



# sanitation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[www.nyc.gov/sanitation](http://www.nyc.gov/sanitation)

## NYC Sanitation Offers NYC Residents FREE Reusable Bags in Advance of State Bag Ban

In advance of the New York State plastic carry-out bag ban set to take effect March 1, the New York City Department of Sanitation has announced that they **will be distributing some 100,000 free reusable bags to city residents** over the next three weeks. Starting March 1, 2020, single-use plastic bags are banned, with limited exceptions, in New York State. In addition, businesses will begin collecting a five-cent fee on paper carryout bags in New York City. Shoppers that bring a reusable bag will not be charged.

“City residents use billions of single-use carryout bags every year, and they are frequently used for only a few minutes at a time,” said **Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia**. “Plastic bags are particularly troublesome as contaminants in our recycling, as they often clog machinery, and we’ve all seen plastic bags stuck in city trees around the city. This is not sustainable. Bring your reusable bag every time you shop, and help us keep the city healthy, safe and clean.”

“I’m very excited to see New York’s plastic bag ban go into effect this March,” said **Council Member Antonio Reynoso**. “A ban on plastic bags is exactly the type of direct action that we need to mount a formidable fight against climate change. Thanks to the ban, New Yorkers will be incentivized to adopt more sustainable habits, resulting in less pollution and heightened awareness about the climate crisis. I am committed to supporting the Department of Sanitation’s efforts to help New Yorkers make the transition by distributing reusable bags to constituents in my own district.”

To help get City residents prepare for the change, the Department of Sanitation has already distributed **more than 700,000 reusable bags** since 2016. The bags have been made available at events, through elected officials and community boards, from community groups and to residents taking the Zero Waste Pledge, among other venues.



New Yorkers can receive a free reusable bag by taking the Zero Waste Pledge or attending a reusable bag giveaway event. Upcoming events are listed below, and more are listed on our events listing at [nyc.gov/bags](http://nyc.gov/bags).

**Bronx:**

Wednesday February 12, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	295 St Ann's Avenue
Friday, February 14, 2:30 p.m.- 3 p.m.	1841 Westchester Avenue
Thursday, February 20, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.	877 Southern Boulevard
Thursday, February 20, 2:30 p.m.- 3:30 p.m.	1065 E 163rd Street

**Brooklyn:**

Monday, February 10, 2:30 p.m.- 3 p.m.	1932 Fulton Street
Thursday, February 13, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.	1555 Linden Boulevard
Thursday, February 27, 2:30 p.m.- 4 p.m.	665 New Lots Avenue

**Queens:**

Monday, February 10, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.	68-07 Burns Street
Wednesday, February 12, 7:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.	183-02 Union Turnpike
Saturday, February 29, 1 p.m.- 4 p.m.	115-21 Farmers Boulevard

**Manhattan:**

Friday, February 14, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	8 East 109th Street
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**Staten Island:**

Tuesday, February 11, 7:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.	1000 Richmond Terrace
Friday, February 28, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.	2600 Hylan Boulevard
Friday, February 28, 7 p.m.- 8 p.m.	77 Bennett Street

New York City residents, commuters and visitors use and discard approximately 10 billion single use carryout bags annually. These bags make up about 2.5 percent of our waste stream. On average, the Department collects more than 1,700 tons of single-use carryout bags per week, totaling 91,000 tons of plastic and paper carryout bags each year.

These products, particularly lightweight single-use plastic carryout bags, are a major contributor to marine and other litter. Single-use plastic bags often end up blowing into the streets and onto the branches of trees, creating unsightly street litter. When rain carries them into catch basins, they pollute the City's waterways, posing a threat to marine animals that often mistake these bags as a food source. Additionally, plastic bags contained in the City's metal, glass and plastic recycling collections can jam the sorting machines at the City's recycling facility, causing processing delays during the cleaning and repair of sorting equipment. They are, quite literally, a blight on our city.

The New York State bag ban, passed last year by the legislature, takes effect on March 1. The ban provides limited exemptions. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has posted information on the plastic bag ban on their website at [on.ny.gov/byobagny](http://on.ny.gov/byobagny).

**About the New York City Department of Sanitation**

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) keeps New York City healthy, safe and clean by collecting, recycling and disposing of waste, cleaning streets and vacant lots, and clearing snow and ice. The Department operates 59 district garages and manages a fleet of more than 2,000 rear-loading collection trucks, 450 mechanical brooms and 705 salt/sand spreaders. The Department clears litter, snow and ice from approximately 6,500 miles of City streets and removes debris from vacant lots as well as abandoned vehicles from City streets.