

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
COUNTY OF SONOMA WASTE REDUCTION PROGRAM FOR CARRYOUT BAGS**

DATE: October 17, 2012

TO: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Organizations and Interested Parties

LEAD AGENCY: Sonoma County Waste Management Agency

The Sonoma County Waste Management Agency (SCWMA) intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a proposed regulation promoting a uniform program for reducing waste by decreasing the use of single use carryout bags. In accordance with Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the SCWMA has prepared this Notice of Preparation to provide Responsible Agencies and other interested parties with information describing the proposal and its potential environmental effects. The environmental factors that the SCWMA has determined would potentially be affected by the project include:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Utilities and Service Systems

PROJECT SPONSOR: Sonoma County Waste Management Agency
2300 County Center Drive, Suite B100
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

PROJECT LOCATIONS: The Waste Reduction Program For Carryout Bags would apply to any retail establishment that sells perishable or nonperishable goods including, but not limited to, clothing, food, and personal items directly to the customer; and is located within or doing business within the geographical limits of the County of Sonoma, including the nine incorporated cities and town (County of Sonoma unincorporated areas; City of Cloverdale; City of Cotati; City of Healdsburg; City of Petaluma; City of Rohnert Park; City of Santa Rosa; City of Sebastopol; City of Sonoma; and Town of Windsor).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed Waste Reduction Program for Carryout Bags (Proposed Ordinance) would regulate the use of paper and plastic single use carryout bags within the geographical limits of Sonoma County, including the nine incorporated cities and town, starting July 1, 2013. The intent of the ordinance is to reduce the environmental impacts related to the use of single use carryout bags, and to promote a shift toward the use of reusable bags. It is anticipated that by prohibiting single use plastic carryout bags and requiring a mandatory charge for each paper bag distributed by retailers, the Proposed Ordinance would provide a disincentive to customers to request paper bags when shopping at regulated stores and promote a shift to the use of reusable bags by retail customers, while reducing the number of single use plastic and paper bags within the participating municipalities.

The ordinance would (1) prohibit the free distribution of single use carryout paper and plastic bags and (2) require retail establishments to charge customers for recycled paper bags and reusable bags at the point of sale. The minimum charge would be ten cents (\$0.10). Single use plastic carryout bags are defined in the Proposed Ordinance as plastic bags that are less than 2.25 millimeters thick, other than a Reusable Bag, provided at the check stand, cash register, point of sale or other point of departure for the purpose of transporting food or merchandise out of the establishment. Regulated bags would not include bags without handles provided to the customer (1) to transport produce, bulk food or meat within a store to the point of sale; (2) to hold prescription medication dispensed from a pharmacy; or (3) to segregate food or merchandise that could damage or contaminate other food or merchandise when placed together in a reusable bag or recycled paper bag. The Proposed Ordinance would not apply to restaurants and other food service providers, allowing them to provide plastic bags to customers for prepared take-out food intended for consumption off of the food provider's premises.

As noted above, the Proposed Ordinance would require regulated retailers to impose a mandatory charge for each paper carryout bag provided. Retail establishments would be required to keep complete and accurate records.

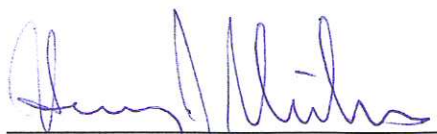
REVIEW PERIOD: As specified by the State CEQA Guidelines, the Notice of Preparation will be circulated for a 30-day review period. The Lead Agency welcomes agency and public input during this period regarding the scope and content of environmental information that must be included in the Draft EIR. **Responses to this Notice of Preparation may be submitted, in writing, by 5:00 p.m. on November 16, 2012, to:**

Patrick Carter, Department Analyst
Sonoma County Waste Management Agency
2300 County Center Drive, Suite B100
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

email: patrick.carter@sonoma-county.org
fax: (707) 565-3701

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS: Scoping meetings will be held during the comment period to take comments related to the scope of the environmental issues to be analyzed within the Draft EIR. The dates, times, and locations of the scoping meetings are listed below.

- **October 30, 2012, 6 pm, Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial, North Room, 1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa**
- **November 1, 2012, 6 pm, Sonoma Veterans Memorial, Lounge Room, 126 First Street West, Sonoma**
- **November 2, 2012, 6 pm, Petaluma Veterans Memorial, Conference Room A, 1094 Petaluma Blvd S., Petaluma**
- **November 7, 2012, 6 pm, Windsor Community Center, Elsbree Hall, 901 Adele Drive, Windsor**



Henry Mikus, Executive Director
Sonoma County Waste Management Agency

10/12/2012

Date