

Proposed Berkeley Disposable Foodware and Litter Reduction Ordinance

Single Use Disposable Foodware includes any food service containers, packaging, utensils, and other related items that are provided for one time use in the service of prepared, ready-to-eat food and beverages.

Problems with Disposable Foodware

Street Litter:

67% of street litter is disposable foodware

Business Expense:

Food businesses spend between \$0.25 and \$0.85 per take out meal on disposable foodware

Stormwater:

Berkeley has a \$2.29M annual unfunded stormwater compliance expense in part to prevent street litter from entering storm drains

Clean Up Costs:

City of Berkeley, Business Improvement Districts, and businesses pay a lot for street sweeping, litter collection, and disposal from public and private waste receptacles

Ocean Pollution:

Disposable foodware is a major contributor to ocean pollution and harms marine wildlife and ecosystems

Costly Recycling:

Disposable foodware contaminates recycling and compost increasing the cost and decreasing the effectiveness of those programs

Voluntary Solutions Have Failed:

There has been no comprehensive, mandatory, and serious municipal program, voluntary solutions have not addressed the issue. A level playing field is necessary.

Municipalities Must Lead:

Leadership from State and/or Federal governments is not up to the task

Confidential

Berkeley leaders are preparing a multi-pronged effort to significantly reduce disposable foodware. If successful, this will create a new global standard for local jurisdictions.

Proposed Ordinance Elements Are:

1. Durable Foodware Only for In-House Dining (No Disposables)
 - Excludes foil, wrappers, and liners
 - Exclusions for physical or financial hardship
2. Disposable Foodware Must be Acceptable per a List Maintained by City:
 - Accepted as compostable and recyclable by City programs
 - Fluorinated compounds phase out
 - Recycled content standards may be added later
3. Take Out Charge For Disposable FoodWare:
 - \$0.25 for Cups (one charge Includes lids, sleeves, straws, etc.)
 - \$0.25 for Food Containers- charge is for a “Meal”- i.e. up to 3 containers that hold 16 oz or more
 - Businesses keep the charges to offset costs
 - Exclusion for SNAP & WIC shoppers (like statewide paper bag charge)
4. Compostable Straw, Lids, Stirrers Etc. By Request Only (i.e. available on request or at self-serve station)

Zero Waste Berkeley

Zero Waste Berkeley is a group of professional Zero Waste leaders and active, engaged Berkeley residents with active participants from:

Ecology Center

UpStream Policy

Clean Water Action

Rethink Disposable

Plastic Pollution Coalition

Story of Stuff

Surfrider Foundation

Environmental Consultants

Global Alliance for Incinerator

Alternatives