



Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) Foam Food Ware Policy

City of Cupertino

This document outlines the City of Cupertino's policy prohibiting the use of expanded polystyrene (EPS) foam food ware in City facilities and at events held on City property. The purpose of this policy is to further the City's litter reduction goals, to support compliance with the City's Environmentally Preferable Procurement Policy, and to help protect the health of our community by prohibiting the use of expanded polystyrene food service ware on all City property.

EPS foam is a petroleum-based, lightweight plastic material commonly used as food service ware by retail food vendors. Often referred to by the trademark Styrofoam™ it has become a particularly problematic component of litter because it is non-biodegradable and nearly non-reusable or recyclable. There currently no meaningful means to recycle or reuse single-use EPS foam food ware, it constitutes a substantial portion of the litter in our region. Numerous studies have documented the prevalence of EPS foam in the environment, including storm drains and in waterways. EPS foam easily breaks down into smaller pieces, floats in water, and is carried by the wind, even when it has been disposed of properly. EPS foam can harm or kill marine animals and birds as they may confuse it as a food source. A way to reduce the prevalence of this pollutant in the environment is to replace it with reusable, compostable or recyclable alternatives. Alternatives to EPS foam food ware are readily available in our region, and the market for these products continues to evolve.

In addition, styrene, a component of EPS foam, is a known hazardous substance that medical evidence and the US FDA suggest leaches from EPS foam containers into food and drink. Styrene is a suspected carcinogen and neurotoxin that potentially threatens human health. Due to these human health and environmental concerns, over 100 cities in the US have banned polystyrene foam food service ware.

Therefore, it is the City's policy to prohibit the use of EPS foam food ware within any City facilities, at city-managed concessions, City-sponsored or co-sponsored events, or by any food vendors doing business with the City. This policy applies to both food service provided by the City and food service provided by outside vendors on City property. See below for policy details regarding food service and events.

Food service on City property

The City shall not purchase EPS foam food ware, per the City's Environmental Preferable Purchasing Policy. This applies to the City's own purchases of food ware and catering services for its facilities, as well as to any vendors, caterers, or members of the public who sell or distribute prepared food products at City-sponsored events. The City shall use reusable food ware when possible, and must otherwise purchase and use only recyclable or compostable (plastic or paper) food ware, and require them of its vendors. When placing catering or food delivery orders for meetings and events, the City shall remind prepared food vendors of this policy, and request that vendors do not use EPS foam delivery or service items.

Materials management for events

The City maintains indoor and outdoor event policies to reduce waste and maximize materials recovery at City-sponsored events. These policies prohibit the use and distribution of EPS foam food ware at City-sponsored events. Cupertino also requires that all events held on City property offer adequate recycling, composting, and trash collection services. Meetings and events primarily produce materials that can be recycled or composted. To support successful materials management, the City provides trash, recycling, and composting bins inside all of its facility room(s) available for rental. Event organizers are required to ensure that no EPS foam food ware is delivered or used by vendors or guests, and to assist the capture recyclable and compostable materials via the following guidelines.

NOT RECYCLABLE

Expanded Polystyrene Foam (Styrofoam™)
is prohibited



Avoid single use items like plastic bags & beverage bottles, recycle these plastics if you must use

NOT COMPOSTABLE

Cornstarch materials & TaterWare™ are NOT accepted in Cupertino's compost collection; put them in the trash or use recyclable or paper products



Cornstarch Ware



Any Plastic-like Compostables



TaterWare™

ACCEPTED RECYCLABLES



All Plastics (#1-7 or unnumbered):
Cups, Plates, Bowls, Utensils, Straws, Lids, Containers, Bottles, Film Plastic



Paper:
Mixed paper (clean to lightly soiled if used for food), cardboard, aseptic (e.g. juice boxes)



Aluminum:
Cans, foil (clean to lightly soiled), aerosol cans (empty)

Glass

ACCEPTED COMPOSTABLES



Paper Products (including food soiled):
Napkins, Paper Towels, Cups, Plates, Bowls, Liners/Wrappers, Containers



Cardboard (including food soiled):
Wax cardboard, paper cartons, pizza boxes, etc.



Food Utensils:
Toothpicks, chopsticks, skewers, etc.



All Food Scraps:
Bread, Dairy, Meat, Bones, Fruits, Vegetables, Coffee Filters/Grounds, Tea Bags, and Yardwaste

Green Your Event!

Recycling & Composting Services are available for your indoor events at Cupertino City Facilities. Please plan to use the trash, recycling and composting bins located inside the room(s) you reserve at your venue by following the guidelines below.

Single Stream Recycling Accepted Materials:

(Recycling Bins are located in the kitchens and main rooms)

- ❖ Plastics, with or without #1-#7, including containers, bottles, party cups, plastic utensils and plates, plastic bags and other film plastic, and straws
- ❖ Glass and Aluminum including bottles, jars, cans, and aluminum foil (w/limited food residue)
- ❖ Mixed paper and cardboard including juice boxes
- ❖ NO Styrofoam - Note: City policy prohibits use of Styrofoam at City facilities.



Compostables (Food Waste & Other Organics) Accepted:

(Compostable Bins are located in the kitchens, main rooms, and restrooms)



- ❖ Soiled Paper Products such as napkins and paper towels/plates
- ❖ Fruits and Vegetables
- ❖ Breads, Pasta and Rice
- ❖ Bones, Meat and Poultry
- ❖ Eggshells, Dairy and Soy
- ❖ Seafood and Shellfish
- ❖ Coffee Grounds/Filters
- ❖ Paper Milk Cartons & Pizza Boxes
- ❖ Paper Tea Bags (*not nylon or synthetic tea bags*)
- ❖ Untreated Wood (*including chopsticks*)
- ❖ Floral Trimmings and Yard Waste
- ❖ NO bio-degradable or cornstarch materials (these do not breakdown fast enough in our compost process) Please use recyclable or compostable products, or throw them in the trash

Cupertino Waste Prevention Guide for Outdoor Events



City of Cupertino Green Goals:

- Divert 75% of materials from landfill by capturing items as recycling & compost
- Conserve natural resources by minimizing the use of disposable items (i.e. plastic bags, water bottles)
- Eliminate litter & prevent debris from reaching creeks
- Promote and support events that “teach by example”- inspiring attendees to take actions at home

City Outdoor Event Materials Requirements

Though most events only span a few hours, these organized activities can produce a large volume of waste. While most materials are discarded as trash that heads to our landfills, events primarily produce materials that can be recycled or composted.

To minimize waste and maximize recovery, Cupertino requires that all events held on City property offer recycling, composting, and trash collection services.

To support successful materials management, the City’s waste service provider, Recology, will supply recycling, composting, and trash containers and collection services for all events held on City property (a refundable deposit is required). As an event organizer, the City requires your assistance to capture recyclable and compostable materials via the following guidelines:

How to Get Started

- At least two weeks before your event, contact Recology at 408-725-4020 to reserve containers and set-up collection service.
- Recology will help you determine the correct number of containers & will provide appropriate signage.
- Recology will require a \$500 deposit that will be refunded when all containers are returned, undamaged.

