



**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**Proposed Ordinance to Ban Sale of Expanded Polystyrene/Plastic Foam**

The City of Santa Cruz sits next to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Working together we can keep our rivers, beaches, and the ocean clean!

**How would a turtle feel?** Plastics threaten our wildlife. As plastic breaks up, pieces are ingested by land and aquatic animals, often causing death. Plastic litter can be found on any beach or river that you walk along. And we know that plastic is swirling in every ocean gyre in the world. Laysan Albatross have been found with over 250 pieces of plastic in their stomachs.

**Great Job!** In 2007 the City of Santa Cruz passed the Environmentally Acceptable Food Packaging Ordinance which prevents the dispensing of food or beverages in expanded polystyrene plastic foam “to-go” containers. Restaurants, hotels, schools, charity races, churches and businesses have embraced the ordinance. Residents and visitors appreciate our “style” and businesses have found it easy to comply knowing it’s the right move for Santa Cruz.

**It’s time for the next step . . .**

**This summer the Santa Cruz City Council will consider new language for the existing packaging ordinance including this key provision:**

**6.48.027 PROHIBITED SALES**—No vendor or special event promoter in the City of Santa Cruz may sell, rent or otherwise provide any polystyrene/plastic foam product which is not wholly encapsulated or encased within a more durable material. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, cups, plates, bowls, clamshells and other products intended primarily for food service use, as well as coolers, containers, ice chests, shipping boxes, pool or beach toys, packing peanuts, or other packaging materials.



**Stopping the local sale of plastic foam products will decrease the amount of litter in our environment!**



Photo courtesy of Save Our Shores

**Thank you!** Since 2007, Save Our Shores has picked up over 56,000 pieces of plastic and plastic foam. During the same time they also documented a **50% decrease in polystyrene/plastic foam to-go containers** picked up during beach and river cleanups. Yet the number of foam plastic pieces has increased. Stopping the local sale of plastic foam products will decrease the amount of litter in our environment and will serve as an example for other cities and counties to emulate.

**You have choices!** The 2007 ordinance prohibited the **use** of polystyrene foam “to-go” containers. This revised ordinance would **prevent the sale** of those items including coolers, containers and packing peanuts. Business owners tell us that there are cost effective, earth-friendly products available to sell instead. For example, foam plastic ice chests would be banned from sale but “soft coolers” or hard plastic ice chests are acceptable, work even better, and are reusable. And paper plates, cups and bowls work just as well as foam ones. And Boogie Boards are ok to use.



Business owners tell us that cost-effective, earth-friendly products work well to improve their bottom line.



*Picnics just got better! Switch out foam cups and plates for paper products. Let your customers know that you care about them, and the environment!*



*Instead of plastic foam coolers or ice chests, businesses can offer longer lasting soft coolers or reusable, hard plastic coolers.*

The City of Capitola and the County of Santa Cruz have passed similar ordinances. The Council date and complete proposed ordinance is available at:

[www.cityofsantacruz.com/index.aspx?page=117](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/index.aspx?page=117)

**We want to hear from you!** If you have questions, suggestions or concerns about the proposed ordinance —give us a call.

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