

Ordinance 709 - Compostable Serviceware Requirement:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What will change for businesses in terms of costs?

A: Although some compostable products may cost more than non-compostable, the prices of compostable products will continue to decrease over time as a result of the increase in demand due to implementation of ordinances such as this one, as well as improvements in manufacturing and the quality of these products. There are also many ways to offset higher costs, such as adding compost services and decreasing garbage services with your waste hauler.

Q: What is the fine for not following the ordinance?

A: As stated in the ordinance code: "1.15.090 Infractions.First offenses shall be class 2 civil infractions, for which the maximum penalty and the default amount shall be \$125.00, and second or subsequent violations shall be class 1 civil infractions, for which the maximum penalty and the default amount shall be \$250.00, not including fees, costs, and assessments."

Q: We are a grocery store. Are we allowed to sell packaged sleeves of plastic cups that are to be used for home use?

A: Yes, this ordinance only applies to to-go food serviceware. If you sell any food that is prepared on site (not pre-packaged), even if you are a business like a grocery store, you will be required to use compostable containers.

Q: Is composting service required under this ordinance?

A: No, it is not required under Ordinance 709. By adding composting service and reducing garbage service with your waste hauler, you can also reduce your overall waste bill.

Q: What will be done to educate residents to know these items are compostable?

A: The City of Burien and Zero Waste Washington have materials available for business owners to use in their business to help inform customers and staff on sorting compostable products. We have labels for bins, informational flyers and posters, and more. Please contact environment@burienwa.gov or thea@zerowastewashington.org to request these free materials.

Q: I am concerned about my food seeping or leaking out of the compostable containers, is there a product that will not leak?

A: There are many different types of compostable products and materials that will protect your food for your customers. If you would like to test out products to make sure they work for you and your business, you can request free samples from Discover Burien through the co-op, or through a distributor or manufacturer.

Q: I own a franchise of a larger national company, and have a large supply chain with a multi-year contract and cannot comply within the timeline of this ordinance, what are my options?

A: You can apply for a one-year waiver for the food service product(s) that cannot be transitioned to compostable through the City of Burien. In the application, you must provide an explanation of your situation and the necessity for the one-year waiver.

Q: I use a specialty shaped container for my business (ex: cupcakes), is this available as a compostable product/what are my options?

A: There are a few exemptions to the ordinance, including certain specialty shaped containers. You can find the list of exemptions [HERE](#). If your product is not included in the list of exemptions, but there is no compostable option available, you can apply for a one-year waiver with the City of Burien, as long as you have proof that there is no option available for you.

Q: What about cups? Are they required to be compostable?

A: Yes, all cups are required to be compostable. There are many options available, in many different materials depending on your needs.

Q: Why are straws not required to be compostable in this ordinance?

A: When voting on this ordinance, the City Council considered the lack of compostable straw options for disabled consumers who have certain requirements for accessibility. In the near future, there may be compostable options available that fit within these accessibility needs.

Q: Our business requires that we have trays and baking containers that can be in a 425 degree oven for 15-20 minutes. Are there compostable products that are able to do this?

A: Yes, there are compostable products available that can be used for this purpose. You can request these products to purchase or samples to test from a distributor or manufacturer.

Q: Will restaurants still be able to use aluminum style take out containers?

A: No, all containers must be fully compostable unless specifically mentioned in the exemption list.

Q: Can we get samples of products before implementing them into our business?

A: Yes, you can request samples from a distributor or manufacturer, and there are already certain product samples available through the co-op that you may request.

Compostable Purchasing Co-op FAQ

Q: Can businesses outside of Burien or individuals purchase products through the co-op?

A: Yes! The more businesses that join the co-op, the lower the product prices will be. Businesses outside of Burien will have to pick up their orders from Discover Burien, rather than the orders being delivered directly to them. Individuals can purchase

products if they wish, but there will be a minimum volume order, such as a case of a certain product.

Q: Can branded products be ordered through the co-op?

A: As these will be bulk orders, they cannot be customized. However, there are compostable products that are able to be customized with logos and brands when ordering directly from a distributor.

Q: Will the co-op carry paper Bags?

A: The co-op can carry whatever products there is a demand for. Bags are not included in the ordinance but can still be offered by the co-op. Requests and interest for products can be sent to ed@discoverburien.org, or brought up in the next co-op meeting. Email thea@zerowastewashington.org to be added to the co-op email list.

Q: Will the co-op provide access to materials in Spanish?

A: Yes! Please let us know if you need any materials in Spanish and we can provide them to you. We also have some materials in Vietnamese and Tagalog.

Q: Will compost bins be available through the co-op?

A: Yes, we are currently adding them to the list of available products, and you can also make a specific request for them to show your interest by emailing the co-op.

If your question was not answered here, you can direct any further questions to these contacts:

Ordinance:

environment@burienwa.gov

Co-op:

ed@discoverburien.org

thea@zerowastewashington.org

