

Disposable Food Service Ware Reduction and Reuse Ordinance

Single-use foodware items, such as plastic and paper cups, plates, and utensils, have a short lifespan but a long-lasting negative impact on human health and the environment. Additionally, most of these single-use foodware items are neither readily recyclable nor compostable, and contaminate recycling and composting programs. Replacing single-use foodware with durable, reusable alternatives is essential to addressing these issues.

StopWaste helps advance reusable foodware innovation and infrastructure in Alameda County through grant funding, outreach, technical assistance, and policy tools. As part of this effort, StopWaste has developed a model ordinance that interested jurisdictions in Alameda County can tailor and then adopt in order to encourage the transition to reusable foodware in their communities.

Key recommended provisions of the ordinance include:

- Requiring reusable foodware at dine-in establishments,
- Mandating acceptance of customer-provided reusables,
- Imposing charges on problematic disposables while offering discounts for reusables, and
- Defining criteria for compliant disposable foodware.

Additional provisions address reusable cups at large events, city facility requirements, and restrictions on specific items like packaged water and polystyrene foam.

The model ordinance incorporates vetted policy language while also providing flexibility for member agencies to customize the language, coverage, and implementation timelines based on their needs. StopWaste will offer support to agencies in the form of customization assistance, data analysis, technical help, countywide outreach materials, and grant funding for the development of a reuse infrastructure. Member agencies are responsible for implementing, enforcing, and conducting outreach within their communities.

For more information about reducing disposable foodware in Alameda County, visit www.StopWaste.org/reusablefoodware.



The benefits of implementing reusable foodware include reducing litter, conserving resources, saving money, promoting sustainability, protecting public health, and providing more pleasant dining experiences.



The model ordinance is designed to be modular and easily customized to fit the needs of each member agency