



RECYCLING NEWS

Cleaner Greener Hingham

Long Range Waste Disposal and Recycling Committee of Hingham



From the Transfer Station

Recycling Makes Sense... and Cents

Mandatory recycling is a way of life for Hingham residents. But many do not realize that recycling is also fiscally responsible for the Town of Hingham – and its taxpayers. Consider:

- Our recycling vendors pay us for recycled materials such as cardboard and tin.
- Current recycling markets require us to pay for most other materials to be recycled.
- However, because Hingham residents pre-sort their recyclables (and thanks to our efficient Transfer Station personnel), we have earned a reputation for “clean” recyclables, which is attractive to companies that process recycled goods. That translates into favorable rates, such as a cost of \$30/ton for paper compared to \$60+/ton being spent by some neighboring towns.
- FYI: communities with “single-stream recycling” experience much less favorable rates, placing a burden on towns and taxpayers

Mattress and Box Spring Recycling

A grant from MA DEP which paid for mattress recycling for the last two years is ending on 1/31/19. Beginning in February 2019, there will be a fee of \$20 for each mattress or box spring brought to the Transfer Station.

The fee is similar to that charged in our neighboring towns and is designed to cover the actual recycling cost, preventing additional increases in the Transfer Station budget.

Warrant Article Demystified

Facts About the Proposed Hingham Bag Bylaw

As you may know from social media, the [Hingham Journal article](#), info sessions at the library, or publicly available meeting minutes, the Cleaner Greener Hingham Committee is working on a warrant article for Hingham to join the ~90 other Massachusetts cities and towns to institute a ban on single-use plastic bags. Here are the facts:

Why a ban?

Plastic bags are convenient, recyclable and part of everyday life. But only 7% of bags get recycled, with the rest becoming garbage that takes many years to break down. They wash up on shore, choke marine life, add to the massive garbage patches known as “gyres,” and break down into microplastics that humans may be consuming unknowingly.

Given that no economical or proven methods to remove plastic bag waste exists, the only solution is to stop plastic bag pollution at the source and to replace single-use bags with reusable bags produced sustainably and ethically.

What does the proposal entail?

The bylaw would target the thin plastic bags you get at places like the grocery store or pharmacy. It would NOT include produce bags, newspaper bags, dry cleaning bags, etc. If approved it would go into effect on Nov 1, 2019. Enforcement would be handled by the Board of Health, and penalties for stores that still offer single-use plastic bags would include a progression from a written warning to fines for each day the violation continues.

In parallel, the Committee would embark upon an educational program to inform residents about why reusable bags – and not paper – is the only responsible alternative.

What can you do?

You can support this effort by writing letters to your selectmen; taking photos of plastic bag pollution and posting on social media with #endplasticbagshingham; and most importantly – attending Town Meeting in April and casting your vote.

Green habits

Bring a cup, save some bucks

Bringing a reusable cup to the coffee shop not only saves on trash, it can save coffee drinkers serious money! A survey of coffee shops in Hingham found that every location offers a discount for customers who bring a reusable cup, ranging from 10 cents to over a dollar!

For example, Coffee Corner on Water Street will fill any size reusable mug for \$1.25, the cost of a small cup. Brewed Awakenings will fill a 16oz reusable mug for \$2.13 compared to a 16oz single use cup that costs \$3.15. Other coffee shops including Red Eye Roasters, Starbucks and Dunkin all give a \$.10 per cup discount, regardless of size. If you're able to stay put and enjoy your coffee in the shop like most Europeans do, some shops offer ceramic mugs at a discount as well.



While the cost savings can add up, so can the impact on trash. By some estimates, Americans throw away as many as 50 billion coffee cups per year, enough to make a pyramid over 700 meters tall. Coffee cups are not recyclable because they are a mixture of paper and plastic. So, if you're looking to adopt a new "green" habit this year, consider the kicking the single use coffee cup habit.

Did we say "clean" and green?

Tips for keeping your reusable bags clean and safe

There are many good reasons to use **reusable bags** for your shopping, not least reducing the impact of single-use plastic and paper bags on our environment and waste stream. Converting to reusable bags takes a little planning, habit change, and effort to keep bags clean and safe for transporting foods.

US Government Food Safety recommendations include:

- Reserving one bag for transporting raw meat/seafood and cooked food that might leak and one bag for transporting fruits and vegetables that may be consumed raw, thereby preventing cross contamination.
- Both bags should be easily washable and it is recommended that they be thrown into the laundry weekly or whenever leaks have occurred.
- Goods that are boxed or packaged in sealed containers can be safely transported in any bag, though the flat bottomed bags are able to fit boxed goods more easily.

Tips on how to keep your reusable bags clean:

- Cotton/canvas and nylon bags: Put in the washer with hot water and soap, then machine dry.
- Woven or Nonwoven Polypropylene Bags (made from recycled plastic): Machine wash on gentle cycle with soap and warm/cold water or hand wash with soap and water, air dry.
- Nylon or Polyester Bags: Hand wash in warm water and soap. Turn inside out and air dry.
- Bamboo or Hemp Bags: Machine-wash on gentle cycle with soap and cold water, machine or air dry.
- Insulated Bags: Hand wash in warm water and soap or wipe with disinfecting wipes, especially along the seams, air dry.

