



# Bye, Bye Plastic Bags!

## Plastic Bag Ban / Questions & Answers

### WHO is supporting this campaign?

- Co-leaders: EWSWA and the City of Windsor.
- Supported by: our collectors- GFL, WDS, County of Essex, EWSWA Board members, City of Windsor Council.

### WHAT is the campaign about?

- **No plastic bags are recycled in Essex-Windsor- period!**
- Includes plastic bags with recycling loops (symbols) on them.
- This means recycling will not be picked up if bags are found by the collectors - in any recycling receptacles like carts and bins.
- Bags can't be used as a recycling container (e.g., a plastic bag containing shredded paper- instead use a paper bag) or put loose (e.g., frozen plastic food bag) in recycling curbside collection.
- To better guide you, 4 forms that plastic bags may come in:
  1. **Plastic Bags:** plastic bags, bread bags, milk bags, newspaper bags, etc.
  2. **Plastic Wrap:** plastic overwrap on 'cased' bottle drinks – like water, cling wrap, cheese wrap, etc.
  3. **Plastic Pouches/Tubes:** food pouches, cracker pouches, drink pouches, etc.
  4. **Plastic Packaging:** air pillows, toy packaging, shipping peanuts, etc.

Visit [ewswa.org](http://ewswa.org) for more details.

NOTE: EWSWA will still be collecting plastic containers and bottles that are loose in your bin/cart as per usual service. Visit [Ewswa.org](http://Ewswa.org) for more information.

### WHEN does this start?

- June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, is the official ban for plastic bags, where collectors will not pick-up recycle bins/carts if bags are visible.
- A campaign to support this ban starts at the end of March with the publication of Windsor calendars and a press release and a massive media campaign and promotions at events and the annual Truckload Sale.

### Where is the campaign?

- It affects all users of the Essex County and Windsor curbside recycling collection program.
- It spans across all sectors: residents, public, private, multi-res, ICI (Industrial, Commercial and Institutional).

## Why is this campaign happening?

- Essex-Windsor's recycling program has never recycled these materials.
- Due to an emphasis on clean recycling by domestic buyers and a massive increase in the use of plastics in today's packaging market, an official ban that enforced this program was needed.
- The recycling plant is not designed to process plastic bags and cause operational issues (e.g., increase downtime, maintenance, repairs, contamination), increase contamination levels in final end markets and disposal costs.
- Plastic bags that reach the recycling plants use additional labour to be pulled out of the recycling stream and then hauled later to the Essex-Windsor Regional Landfill where they are disposed of as waste.
- Many municipalities who once recycled plastic film have stopped as a result of operational and marketing issues they faced.

### Q1. What do I use instead of a plastic bag to put my recyclables in for curbside collection?

#### *If they are using plastic bags as an overflow receptacle:*

- Buy an extra recycle box.
- Drop off excess recyclables at 1 of 3 Drop-off Depots for free.
- Residents can purchase 35 gal carts and recycle boxes at the Annual Truckload Sale (May 3, 2020). There will be a BOGO (buy one, get one free) sale for recycle boxes.

#### *If they are using plastic bags as recycling boxes inside and out for curbside collection:*

- Buy an additional recycle box/ mini box (3 gal). The minis fit perfectly under a sink or cabinet – and can easily be emptied into a recycle box/cart).
- Drop off excess recyclables at 1 of 3 Drop-off Depots for free.
- 35 gal carts and a BOGO sale on recycle boxes will be available at the Annual Truckload Sale (May 3, 2020).

#### *If they use plastic bags to combat inclement weather (e.g., winds, rain):*

- Buy a recycle cart or an extra recycle box.
- Drop off excess recyclables at 1 of 3 Drop-off Depots for free.
- 35 gal carts and a BOGO sale on recycle boxes will be available at the Annual Truckload Sale (May 3, 2020).

### Q2. I buy the blue recycling plastic bags from the store – I can't use these anymore?

- These are NOT accepted in the program. Don't use them, the recycle centre disposes of them to the Essex-Windsor Regional Landfill as waste.
- Do NOT buy these bags and save your money- Keep items loose in recycle boxes/carts.
- Recycle Boxes are cheaper and last longer; they are reusable.
- Plastic bags are wasteful and made of petroleum (a non-renewable resource).
- Only use extra plastic bags to contain waste where necessary (e.g., dog poop, garbage).
- The recycling loop (recycle symbol) does **not** mean it's recyclable in our community.
- Each community has a specific program – Essex-Windsor does **NOT** accept plastic bags.

### Q3. Why are companies allowed to sell them?

- We deal with municipal recycling, not corporate/international companies.
- We have no control over what a company (e.g., SC Johnson) sells.
- Many of these companies are international, and in other countries or communities' regulations on plastic bags may be different.

- Q4. If I can't use a plastic bag as a receptacle, I'm not going to recycle anymore.**
- We are not trying to make recycling difficult. The bottom line is that they are contaminants in the recycling program and cause many issues both operationally and at the marketing level.
  - Plastic bags cause issues at our plants, which costs the taxpayer.
  - We appreciate your continued support in making our recycling program a success.
- Q5. What plastics can be recycled?**
- Plastic bottles and jars/ jugs– food grade/ bathroom/laundry.
  - Plastic bottles and jars can include water bottles, shampoo bottles, bleach jugs, fabric softener jugs, etc.
  - Plastic clamshell containers – clear (e.g., cookies, muffins).
  - Resources: EWSWA.org, Recycle Coach App., EWSWA Social media (Facebook, Twitter).
- Q6. I live in an apartment/condo how do I get my recyclables to the remote cart location?**
- Dump recyclables into the cart – do not put plastic bags into the recycling cart.
  - Use a reusable bag – dump the recyclables in the cart.
  - BOGO recycle bags will be available at the Annual Truckload Sale (May 3, 2020).
  - Ask Property Manager for a garbage receptacle near recycling carts for plastic bag disposal.
- Q7. Businesses – we use plastic bags to line the boxes?**
- Keep your liner in the box and dump items in the box directly into carts.
  - Do not include the plastic liner.
- Q8. How to avoid plastic bags, plastic wrap, plastic pouches/tubes, and plastic packaging.**
- Bring and use reusable bags for groceries.
  - Use paper/reusable bags and/or cardboard boxes to carry out purchased items.
  - Use reusable vegetable bags instead of single-use plastic bags.
  - Shop with reusable containers at the Bulk Barn.
- Q9. The Windsor Star is packaged in a plastic bag – what do I do with it?**
- The blue plastic bag that the Windsor Star is packaged in - is garbage if you have no use for it. Please dispose of it properly in the garbage.