

NEWS RELEASE

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Nanaimo's checkout bag regulation bylaw receives Provincial approval

Summary

Today (February 12, 2021) the Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy announced approval of Nanaimo's Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw 2020 No. 7283. The Bylaw will now return to Council for adoption with an effective date of July 1, 2021.

The Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw will encourage the use of reusable bags by eliminating use of plastic bags and sets fees for paper bags and new reusable bags. Paper bags will need to contain at least 40% post-consumer recycled content and be labelled as recyclable. Reusable bags for sale should be washable and capable of at least 100 uses. The regulation will list exemptions, including but not limited to small paper bags, bags for bulk foods and produce, wrap for flowers, and multi-packs of plastic bags. The regulation will prohibit the distribution of compostable and biodegradable checkout bags.

With the Minister's proclamation of Plastic Pollution Awareness Day on Monday, February 15 the City will begin an education and awareness campaign to assist residents and businesses with the transition.

Nanaimo's Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw will compliment the Federal and Provincial governments movements to reduce harmful single-use plastics, and support the waste reduction goals set out in the Regional District of Nanaimo's Solid Waste Management Plan.

For more information, visit www.nanaimo.ca/goto/BYOBag.

Strategic Link: Taking a leadership role in protecting our natural environment and our municipal infrastructure.

Key Points

- On October 19, 2020 Nanaimo City Council unanimously gave three readings to Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw 2020 No. 7283.
- The Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw encourages use of reusable bags by regulating the distribution of plastic bags, paper bags and new reusable bags.
- Checkout bags labelled 'compostable' or 'biodegradable' are prohibited under the new bylaw, as some of these form harmful micro-plastics as they degrade.
- Pending final council adoption, the bylaw comes into effect on July 1, 2021. This gives time for retailers to adjust their delivery and work through any existing stock of bags.

Quotes

"This is another important practical step in making real one of our four Strategic Themes, namely, Environmental Responsibility by individually reducing our collective carbon footprint."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Continued... Nanaimo's checkout bag regulation bylaw receives Provincial approval

"February 15 being proclaimed the provincial Plastic Pollution Awareness Day brings even more awareness and education around this important topic. We look forward to continue working with the community on all our Zero Waste goals"

Kirsten Gellein
Zero Waste Coordinator
City of Nanaimo

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