mississauga's brand and to entice participation at local events. Being additionally conscious about the giveaways will help reduce the amount of single-use items generated.

Recommendations for reduction:

- Purchase fewer items with higher quality, sustainably sourced materials
 - Offering a draw for high quality item(s) instead of giving away more low quality items. For example:
 - Raffle for one YETI tumbler (\$50 /unit) versus giving out 15 lower quality reusable plastic waterbottles (\$50/combined)
- Reward based distribution. For example:
 - Request a social media follow
 - Conduct a survey
 - Participate in a game
- Avoid printing dates on promotional giveaways to allow use for multiple events
- Make note of packaging
 - Do your giveaways come with unnecessary packaging? Request less packaging from your manufacturer.



Single-use Condiments

Single-use condiment items, such as small packages of ketchup, mustard, relish, mayo, and individually packed milk, cream, butter, and jam, have a significant environmental impact. Although they may seem convenient and require less cleanup, the production, use, and disposal of these items contribute to waste generation, resource depletion, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Recommendations for reduction:

- Require caterers to use reusable dishware including bulk condiments
- Use large bottles that can be refilled and purchase condiments in bulk (also more cost effective)
- Provide condiments on an ask-only basis. This will eliminate any unused items.



Internal Events and Meetings

Planning and executing an event or a large meeting requires a time commitment from staff. To ensure the reduction of single-use items, there are many different factors to consider.

Recommendations for Reduction:

- **Invitations/Name Tags**
 - Consider using electronic invitations or Outlook calendar
 - Provide reusable lanyards as name tags and collect them at the end of event/meeting
 - Inform guests where to locate waste receptacles
- **Decorations**
 - Avoid decorations that are designed for single-use (streamer, balloons, etc)
 - Skip the centerpieces if possible
 - Use fresh fruit and vegetables or potted plants as an alternative (edible or use as event/meeting favours)
 - Do not print dates on décor and signage in case the event/meeting is reoccurring
- **Food and beverage**
 - Plan the menu ahead to determine the amount of waste generated
 - Choose food items with less packaging or the need for additional processing. For example:
 - Setting out fruits with peels such as bananas, oranges and apples
 - Ask/request catering to provide beverages with reusable mugs and glasses
 - Use reusable cutlery
 - If single-use dishes and utensils must be used, choose ones that are compostable. For example:
 - Wooden cutlery is compostable in the City of Mississauga
 - Paper plates with no wax coating, is compostable in the City of Mississauga
 - Provide cloth napkins (see if caterer can provide)
 - Provide cloth tablecloths (see if caterer can provide, borrow from another group or purchase and wash/store for the next event)
 - Provide bulk water stations or water pitchers as an alternative to plastic water bottles




Litterless Lunches

Another opportunity to promote reduction of single-use items is with litterless lunches. A litterless lunch creates little or no waste. Packing a litterless lunch is simple, reduces single-use items and better for the wallet.


The images below are the promotional material for the litterless lunch campaign. Use these tips with your team to see who can achieve the best waste free lunch.

What is a litterless lunch?


Fruit with a natural wrapper




Reusable containers



Refillable water bottles





Reusable cutlery



Litterless Lunch

- Reusable sandwich bag or a reusable container
- Reusable water bottle or cup
- Buy a large tub of yogurt or fruit and pack a serving in a reusable container
- Buy (nut free) snacks in bulk and pack a serving in a reusable container
- Reusable cutlery
- Reusable lunch bag

Typical Lunch

- Food wrapped in plastic wrap, foil or in a Ziploc bag
- Single-use plastic water bottles, juice boxes, plastic straws
- Single use beverage cups/containers (i.e. coffee cups, plastic cups)
- Yogurt cups, apple sauce cups, fruit cups
- Sealed plastic packaged (nut free) granola bars, cookies, chips, pretzels, crackers, cheese or any other individually packaged snack
- Plastic utensils
- Disposable plastic bags, paper bags

Tips

- Purchase an affordable set of reusable containers and cutlery
- Pack fruits that have a natural wrapper (i.e. banana, orange, apple)
- Plan ahead, pack lunches the night before

Surplus Assets Solution

The Disposal of Surplus City Assets Policy³ outlines the City’s commitment to continuously improve the social and environmental impacts of its disposal of City-owned items in a transparent and accountable way that balances fiscal responsibility and environmental stewardship.

The Surplus Asset Solutions (SAS) is a decision making tool created to support the Surplus City Assets Policy. Assets such as books, branded material, construction material, IT equipment, office supplies and other categories can be posted on the SAS platform. The SAS User Guide will support staff on how to use the online platform⁴.

For questions regarding the SAS platform, email sas@mississauga.ca.

Surplus Assets Solutions

Learn how to properly dispose of an asset in accordance with the City's Corporate Policy for the disposal of surplus assets.

OPTION 1: REUSE

View list of available items for internal reuse throughout the City.

OPTION 2: LEARN

See the table below for Surplus Asset Categories and how to dispose of them.

OPTION 3: DISPOSE





Add new Surplus Item. Start the process of disposing of a Surplus Asset.

OPTION 4: ASK

Still have questions? Ask an Expert. [Send us an email.](#)

Select a Surplus Asset Category

Learn How to Dispose

 <h4>Books</h4> <p>Paperbacks Hardcovers</p>	 <h4>Branded Material</h4> <p>Uniforms T-Shirts Sweatshirts Jackets Reusable Cups Water Bottles Envelopes Banners</p>	 <h4>Construction Material</h4> <p>Building Materials Utility Equipment & Utility Poles Traffic Poles</p>	 <h4>Fleet</h4> <p>Heavy & Light duty Vehicles Heavy & Light duty Equipment Miscellaneous Equipment</p>
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³ Link to Policy: <http://inside.mississauga.ca/Policies/Documents/03-06-10.pdf#search=surplus%20asset>

⁴ Link to SAS User Guide: [http://teamsites.mississauga.ca/sites/192/SharedDocuments/Surplus%20Asset%20Solution%20-%20User%20Guide%20\(revised%20Dec.%202020\).pdf#search=surplus%20asset](http://teamsites.mississauga.ca/sites/192/SharedDocuments/Surplus%20Asset%20Solution%20-%20User%20Guide%20(revised%20Dec.%202020).pdf#search=surplus%20asset)

Contact

For any additional comments or questions regarding the Reduction of Single-use Items in City Facilities and Operations Policy or this guidebook, please email: wastemanagement@mississauga.ca