



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Free toolkit released to help Colorado municipalities
implement statewide bag fees beginning January 1, 2023**

Templates provided for everything from step-by-step guides,
store signage, and employee training materials to a social media kit, and more

BOULDER, CO (December 16, 2022)—Colorado is the first non-coastal state to enact a statewide bag fee and ban. A 2021 Colorado law, HB21-1162, [Plastic Pollution Reduction Act](#), goes into effect on January 1, 2023, and aims to reduce the cost burden to municipalities and businesses and the environmental harm caused by single-use bags. [Nearly 20 Colorado communities](#) already have some sort of ban or fee on single-use bags, and others have been preparing for the implementation of HB21-1162 to reduce single-use bags in their communities. Many other Colorado communities have not had the capacity to create the systems and materials needed to educate residents and businesses about this law. **To help fill that need, Colorado-based nonprofit recycler and Zero Waste advocate Eco-Cycle launched a [free toolkit](#) this week to help municipalities implement the program and to help businesses provide required education to customers.** The free toolkit can be found at <https://ecocycle.org/ppra>.

According to the new law, all retailers with more than three locations in the state or those operating in both Colorado and other locations are required to charge \$0.10 per single-use checkout bag provided. The retailers may keep \$0.04 of each transaction and the municipality or county in which the store is located will get the other \$0.06 to use for recycling, composting, or waste reduction programs and education, and to administer the bag fee program.

Eco-Cycle worked with Colorado cities that have led bag ban and fee efforts to compile a streamlined toolkit that local jurisdictions can use to prepare for implementation of the law. The toolkit includes bag reduction and cost impact results from existing bag fees in Aspen, Steamboat Springs, and the City of Boulder, and model ordinances that can support or expand the requirements of the state law. It also provides free downloadable materials including store signage, employee training materials, a social media kit, and more, which communities can use

for resident and business outreach. Materials are curated from state leaders including Fort Collins, Steamboat Springs, Boulder, and Denver.

In January 2024, the law bans single-use plastic bags, while requiring the \$0.10 fee for paper checkout bags. It also bans polystyrene food take-out containers and ends the state's preemption on local plastic bans. Eco-Cycle plans to create a second toolkit for the 2024 requirements.

According to Suzanne Jones, Eco-Cycle Executive Director, "We are thrilled that the state legislature and Governor Polis adopted this valuable plastic waste reduction law. As the implementation date approached, we saw there was a need to support communities' compliance with the law. To fill this need, Eco-Cycle collaborated with partners at the Colorado Municipal League, Recycle Colorado, and leading municipalities to create a set of tools we hope will help streamline efforts to implement this policy that really is a win for business, local government, and the environment."

An estimated [4.6 million plastic bags are used every day in Colorado](#). Plastic bags are [one of the most common pollutants in Colorado rivers](#), litter landscapes, and can be lethal to birds, fish, and cattle that mistake plastics as food. Plastic bags aren't just bad for the environment, they also cost retailers money to provide to customers, and cost municipalities money in the form of litter clean-ups and repairing damage to recycling infrastructure when plastic bags are mistakenly included in single-stream recycling.

Colorado has seen an increase in waste reduction and diversion policies in the past few years at the state and local levels. Residents and elected leaders are increasingly exploring ways to achieve more systemic sustainability; unfortunately the funds needed to implement these programs are often lacking. The Plastic Pollution Reduction Act and shared learning and resources like this toolkit are examples of solutions that can move the whole state forward. The fee required by the law will provide local communities with dedicated funding for sustainability efforts, and the toolkit shows the power of leveraging lessons learned from peer communities that lead the way in sustainability to help move all Colorado towns and cities forward together.

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Eco-Cycle is one of the oldest and largest recycling organizations in the US and brought curbside recycling to Colorado back in 1976. Eco-Cycle works to innovate, implement, and advocate for local and global Zero Waste solutions to foster a more climate-resilient future. Learn more at ecocycle.org.