

Polystyrene Foam Food & Beverage Containers

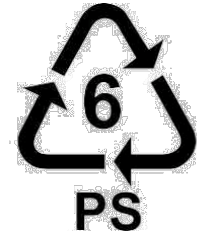
Ordinance 12, Series 2017

Introduction – Executive Summary

- Goal: Minimize PSF litter in environment
- City Work Plan: Goal 2, Objective 3, Task 2
- Research included:
 - Investigating policy in other jurisdiction
 - Conducting public outreach
 - Council Worksession
- Developed 3-part recommendation:
 - Policy
 - Business Alternatives Education
 - PSF Shipping material education campaign

PSF Food Service Containers

- Polystyrene Foam (PSF or “foam”) plastic containers for single-use food service applications
 - Often generically but incorrectly called “Styrofoam”
 - Heat resistant
 - Lightweight
 - Cheap



What We Know About PSF

- Difficult to recycle (not recyclable in Florence)
 - Increases cost of recycling recovery due to foam contamination
- Not biodegradable
 - Easily enters environment, easily fragmented, persistent
- Significant source of litter, especially in waterways
 - Potential negative impact on tourism (local economic impact)
- Harms wildlife, especially bird & marine life*
 - Ingestion
- Possible negative impacts on human health*
 - Styrene leaching
 - Food animal ingestion - bioaccumulation

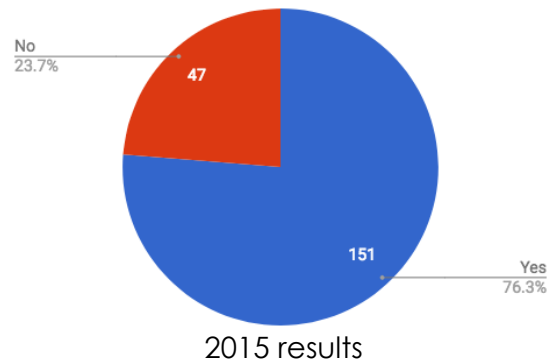
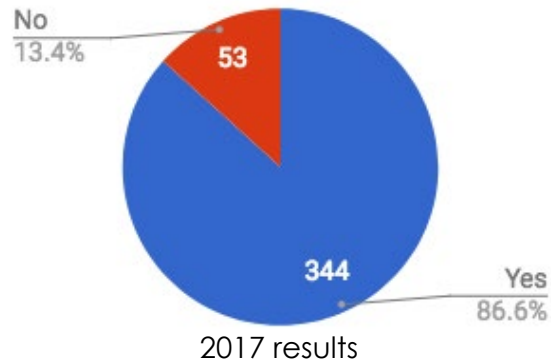
*See "Comments on letter to Florence City Council from American Chemistry Council" dated October 2, 2017

EMAC Process

- Reviewed codes in other jurisdictions
- Investigated options
- Conducted public outreach:
 - 2 formal opinion surveys (online & paper), 1 informal survey
 - Public comment forum attended by community members
 - Individual outreach to approx. 20 local businesses
- Developed recommendation:
 - Addition to city code regulating PSF use
 - FAQ pamphlet to assist local businesses
 - Education campaign regarding PSF shipping packaging (block foam & “peanuts”)

Summary Survey Results

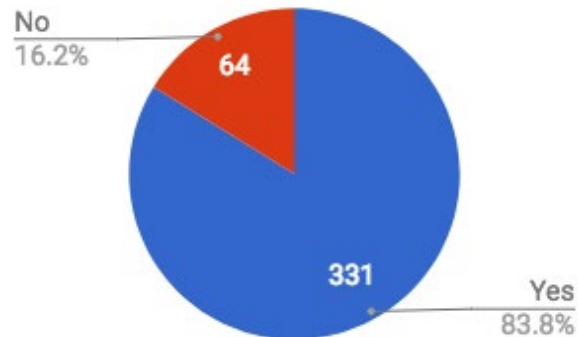
Should Florence prohibit PSF containers?



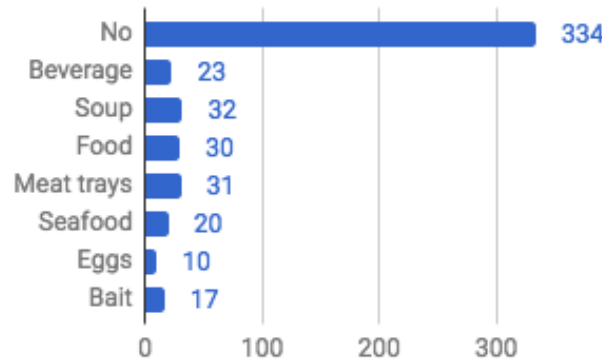
Informal "dot" survey at 2017 Green Fair



Would you pay slightly more (5 – 10 cents) for non-PSF containers?



Do you prefer PSF over another disposable option?



Proposed City Code – Key Provisions

- Prohibits sell/package/serve/provide most PSF containers
 - Allows PSF trays for meat/seafood for human consumption
 - Allows PSF coolers/ice chests
 - Allows carrying/possessing
- Exceptions for emergencies and public health & safety
- 3 month amortization - use up existing stock & find alternatives
- Normal code enforcement process--education, letter, citation

Summary

■ EMAC recommends:

- Addition to city code that prohibits most (but not all) PSF food packaging
- Pamphlet that assists Florence-area businesses with finding alternative packaging
- Education campaign to encourage residents to properly dispose of PSF shipping material (block foam & “peanuts”)

■ Recommendation based on:

- Trends in other jurisdictions
- Public input
- Desire for most effective way to reduce PSF litter
- Desire to mitigate impact of prohibition for some food products

Testimony Received

- Tim Shestek, American Chemistry Council (ACC)
 - Concern for ban in general
- Brian Cole, BJs Ice Cream
 - Best for ice cream, cost, fad, used paper 39 years ago
- David Lynch
 - Against regulations in general, opposed to banning shipping materials

Supporting Material

- ▣ Types of biodegradable containers
- ▣ PSF regulations in other jurisdictions
- ▣ PSF regulation Q&A
- ▣ 2017 survey results

Biodegradable or Recyclable Container Alternatives

- Biodegradable or recyclable take-out containers are readily available
 - Polylactic Acid (PLA) leak-proof lining is compostable, derived from corn/cassava starch or sugarcane
- Cost is typically 5-10 cents more per container*



Paper



Sugarcane



Starch-based



Polyethylene or Polypropylene
(recyclable)



Wheat Straw



Palm Leaf



Polylactic Acid (PLA)

*Recommendations for Reducing or Banning Foam Food Service Containers, Equinox Project Center for Sustainable Energy, March 2017
EMAC research, WebRestaurant.com

PSF Prohibitions In Other Jurisdictions



PSF Codes--Other Oregon Jurisdictions

■ Portland

- No vendor or nonprofit food provider shall serve food in PSF containers
- No packaging meat, eggs, bakery products or other food in PSF containers

■ Medford

- No vendor shall provide prepared food in PSF

■ State of Oregon

- Prohibits food served in PSF containers at public schools (phase-in complete by 2020)

PSF Regulation Q&A

Question #1: Won't this cost too much?

Response: No - the cost difference between PSF containers and biodegradable alternatives is negligible. Biodegradable containers currently cost approximately two to ten cents more per container than PSF, depending on the type of container and the material used (there are many different biodegradable container materials to choose from).

Question #2: Why not make it voluntary? Use education, not regulation.

Response: Voluntary action on PSF containers has been shown to be much less effective than regulation. For example, the cities of Capitola and Santa Cruz, CA instituted mandatory PSF bans after several years of voluntary bans proved ineffective. Education programs require significant ongoing effort on the part of city staff.

PSF Regulation Q&A (cont.)

Question #3: Why not “let the market decide”?

Response: In effect, this is exactly what we *have* been doing for the last several decades - without success. With pure market-based approaches, it is almost always the “cheapest” solution that wins. The problem with this is that the market cost doesn’t reflect the true cost to the community and to society.

Question #4: Why should the government be telling me how to run my business?

Response: The community has a vested interest in setting the parameters under which local businesses operate, to protect both members of the community and the local environment. For example, clean air and water regulations prohibited businesses from dumping their effluent into the Siuslaw River, or pumping particulates into the air. PSF regulation does not “tell you how to run your business”. It merely prohibits one type of (harmful) food service container among many other possible, less harmful options.

PSF Regulation Q&A (cont.)

Question #5: Don't we have enough regulations already?

Response: The fact that there are many regulations already on the books doesn't make this regulation any less necessary or valuable.

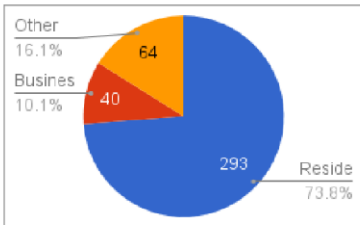
Question #6: This is a waste of the city's time. Shouldn't you instead be focusing resources on [fill in your favorite cause here - street maintenance, urban renewal, housing, homelessness, crime, drug abuse, economic growth, spending cuts, etc.]?

Response: Working on problem X doesn't mean we're going to ignore problems Y or Z. The EMAC is chartered to work on environmental issues, but Florence also has a range of city officials, staff, and volunteers working on many other issues to effect positive change in our community.

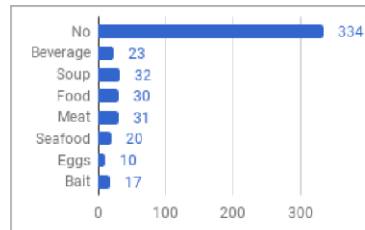
2017 Survey Results

- Survey was publicized in city newsletter and social media, Siuslaw News, radio stations KCST and KCXR, Chamber of Commerce, and EMAC personal contacts

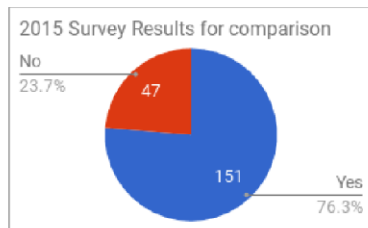
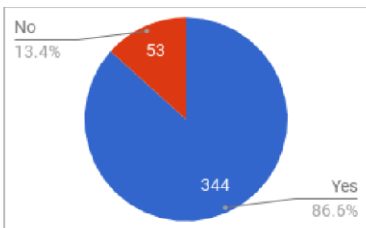
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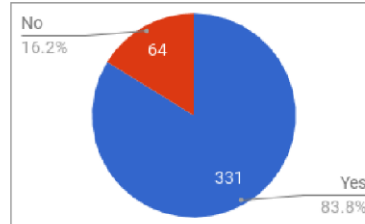
3. When you get take-out food/beverages or visit the grocery store, is there an instance when you prefer a foam container over another disposable option? (check all that apply)



2. Should Florence prohibit foam take-out containers in favor of biodegradable or recyclable alternatives?



4. Would you pay slightly more (5 - 10 cents) for non-foam biodegradable or recyclable take-out container options?



Questions?