

News Bulletin 1/1/09 “NY Requires Retailers to sell reusable bags and provide recycling centers for plastic bags”

Effective January 1, 2009, a new statewide law in New York State requires certain retail and grocery stores to set up a plastic carry out bag recycling program for their customers.

Stores with 10,000 square feet or more of retail space and chains which operate five or more stores with greater than 5,000 square feet of retail space, and which provide plastic carry out bags to customers, are required to comply with the law.

Each year, Americans throw away more than 100 billion plastic bags. Less than 1% are recycled. Recycling these bags reduces waste and litter, resulting in cleaner streets and waterways and less material in landfills. Recycling also protects wildlife because plastic bags can be dangerous to animals that ingest them or are strangled by them. In addition, using recycled plastic bags in place of virgin plastics reduces our demand for oil. Recycled plastic bags provide valuable material to manufacturers of plastic lumber, bags and other useful products.

Instead of using a plastic bag, you can:

Use canvas, cloth or a durable plastic bag.

Reusable bags are more environmentally friendly than paper or plastic. Under the law, any store required to recycle plastic bags must also sell reusable bags. Keep them in your car for the next time you have to run out for groceries.

Tell a friend.

Get others to recycle and use reusable bags.

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/50034.html?showprintstyles>