



In 2020, the County Executive proposed, and the County Council passed Bill 32-20, a ban on the distribution of single-use straws.

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Recycling and Resource Management Division Waste Reduction and Recycling Section is providing outreach and education to ensure that all affected food service businesses are aware of the law. We look forward to assisting your business or organization in your efforts to comply with the requirements of this law.

Reduce waste and recycle more, aiming for zero waste. Help prevent litter and keep our land, air and water clean.
Skip the straw.

For more information, visit
MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/SkipTheStraw



Montgomery County, Maryland
Department of Environmental Protection
Recycling and Resource Management Division
Waste Reduction and Recycling Section
2425 Reddie Drive, 4th Floor
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MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/SkipTheStraw
311 or 240-777-0311
TTY: MD Relay 711

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NO THANKS!

SKIP THE STRAW

Information on
Montgomery County's
Ban on Straws



MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/SkipTheStraw

THE LAW AT-A-GLANCE

- Plastic straws may no longer be provided to customers, unless requested by the customer to meet medical needs and comply with disability rights laws.
- Straws provided to customers upon request must be reusable, home compostable, or marine degradable. Food service businesses must maintain a supply of plastic straws to provide to customers to meet medical needs and comply with disability rights laws.
- Reusable, home compostable, or marine degradable straws can be provided in a self-serve straw dispenser, or to customers who order food for carryout, delivery, or drive-thru.
- All food service businesses must post this information to inform customers.

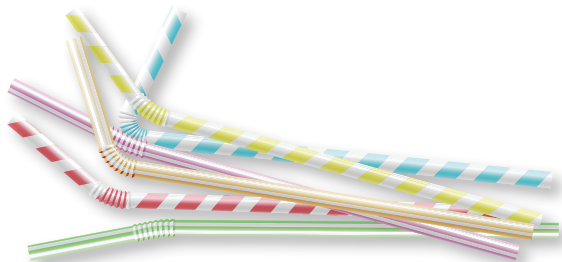
THE PROBLEM WITH PLASTIC STRAWS

Plastic straws are not recyclable.

Plastic straws are also not biodegradable and may persist in the environment for many years.

Plastics break down into smaller pieces of microplastic that make its way into our ground water; our food supply; and sea mammals, fish, birds, and other wildlife. Fish and other aquatic animals can confuse these bits of microplastic for food and ingest or choke on them.

Improperly disposed plastic straws can end up as litter, blow out of trash cans, or wash down storm drains ending up in our rivers, streams, and oceans.



LET'S REDUCE WASTE AND RECYCLE MORE, AIMING FOR ZERO WASTE

This initiative will reduce waste, eliminate problematic non-recyclable plastics, and reduce litter.

The law applies to all food service businesses in Montgomery County, Maryland:

- Full- & Limited-Service Restaurants
- Fast Food Restaurants
- Cafes & Coffee Shops
- Delicatessens
- Supermarkets & Grocery Stores
- Vending Trucks, Carts & Food Trucks
- Business & Institutional Cafeterias
- Not-for-Profit Organizations
- Federal, State & Local Government Facilities
- Food Service Operated by or on Behalf of County Departments & Agencies
- Businesses Selling or Providing Beverages Within the County for Consumption On or Off Premises.



SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS

Food service businesses must keep a limited supply of plastic straws for customers to meet any medical needs and comply with disability rights laws.

A food service business must provide a plastic straw to a customer who requests one to accommodate a medical or disability-related need of that customer. Employees should never ask about the nature of the disability or for any medical information when a customer requests a plastic straw.

WHERE TO FIND REUSABLE, HOME COMPOSTABLE OR MARINE DEGRADABLE STRAWS

Reusable straws can be made from bamboo, glass, silicone, or stainless steel.

Home compostable straws can completely biodegrade in an outdoor, non-industrial environment, leaving no toxic substances or residue. These types of straws include products that meet the OK Compost Home certification standard adopted by TÜV AUSTRIA (formerly Vincotte).



Marine degradable straws, such as paper straws, completely biodegrade under marine environmental conditions including marine waters or marine sediments, leaving no toxic substances or residue.

DEP's Waste Reduction and Recycling Section maintains an online resource listing of vendors that sells food service products, including straws, that are reusable, compostable, or recyclable in Montgomery County. Visit MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/SkipTheStraw or call MC311 at 311 or 240-777-0311 (outside Montgomery County) for more information.