



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

**DATE:** February 4, 2013

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

**LEAD AGENCY:** Sonoma County Waste Management Agency

As the Lead Agency overseeing this project's environmental review, the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency has initiated the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report to determine the nature and extent of the project's potential impact on the surrounding environment. Pursuant to Sections 15086 and 15087, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, this Notice is given to advise interested parties that the Agency has completed a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the proposed project described above and that the Draft EIR is available for public review. The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects appear below.

**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 by the retail establishment 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 as defined in the proposed ordinance, 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.

**POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:**

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

**REVIEW PERIOD:** As specified by the State CEQA Guidelines, the Draft Environmental Impact Report will be available for public comment for a 45-day review period. The public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Report will begin on February 4, 2013 and end on March 22, 2013. **Comments may be submitted, in writing, by 5:00 p.m. on March 22, 2013** and addressed to:

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

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

**DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY:** The Draft EIR is available for public review at the locations listed below during regular business hours:

Sonoma County Waste Management Agency, 2300 County Center Drive, Suite B100, Santa Rosa  
Santa Rosa Central Library, 211 E Street, Santa Rosa  
Petaluma Regional Library, 100 Fairgrounds Drive, Petaluma  
Sonoma Valley Regional Library, 755 West Napa Street, Sonoma  
Windsor Regional Library, 9291 Old Redwood Highway, Building 100, Windsor  
Rohnert Park - Cotati Regional Library, 6250 Lynne Conde Way, Rohnert Park

The Draft EIR may also be accessed from the Agency website, [www.recyclenow.org](http://www.recyclenow.org).

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

The Sonoma County Waste Management Agency Board of Directors will hold a public hearing at 9:00 AM on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 to take public comment on the Draft EIR and to discuss details of the proposed ordinance. For more information and updates on upcoming hearings, please visit [http://www.recyclenow.org/agency/current\\_packet.asp](http://www.recyclenow.org/agency/current_packet.asp).



Henry Mikus, Executive Director  
Sonoma County Waste Management Agency

1/25/2013  
Date