

Calistoga Foodware & Waste Reduction

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Calistoga's Reusable Foodware and Waste Reduction code changes are designed to meet the public's desire to minimize wasteful and polluting food packaging.

1. What businesses will be affected by the new Calistoga Foodware code changes?

- All merchants selling food and/or drink to their customers.
- Including restaurants, grocery stores, delis, coffee shops, ice cream vendors, bakeries, food trucks, tasting rooms, hotels, motels, B&Bs, etc.

2. When do these code changes take effect?

- The changes go into effect on March 20, 2024.

3. What are some highlights of the code rules?

- **For Dining-in:** Single-use/disposable foodware will not be permitted. Reusables only. This also applies to outdoor spaces where service is provided.
 - Straws must be compostable.
 - No more single-use condiment packages. Refillable containers or dispensers only.
- **For Take-Out:** Condiments and accessories, including utensils, straws, napkins, etc., are permitted by customer-request only. (This is already state law.)
- **For Take-Out/ Leftovers:** Containers and accessories offered must be made of all-natural fiber, compostable materials. (Exception for hot beverages and soups only. See Items 7 and 8 below.)
- There will be a mandatory \$0.25 charge for all Checkout bags.
- Both checkout bags and small "produce bags" must be compostable paper or green "bio-bags," except that plastic bags are permitted where liquids or melting/defrosting frozen items are likely to result in spills/leaks.
- No polystyrene of any kind may be sold or distributed within the City limits.

- Where food vendors supply trash bins for customer use, there must be three bins, side-by-side, for (a) recyclables, (b) compost (food waste, soiled paper such as napkins and paper towels), and (c) landfill.
- Only those plastic items labeled with recycling code 1 or 2 are recyclable.

4. What about items that say, “compostable in a commercial facility”?

- Generally, plastics displaying a green leaf and/or stating, “compostable in a commercial facility,” contain polylactic acid (PLA).
- Despite the “biodegradable” or “compostable” labeling, PLA is not currently compostable by most disposal facilities, including Upper Valley Disposal, and items containing PLA are thus not permitted.

5. Are cardboard to-go containers compostable?

- Clamshells and other Takeout containers made entirely from all-natural, compostable fiber such as paper or uncoated cardboard are compostable.
- Clamshells and other containers with any sort of shiny wax or plastic coating are neither compostable nor recyclable and are not permitted.

6. What about take-out utensils?

- Single use utensils made from all-natural fibers, such as bamboo, palm leaf, birchwood, sugarcane, or uncoated cardboard are compostable.
- Utensils made of plastic, corn or potato are not compostable and are not permitted.
- Single-use utensils are not permitted for dining in.

7. What about takeout containers for liquid foods, such as soups, etc.?

- Plastic containers are permitted for liquid takeout foods. These containers must be recyclable (labeled with recycling code 1 or 2).

8. Is there a compostable single-use, to-go coffee cup?

- Single-use coffee cups, though they appear to be plain paper, are lined with a plastic coating, making them neither recyclable nor compostable.
- Because there is currently no compostable, single-use hot beverage cup on the market, single use coffee cups will be allowed - for takeout only.

- Single-use coffee cups are not permitted for dining-in.
- Businesses are encouraged to offer a discount to customers who bring their own cups.

9. What is recyclable?

- Currently “recyclable” includes plastic items with a recycling code of 1 or 2.
- Clean paper and cardboard are recyclable.
- Rinsed glass bottles and jars, metal cans, plastic bottles and jugs (recycling code 1 or 2 only) are all recyclable.

10. Who is responsible for code enforcement? Are there fines for violations?

- Calistoga code enforcement officers are responsible for enforcement.
- The code office will first issue a notice of violation as a warning. If the violation is not corrected by the date specified on the notice, a fine of \$100 is issued for the first citation, \$200 for a second citation, and \$500 for each subsequent violation.

11. May food vendors charge an extra takeout fee to cover the cost of compliance?

- Merchants are permitted to add a fee for Takeout items if they wish.
- Only the \$0.25 checkout bag charge is mandatory.