



## Frequently Asked Questions Checkout Bag Policy

### **What is the purpose of the legislation?**

*The San Francisco checkout bag legislation will reduce unnecessary waste, contamination in recycling and composting programs, litter, and harm to marine life.*

### **What types of businesses does the legislation apply to?**

*This legislation applies to all retail establishments located within the geographical limits of the City and County of San Francisco, including convenience stores. The legislation also applies to restaurants starting October 1, 2013.*

### **How will the legislation affect the poor and elderly in San Francisco?**

*Shops pass the cost of bags onto their shoppers. Low-income people and seniors will be able to avoid all bag costs by bringing their own bags to the store. SFE will partner with grocers and local non-profit environmental groups in a public awareness campaign promoting reusable bags, including reusable bag giveaways targeting low and fixed-income San Franciscans. Customers participating in WIC or food stamp programs are exempt from the bag charge.*

### **What will dog owners use to clean up after their pets?**

*Dog owners will still have multiple options to clean up their pet waste. They can use plastic bags from the newspaper, produce or bread; compostable plastic bags; or use paper or paper bags.*

### **Where will the money be spent?**

*Stores keep the entire checkout bag charge in order to offset the cost of allowable bags.*

### **Does the checkout bag charge apply to compostable plastic bags?**

*Compostable plastic bags will not be subject to the checkout bag charge until October 1, 2013. However, since compostable plastic bags are more expensive than traditional plastic bags, stores may choose to impose a similar charge on compostable plastic bags.*

### **How can shoppers avoid the charge?**

*Shoppers can avoid the charge by bringing their own bags whenever they shop or refuse a bag when they make a small purchase that is easy to carry without a bag.*

### **How will the fee be monitored?**

*The checkout bag charge must be itemized and shown separately on the customer's receipt.*

### **Where can I buy reusable bags?**

*Reusable bags come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. Some reusable bags are specially designed to fit inside a purse or a pocket and are available at a variety of price points. SFE will help retailers identify ordinance-compliant reusable bag suppliers.*

### **Can retailers charge more than 10 cents for reusable bags at checkout?**

*Yes, the Checkout Bag Charge is just a minimum charge and stores may sell reusable bags at checkout for an amount over 10 cents to cover costs.*

**For more information please call SFEnvironment at (415) 355-3700**