



*The City of Moab has adopted an ordinance prohibiting the distribution of single-use plastic bags. This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) guide is intended to answer questions Moab residents may have about the upcoming implementation of the ban.*

## **Plastic Bag Ban Frequently Asked Questions Information for Residents**

### **When are retailers required to stop providing single-use plastic carryout bags to customers?**

January 1, 2019.

### **Why ban single-use plastic bags?**

These plastic bags will remain in the environment for hundreds, if not thousands, of years, and destroy wildlife, clog storm drains, end up in waterways and the oceans, and fill landfills. This legislation is one step toward meeting the City of Moab's goals as established in its "2020 Vision: A Sustainable Moab Plan," which was passed by Council in 2008, and helps protect the environment by moving away from "disposable" materials to "reusable" materials.

### **What plastic bags are prohibited?**

All plastic bags provided at the time of checkout/payment that are less than 2.25 mils thick are prohibited. These are the typical plastic bags with handles constructed of thin plastic provided at most grocery and convenience stores and other retail establishments. Bags constructed of durable plastic (2.25 mils or thicker) are considered reusable and are allowed.

### **Can retailers provide plastic bags for meat, produce, and bulk foods and items?**

Yes, plastic bags used inside stores for bulk foods and other items will still be allowed. Only "single-use" plastic bags used for "carryout" are prohibited.

#### **The following types of plastic bags are allowed:**

- Meat, produce and bakery bags;
- Laundry or dry cleaning bags;
- Newspaper and door-hanger bags;
- Pet waste, yard waste and garbage bags;
- Bags provided by pharmacists or veterinarians to contain prescription drugs or other medical necessities, as required by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA);
- Bags for items sold in bulk such as bulk food and bulk hardware items;
- Bags or plastic wraps for flowers, potted plants or items where dampness may be an issue;
- Bags of any type that a customer brings to the store for his or her own use to carry away goods that are not placed in a bag provided by the store;
- Bags comprised of recyclable plastic, with a minimum thickness of 2.25 mils.

**Can retailers provide paper bags?**

Retailers may provide customers with paper bags made of at least 40% recycled paper.

**Which businesses are affected by the ban?**

All retail establishments must comply with the new requirements, including grocery stores, retail shops, hardware stores, pharmacies, restaurants, and convenience stores located within the Moab city limits.

**What if I notice a store is violating the ordinance?**

Contact the City of Moab at 435-259-5121 to report a violation. City staff will talk to the retailer about the law and explain how to comply. Retailers who intentionally don't comply could face a fine of up to \$250 for each violation.

**Can residents be fined for using plastic bags?**

No. The plastic bag ban applies only to retail businesses.

**Won't the law hurt consumers?**

Most reusable bags can be used hundreds of times so the cost to purchase them is quickly recouped. While shoppers may forget to bring them in the beginning, they will soon get into the habit of bringing reusable bags for shopping. Also, many times smaller purchases don't even require bags.

**Will reusable bags be available for families that cannot afford to purchase them?**

A certain number of reusable bags will be available at various locations throughout Moab. These locations will be announced later this fall.

**How can shoppers keep their reusable shopping bags clean and safe?**

A 2010 study showed that 97% of shoppers have never washed their reusable bags. Reusable shopping bags should be laundered frequently to prevent cross-contamination. In addition, when using reusable bags, consumers should be careful to separate raw foods from other food products. Do not use reusable food bags for other purposes such as carrying books or gym clothes.

**Tips for remembering to bring your reusable bags:**

- Always start your shopping list with "Bring Bags".
- Keep a collapsible bag in your purse, backpack, or briefcase.
- Keep bags in a visible place in your vehicle.