

Reducing Takeout Packaging Waste in NYC

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Introduction



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Certified as a Zero Waste Business Associate by the
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Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board (SWAB)

Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board (SWAB) was established in 1989 by NYC's Local Law No. 19.

- Non-profit, non-governmental Organization dedicated to increasing recycling, reducing solid waste, and advancing solid waste policy in New York City
- Board comprised of waste and recycling industry experts and concerned citizens
- All members appointed by the Manhattan Borough President

www.manhattanswab.org



NYC Zero Waste Goals

#ONENYC



- ✓ Expand organics program
- ✓ Implement single stream recycling
- ✓ Reduce plastic bags and all other non-compostables/recyclables
- ✓ Expand recycling at NYCHA housing and throughout NYC



- Make all schools Zero Waste schools ✓
- Increase reuse and recycling of electronics and textiles ✓
- Develop an equitable save-as-you-throw program ✓
- Reduce commercial waste disposal 90% by 2030 ✓

2 Major NYC Waste Policies Impacting Businesses *Today*

- New commercial organics law enforcement started Jan. 19, 2017
- New commercial recycling rules – will be enforced starting August 1, 2017

NYC Commercial Recycling rules: All businesses must recycle - metal, glass, plastic, paper, cardboard and beverage cartons

Metal, Glass, Plastic, and Beverage Cartons



Metal Cans,
Aluminum Foil



Glass Jars
and Bottles



Rigid Plastic



Mixed Metal/
Plastic Objects



Beverage Cartons

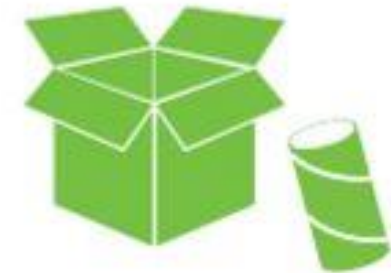
Paper



Receipts, Mail, Office Paper, Folders



Newspapers, Magazines, Catalogs



Cardboard

NYC Business Waste Facts



Paper
Waste

37+%



Food
Waste

35+%



Metal, Glass,
& Plastic

17+%

NYC Businesses generate 3 million tons of waste / year,
*If all Paper/Cardboard, Metal, Glass, Plastic and Cartons were Recycled
and all Food waste was Composted we would already be at 90%
Diversion!*

Takeout Waste: The Problem

Upstream: Fossil fuel intensive

Current system for producing takeout food containers is *not* sustainable; production of takeout containers involves:

- Extraction of fossil fuels
- Manufacturing powered by fossil fuels
- Transporting takeout containers fueled by fossil fuels



Takeout Waste: The Problem

Downstream: GHG emissions, air pollution and other toxics



Collecting and transporting waste

- Results in air pollution & GHGs
- NYC sends waste to landfills far away, such as:
 - Seneca Meadows Landfill- 270 miles from NYC
 - Virginia landfills- 400+ miles from NYC

Landfilling

- U.S. MSW landfills 3rd largest source of human-related methane emissions ~18.2% of U.S. human emissions in 2014 (U.S. EPA)
- Produces toxic leachate
- Takes up valuable space

Incineration

- NYC sends a portion of its waste (commercial & residential) to NJ incinerators
- Generates emissions that contribute to air pollution & climate change including:
 - Carbon dioxide (CO₂)
 - Nitrous oxide (N₂O)
 - Ammonia and others depending on technology
- Generates toxic incinerator bottom ash (IBA)

Takeout Waste: The Problem

Takeout waste isn't just filling our landfills & incinerators, its filling our beaches and waterways as well



1. Cigarettes



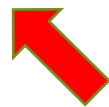
2. Food containers
& wrappers



3. Beverage bottles



4. Plastic bags



According to a recent study by Ocean Conservancy, takeout food containers and wrappers are the #2 most prolific litter on our beaches

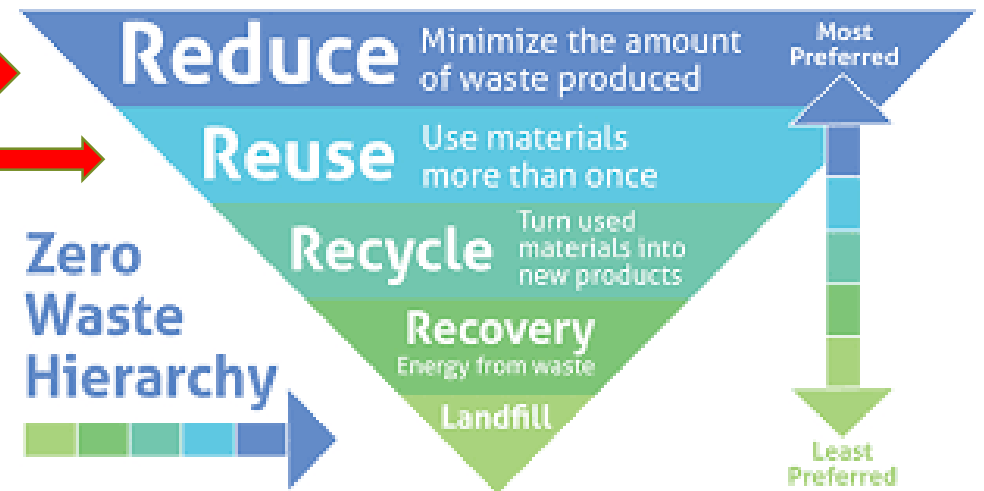
Takeout Waste: The Solution

Recycling takeout containers is *not* the solution:

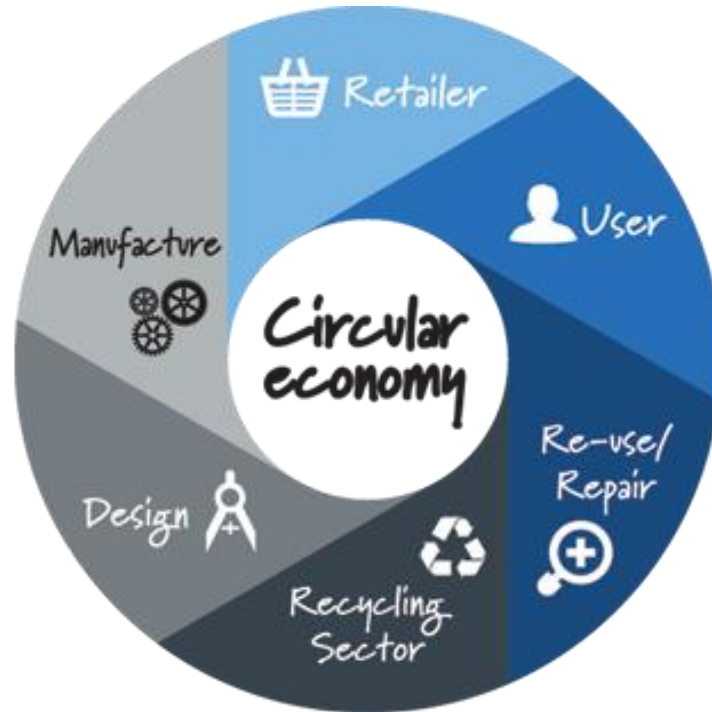
- Many containers destined for recycling end up as litter and wind up in our waterways
- Some takeout containers such as EPS foam (aka Styrofoam) are not recyclable in most places
- Recycling is a very fossil fuel intensive process: collection, transport, processing, shipping, etc.
- Often materials are “down-cycled”

The solution is to *Reduce* waste by *Reusing* takeout containers.

- ✓ Switch to durable, reusable containers that can be washed and used again, and again, and again.
- ✓ Remember to pack a clean container in the morning
- ✓ Buy each of your family members their own reusable takeout container
- ✓ Spread the word about reusable takeout containers to friends & colleagues



Takeout Waste: The Solution



How Restaurants Can Make the Switch

Cut down on waste & reduce cost by providing customers with a reusable container for refill and purchasing less single-use takeaway containers



DOHMH health code (Article 81, section 81.46) now allows restaurants to provide customers with reusable food containers returnable for refill as long as the:

- a) Containers are washed and sanitized by the restaurant before reuse; or
- b) Establishment obtains Health Department approval of a written standard operating procedure demonstrating that there is no contamination of food and/or food contact surfaces

NYC DOHMH Health Code Article 81.46

- (a) *Beverage containers.* Employees or consumers may refill consumers' personal take-out beverage containers (such as thermally insulated bottles, non-spill coffee cups, and promotional beverage containers) with beverages that are not potentially hazardous foods, provided that beverages are dispensed in a manner that prevents contact with, or contamination of, the food contact surfaces of the beverage dispensing equipment.
- (b) *Other containers.* An establishment providing consumers with returnable containers must wash and sanitize all such containers before reuse in accordance with §81.29 of this Article. An establishment that does not wash and sanitize patrons' containers before reuse must obtain Department approval of a written standard operating procedure that demonstrates that there is no contamination of food and/or food contact surfaces. Such procedure must be maintained on the premises and made available at the time of Department inspection.
- (c) *Container materials.* Reusable containers that will be washed and sanitized must be made of food grade materials resistant under normal conditions of use to scratching, scoring, decomposition, crazing, chipping and distortion, and of sufficient weight and thickness to be washed and sanitized in accordance with §81.29 of this Article.



How Restaurants Can Make the Switch



- Provide customers with a returnable container, then:
 - ✓ Wash and sanitize container before reuse; or
 - ✓ Write a procedure showing how your restaurant will avoid contamination when filling reusable takeaway containers:
 - Submit procedure to DOHMH, Bureau of Food Safety and Community Sanitation, 212-676-1600
 - Contact Keri Crayne, MPH, RD | Special Projects Director, Bureau of Food Safety and Community Sanitation, NYC DOHMH with any questions, 646-632-6247, kcrayne1@health.nyc.gov
- Once your plan is approved by DOHMH:
 - ✓ Train your staff on how to implement the plan
 - ✓ Communicate to staff that they can provide customer's with reusable takeaway containers for refill
 - ✓ Communicate this information to your customers!

Benefits to Reducing Takeout Waste



Cutting Costs From Reducing Takeout Waste



Switch from use of single-use items to reusables up and down the supply chain



Buy less single-use takeaway containers



Pay less for waste collection/disposal

Manhattan SWAB initiative to increase reusable takeout containers in NYC



- Will hold event with restaurants and DOHMH in 2017 to help increase use of reusable/refillable takeout containers
- Planning on partnering with other organizations to expand public education about switching to reusable takeout containers

Please check back on our website for more info: <http://www.manhattanswab.org/>



Thank you.

