



## Support Waste Management and Sustainability Programs and Oppose Local Bans or Mandates

**POSITION:** Hospitality Minnesota supports the use of waste management and sustainability programs that can reduce what goes into the waste stream while reducing costs for hospitality businesses. While we oppose local and state bans and mandates, as an industry we are committed to innovation and collaboration, seeking opportunities to understand and share sustainability practices that can benefit our businesses and customers alike.

Mandates and bans on foodservice packaging are not the most environmentally or economically responsible approach to managing foodservice packaging disposal. Mandates that arbitrarily single-out restaurants while exempting other commercial and residential users that contribute significantly more waste are particularly problematic from both a fairness and effectiveness perspective.

### BACKGROUND:

- Sustainability programs (such as [Waste Wise via the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce](#)) have been proven to remove material that goes into the waste stream while saving businesses money through reduction, reuse or recycling.
- Minneapolis, St. Paul and St. Louis Park have implemented local ordinances that require all foodservice packaging to be reusable, returnable, recyclable or compostable. The ordinances include a ban on expanded polystyrene foam (Styrofoam) packaging.
- Unfortunately, composting does not always achieve the benefits that are promoted because compostable or “biodegradable” commercial products do *not* actually biodegrade unless they are processed at specialized industrial facilities, and in the U.S. the vast majority of composting facilities are not currently able to accept these products. Additional concerns have been raised about the use of PFAS or “forever chemicals” in supposedly “eco-friendly” products in the U.S., and more research is needed.
- Polystyrene, both rigid and expanded, is being recycled in other communities and could also be recycled here. Most cups for hot or cold beverages or soup are made from poly coated paper. That material is recyclable and should not be prohibited.
- Most residential recycling programs accept plastic types one through seven in “single-sort” programs. Hospitality businesses should have the same options.

Providing access to sustainability programs and expanding comprehensive recycling programs is a more effective economic policy approach than implementing narrow and arbitrary local mandates.

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