



OurCounty

LA County Plastics Policy

Rita Kampalath, PhD, PE

LA County Chief Sustainability Office

November 16, 2020

High Level Goals



Resilient and healthy community environments where residents thrive in place



Buildings and infrastructure that support human health and resilience



Equitable and sustainable land use and development without displacement



A prosperous LA County that provides opportunities for all residents and businesses and supports the transition to clean economy sectors



Thriving ecosystems, habitats, and biodiversity



Accessible parks, public lands, and public spaces that create opportunities for respite, recreation, ecological discovery, and cultural activities

High Level Goals



A fossil fuel-free LA County



A convenient, safe, clean, and affordable transportation system that expands mobility while reducing car dependency



Sustainable production and consumption of resources



A sustainable and just food system that enhances access to affordable, local, and healthy food



Inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance that supports participation in sustainability efforts, especially by disempowered communities



A commitment to realize OurCounty sustainability goals through creative, equitable, and coordinated funding and partnerships

LA County Efforts Related to Plastics



Ban of Expanded Polystyrene food containers at County Facilities

- Adopted by Board in November 2010

Plastic Bag Ban

- Adopted in November 2011 for County unincorporated areas
- ~95% reduction in overall single use bag usage after one year

Single Use Food Service Ware Ordinance (in progress)

- Driven by Board motion adopted in October 2019
- Study by UCLA Luskin on specific impacts of single use food service ware on LA County
- Stakeholder engagement and drafting of ordinance

UCLA Single Use Food Service Ware Study



Methods

- Literature review, interviews with key stakeholders including local government, and waste haulers, and materials recovery facilities (MRFs) serving LA County

Key Findings

- Only HDPE (Code #2) and PET (Code #1) are commonly recycled in LA County
- No recovery facility serving LA County consistently recycles single use food service ware, mostly due to contamination, product size, and material
- Alternatives may have lower lifetime costs:
 - Reusable ware: higher initial cost, but long-term net benefits
 - Compostable ware: 100% fiber-based products, no chemical treatments
- Interviews with other jurisdictions have shown no reported negative economic impacts
- Significant cost impacts to local jurisdictions and waste industry

Single Use Plastic Food Service Ware Ordinance

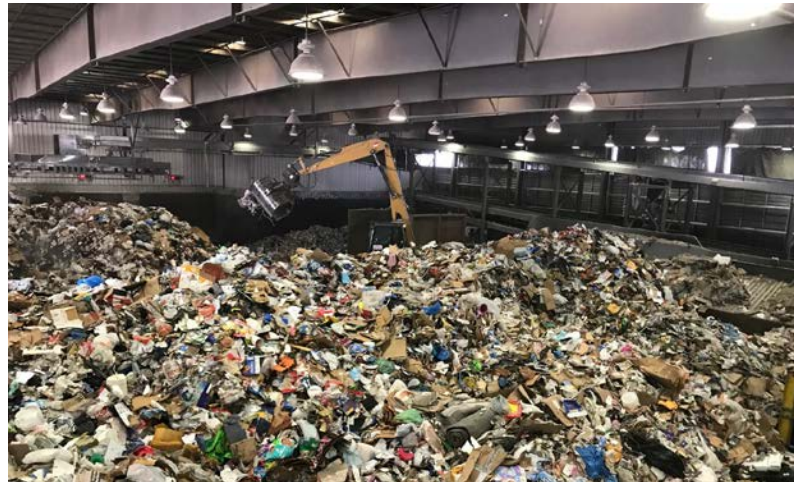


- County conducted stakeholder workshop with diverse stakeholders: environmental and environmental justice NGOs, local government, waste industry, and plastics industry
- Expected April release date for draft, and end of June date for consideration by Board of Supervisors
- **COVID-19 Impacts:**
 - Ordinance development now on hold
 - Challenging to define approach due to uncertainty related to economic recovery



Next Steps and Gaps Identified

- Clear definitions/standards for “compostable” and “recyclable”, and appropriate product labeling
- Focused work and collaboration on source reduction
- Creative incentives and/or pilot programs to encourage use of reusables
- Funding for infrastructure
- Collaboration between producers and waste industry





[OurCountyLA.org](https://www.OurCountyLA.org)