



sanitation

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CONTACT: Press Office / 646-885-5020

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www.nyc.gov/sanitation

NYC Sanitation Reminds Residents that State's Plastic Bag Ban and Paper Bag Fee Begins March 1, 2020

Department has Given Out More than 800,000 Free, Reusable Bags Since 2016

The New York City Department of Sanitation is reminding city residents that starting March 1, the State's ban on most single-use plastic bags, and fee on paper carryout bags, will be in effect. Shoppers who bring a reusable bag to the store will not be charged. To help residents prepare for the change, today, Mayor Bill de Blasio and Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia gave out free, reusable bags to passersby at a giveaway event in Union Square, one of many opportunities the City has provided to residents to get a bag.

"We only have one chance to save our planet," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "Reducing the use of plastic bags will help us create a more sustainable city. New Yorkers: Don't forget to bring your reusable bag to shop starting on March 1, and if you need a bag, we've got you!"

"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."

To help City residents prepare for the change, the Department of Sanitation has distributed more than 800,000 free reusable bags since 2016, including some 200,000 bags in the last two months alone. The bags have been made available at specific bag giveaways, at community events, through elected officials and community boards, from community groups and to residents taking the Zero Waste Pledge, among other venues. Residents interested in getting a bag should visit nyc.gov/bags.

New York City residents, commuters and visitors discard approximately 10 billion single-use carryout bags every year. 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, single-use 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.

The New York State bag ban, passed last year by the legislature, takes effect March 1, 2020, and 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.

About the New York City Department of Sanitation

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) promotes a healthy environment through the efficient management of solid waste and the development of environmentally sound long-range planning for handling refuse, including recyclables. 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.