



General FAQs

Why regulate single-use plastic bags?

There are a few reasons for regulating single-use plastic bags in the District of Oak Bay:

- to reduce the amount of plastic bag litter and waste in the community, as well as plastic bag disposal at the garbage and recycling depot, and ultimately in landfills. According to the Government of Canada, Canadians use up to 15 billion plastic bags every year;
- to respond to the Fall 2021 survey of local businesses in which development of regulations was identified as one of the top 3 ways in which the District could support local businesses to reduce their use of single-use plastics; and,
- to improve regional consistency in the regulation of checkout bags, essentially mirroring the Bylaws adopted in Victoria, Saanich and Esquimalt.

Can residents continue to use plastic bags that they already have after the bylaw comes in effect later in 2022?

Residents can continue to reuse their existing plastic bags. The Bylaw regulates business practices and states that new single-use plastic bags cannot be distributed to customers after a certain date (still to be established).

When do businesses have to comply with the Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw?

The Bylaw is expected to take effect in November or December 2022, 6 months from the date of adoption (exact date still to be established). After this date, all business licence holders within the District of Oak Bay will need to stop offering plastic bags at the point of purchase and to start charging a minimum fee for recycled or reusable bags provided at the point of purchase.

What fees will I be charged for recycled or reusable bags at the point of purchase?

The Bylaw requires businesses to charge a minimum fee for recycled or reusable bags provided at the point of purchase. Fees are intended to offset costs to businesses and reduce the demand for plastic bags. For one (1) year after the Bylaw takes effect (starting

approximately November or December 2022), the minimum fees will be \$0.15 for each recycled paper bag, and \$1.00 for each reusable bag. After the one (1) year introductory period, minimum fees will increase to be consistent with the fees in Victoria, Saanich, and Esquimalt, which are: \$0.25 for each recycled paper bag, and \$2.00 for each reusable bag.

How will the District enforce the Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw?

The District is prioritizing outreach and education to ensure businesses have the support they need to comply with the Bylaw. If a business is found to be out of compliance with the Bylaw, District actions will focus on education, outreach and support to help them comply. Following these educational actions to achieve compliance, increasing levels of enforcement may be used. Enforcement may include issuing tickets, which carry a fine of up to \$100 per offence.

Where can plastic bags be recycled?

Existing plastic bags can be taken to depots around the District and to many grocery stores and retail outlets to have these bags recycled responsibly. The Recycling Council of British Columbia is a good resource for finding out where to recycle specific materials.

I use a plastic bag to line my waste bins. Does this bylaw mean I cannot use plastic bags to collect my garbage anymore?

Plastic bin-liners and garbage bags can still be purchased in bulk at retail outlets. We encourage residents to continue to separate kitchen scraps, and recyclables from landfill waste.

I use plastic bags to pick up my pet's waste. What will I use instead?

Use the same dog bags that are available in dispensers or pet stores across the region.

Can reusable bags be recycled at the end of their intended service life?

Some reusable bags can be recycled while others cannot be recycled. The Municipal Drop-Off Depot accepts reusable bags.

Questions?

Email administration@oakbay.ca
or Call 250-598-3311