

Single Use Plastic – Draft Policy

March 9, 2021

In October 2020, the Board Policy Review Committee proposed a Single-Use Plastics policy (please see attached policy draft). Other colleges, universities, and local municipalities have moved or are moving in this same direction.

In Marin County, a Reusable Foodware Ordinance is temporarily on hold as the County and local food service industry responds to the COVID-19 pandemic. The town of San Anselmo has approved a Single Use Foodware Ordinance, developed by its Sustainability Commission to reduce waste and protect the environment. The ordinance furthers the Town Council's goal to be Zero Waste by 2025.

The Board Policy Review Committee's proposed policy would require various actions of the District no later than July 1, 2021. The proposed actions are presented below with an impact update for each of the associated actions.

Eliminate single-use plastic water bottles upon contract renewal if existing contract terms prohibit. A 25% reduction in single-use plastic water bottles purchased and supplied will be achieved annually.

According to Canteen, our contractor for vending machines, they can eliminate all plastic bottle usage at COM "pretty easily." Without getting into the details, this would result in at least a 40% reduction in commissions to the College. In a normal year of sales, the reduction would equate to approximately \$5,400. Santa Rosa Junior College experienced similar reductions when they made this transition. Commissions from vending normally go to ASCOM for programs and activities. According to Follet, our book store contractor, they have already worked with their beverage vendors and convenience buyers to eliminate single-use plastics, including water bottles.

Eliminate plastic straws.

Fresh & Natural, our former contractor for the cafeteria, was forced to cease business operations due to the pandemic. We can easily require the use of non-plastic straws in our future cafeteria or food service operations.

Eliminate single-use plastic carryout bags.

Follet eliminated single-use carryout bags years ago. Again, this can easily be incorporated in future cafeteria or food service operations.

Eliminate single-use polystyrene (e.g. STYROFOAM) food service items.

Again, this can be easily incorporated in future cafeteria or food service operations. Follet discontinued "Cup of Noodles" due to its polystyrene containers.

Replace single-use plastic items with materials that are reusable, locally compostable and/or recyclable.

The District's purchasing office continues to work with specific vendors to address how items are packaged with an eye on reducing single-use plastic or Styrofoam packaging. This will be a longer-term effort.