

# **Did You Know?**

## **Kennebunk voters have approved a ban on plastic bags. (effective October 14, 2016)**

### *Information for Kennebunk Retailers*

The Kennebunk ordinance prohibiting distribution of single-use plastic carry out bags went into effect on October 14, 2016. While the focus of the ordinance is on plastic bags, the intent of the ordinance is not to have shoppers shift to paper bags, but to encourage and make it easy for them to switch to reusable bags. Paper bags were excluded from the ordinance in order to give retailers a recyclable option for those who come into your establishment not knowing Kennebunk has a ban on plastic or who have come without their reusable bags for other reasons. (Retailers are not prohibited from charging customers for paper bags.)

Following are a few suggestions to retailers to help smooth the transition to reusable bags for your employees and customers. They are based on the experiences of other municipalities that have enacted fees or bans on plastic bags.

#### **BENEFIT OF REUSABLE BAGS TO RETAILERS**

When shoppers bring their own bags, it can lead to a cost savings for you because you will not have to purchase, store, and distribute as many carry out bags to customers. You and your customers will be helping the environment, our oceans, and protecting human health.

A reusable bag program can offer you an additional way to create brand awareness and also do some local advertising by offering your own reusable bag. Customers use attractive and functional reusable bags for many tasks, which increases your visibility throughout the community.

#### **CHANGING CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR**

##### **At the Register**

You can potentially save a bag by assessing whether the purchase is small enough or prepackaged enough that you can simply ask “Do you need/want a bag?” Often when presented with the concept of not bothering with a bag at all, many people choose to skip it.

##### **Ideas to Encourage Use of Reusable Bags**

You might find one or more of these ideas good for your business:

- Display reminders in store parking lot/windows “Do you have your reusable bags?”
- Use your email list or Facebook page to alert locals and out-of-town customers to the new ordinance.
- Give a reusable bag away if a customer makes a purchase over a certain amount.
- Have store-branded reusable bag act as a permanent coupon for some amount of discount off all purchases.
- Consider donating \$.05 (or more) to a local non-profit organization for each reusable bag used to pack customer purchases. Gain recognition for your business in new venues while getting a tax deduction at the same time.
- Give a discount of \$.05 (or more) for each reusable bag used to pack customer purchases.
- Charge \$.05 (or more) for each paper bag used to offset added cost of paper.

*Thank you for doing your part to make this program a success!*