



SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Green Paper: Del Mar's Ordinances to Reduce Plastic Pollution in our Environment

Prepared by the Sustainability Advisory Committee Plastics Subcommittee

Since 2016, the City of Del Mar has adopted four ordinances banning single-use plastics, to reduce plastic pollution on our beaches, in our environment, and in our waste stream. In addition, in its work plan for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, the City Council has included a single-use plastic ordinance “to regulate the use of single-use plastic food service ware citywide and at City-sponsored events, with ordinances from neighboring jurisdictions of Solana Beach and Encinitas serving as references.”

Here is a summary of Del Mar's existing pollution and waste reduction ordinances, including the corresponding Del Mar Municipal Code (DMMC) chapters:

- [DMMC Chapter 11.36](#): A single-use plastic carry-out bag use reduction ordinance was adopted on May 16, 2016. It prohibits the use of single-use plastic carry-out bags at retail establishments, restaurants, food vendors, catering food trucks, and farmer's markets.
- [DMCC Chapter 11.40](#): The use of expanded polystyrene and non-recyclable plastic disposable food service ware was banned and adopted by ordinance on December 3, 2018. It regulates and prohibits the use of expanded polystyrene (EPS or Styrofoam) and non-recyclable plastic disposable food service ware. This includes plates, cups or drinkware, bowls, trays, wrappers or wrapping, platters, cartons, condiment containers, hinged or lidded containers, or any other container used to package prepared foods.
- [DMCC Chapter 11.44](#): An ordinance that prohibits the usage of plastic straws and stirrers, and requires that only biodegradable or reusable straws are to be provided if requested by the customer. Adopted on March 4, 2019, this ordinance bans the use of plastic straws and stirrers and requires that biodegradable or reusable straws should not be offered with a beverage in any restaurant or venue in Del Mar, unless specifically requested by a customer.
- [DMCC Chapter 11.48](#): An ordinance that bans the use, sale, and distribution of balloons filled with a gas lighter than air (e.g. helium) was adopted on December 4, 2023. This litter reduction ordinance prevents the sale and the release or disposal of helium-filled balloons. This promotes environmentally

sustainable practices throughout the city and ensures that balloons—which can harm and choke marine life—do not end up in the ocean.

The City of Del Mar expects all residents and visitors to comply with the above ordinances at all times. When at the beach or renting a city facility or venue such as Powerhouse Community Center, Seagrove Park, or Powerhouse Park, the City requires that caterers and permittees use conservation practices, which include: energy-efficient food preparation and cleaning methods, as well as the use of equipment composed of sustainable materials to decrease the amount of waste and reduce overall energy consumption. Using non-disposable plates, glasses, utensils, and alternatives to single-use plastic water bottles should also be prioritized.

If you observe that a vendor, retail establishment, restaurant, catering food truck, farmer's market provider, or other permittee is not following the ordinances described above, please contact GoGreen@delmar.ca.us.