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Press Release

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## **ENFORCEMENT OF CITY FOAM BAN BEGINS TODAY**

### **DSNY Begins Fining Businesses Using Single-Use Foam Items as Warning Period Ends**

NEW YORK—The New York City Department of Sanitation is reminding businesses that it will begin enforcing its foam ban law today, July 1, 2019, at the end of its six month warning period.

“Foam cannot be recycled, plain and simple,” said **Acting Sanitation Commissioner Steven Costas**. “When foam enters our waste stream, it becomes a source of neighborhood litter and can end up on our beaches and in our waterways. It’s hazardous to marine life and can clog storm drains. It’s even a contaminant in our recycling and organics programs. Over the past six months, we’ve worked to educate businesses of the new law, and many businesses have already made the change to recyclable products.”

The foam ban, which officially took effect January 1, prohibits New York City stores and food-service businesses from offering, selling or possessing single-use foam food containers such as takeout clamshells, cups, plates, bowls, coolers and trays. Additionally, manufacturers and stores may no longer sell or offer for sale loose fill packaging, typically known as “packing peanuts,” in the city.

Single-use foam items are not recyclable and are instead collected as trash in the city. The ban encourages businesses to use one of many alternative packaging options including compostable products, or recyclable paper, plastic and aluminum.

“Reducing our waste is vital to the health of our planet and our city. Single-use foam has littered our streets, sidewalks and parks or ended up in our landfills for

too long,” said **City Council Speaker Corey Johnson**. “I am thrilled that we are taking steps to remove materials that cannot be recycled from our waste stream.”

“It’s time for New York City to move away from the use of poly-styrene once and for all,” said **Council Member Antonio Reynoso, Chair of Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**. “In order to meet our City’s goal of zero waste to landfill by 2030, we must rid our waste stream of non-recyclable materials like Styrofoam that have no post-consumer application. Elected officials and advocates fought long and hard to rid our city of this pernicious material, and I am thrilled to see the ban finally go into effect. I look forward to working with the de Blasio administration in taking further steps to reach Zero Waste by 2030.”

“Because styrofoam can’t be recycled, it ends up in landfills and adds to our city’s pollution,” said **State Senator Alessandra Biaggi**. “By banning single-use styrofoam containers, New York City businesses will be incentivized to offer customers recyclable alternatives that are safer for our planet and will help to shrink our city’s carbon footprint.”

“When it comes to the environmental challenges facing our state and our world, we’ve learned that if we all make small changes in our behavior, together we can have a big impact,” said **State Senator Liz Krueger**. “New York City’s ban on polystyrene packaging is the kind of forward-thinking policy that will ensure our children and grandchildren inherit a livable planet. Congratulations to the City Council and Mayor de Blasio for making our city cleaner and greener.”

“New York City’s ban against foam containers represents an important step towards a more progressive and healthy society,” said **Assistant Assembly Speaker Felix W. Ortiz**. “We are taking a responsible step to insure that our environment is a safe and free from pollutants that damage our quality of life and spoil the ecosphere. The next step should be to ban these products at the state and national level. The fight for a better New York continues.”

Over the past six months, the Department of Sanitation and other city agencies have worked to educate affected business throughout the five boroughs. Outreach activities have included:

- Sent mailers to nearly 130,000 commercial addresses

- Sent email blasts to elected officials, BIDs, merchant associations, chambers of commerce, industry groups and corporate contacts, and distributors and contacts tied to mobile commissaries
- Ran ongoing social media campaigns, including #FoamBanNYC and #FoamFreeNYC
- Conducted surveys on foam during recycling and organics outreach site visits and distributed foam notices at events
- Released taxi cab video announcing foam ban in effect
- Sent nearly 30,000 foam ban enforcement warning cards to DSNY, DOHMH, SBS, and DCA Enforcement

For more information, visit: [nyc.gov/foamban](http://nyc.gov/foamban).

### **Who is Covered:**

- For-profit or not-for-profit: food service establishments, mobile food commissaries, and stores that sell or use foam items
- Manufacturers and distributors of polystyrene foam packaging that are located or operate within any of the five boroughs of New York City

### **What is Banned:**

- Single-service foam items, including cups, bowls, plates, takeout containers and trays
- Foam loose fill packaging, commonly known as “packing peanuts”

## **What is Not Banned:**

- Foam containers used for prepackaged food that have been filled and sealed prior to receipt by the food service establishment, mobile food commissary, or store
- Foam containers used to store raw meat, pork, fish, seafood or poultry sold from a butcher case or similar appliance
- Foam blocks used as protective packaging in shipping

Non-profits and small businesses with less than \$500,000 in gross income for the most recent tax year may apply for hardship exemptions from the Department of Small Business Services (SBS) if they can prove that the purchase of alternative products not composed of EPS would create a financial hardship. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/foamwaiver](http://nyc.gov/foamwaiver).

## **About the Department of Sanitation**

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) keeps New York City healthy, safe and clean by collecting, recycling and disposing of waste, cleaning streets and vacant lots, and clearing snow and ice. The Department operates 59 district garages and manages a fleet of more than 2,000 rear-loading collection trucks, 450 mechanical brooms and 695 salt/sand spreaders. The Department clears litter, snow and ice from approximately 6,500 miles of City streets and removes debris from vacant lots as well as abandoned vehicles from City streets.