



MEDIA ADVISORY FROM

Office of Councilmembers Nancy Nadel, District 3, and Jean Quan, District 4

MEDIA ALERT
January 24, 2008

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OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL ASSERTS PLASTIC BAG BAN IS RIGHT FOR OAKLAND AND RIGHT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

WHAT: Press Conference to affirm the City of Oakland's commitment to reducing pollution, oil-consumption, blight, and global warming through its ban on the use of non-biodegradable carry out plastic bags at retail establishments in the City of Oakland.

WHEN: Monday, January 28, 2008, 10 am

WHERE: Oakland City Hall front steps
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza
Oakland, CA 94612

WHO: Councilmember Nancy Nadel (District 3), co-author of the ordinance
Councilmember Jean Quan (District 4), co-author of the ordinance
Jack Macy, Commercial Zero Waste Coordinator, S.F. Department of the Environment
Dr. Richard Bailey, Director, Lake Merritt Institute
Wanda Redic, Recycling Specialist, Environmental Services Div., City of Oakland
Peter Slote, Recycling Specialist, Environmental Services Div., City of Oakland

BACKGROUND:

A City of Oakland ordinance banning the use of plastic bags was to take effect on January 18, 2008, but the City delayed implementation until after a court ruling to be issued on Tuesday, January 29, 2008. Alameda County Superior Court Judge Frank Roesch is expected to consider at 9 am the plastic bag industry's request to stop implementation of the ban on the ground that the City did not consider potential environmental impacts, although the City determined that environmental review is not necessary since banning plastic bags will improve the environment.

Oakland's plastic bag ban ordinance (Ordinance No. 12818, C.M.S.) passed on July 17, 2007, contains four elements:

- It bans the use of non-biodegradable plastic carry-out bags provided at the point of sale at retail establishments in Oakland that gross one million dollars or more.
- It encourages affected retail establishments to offer incentives to customers to use reusable bags.
- It allows the use of single-use paper bags, but stipulates that they must contain recycled content.
- Although it does not encourage or discourage their use, the Ordinance allows the use of biodegradable plastic bags.

(con'td)

San Francisco has already implemented a ban on plastic bags. Ukiah passed an advisory resolution for an all-county plastic bag ban in December, 2007, and Bakersfield, Berkeley, Fairfax, and Santa Cruz are considering similar legislation. Numerous U.S. states and cities, including Alaska, Boston, Baltimore, Maui, Portland, Seattle, Phoenix, New Haven, Austin, and Annapolis, are also considering the feasibility of banning plastic bags.

A growing list of countries and foreign cities from Bangladesh to Zanzibar have already banned plastic bags, including China, Denmark, Ireland, South Africa, Taiwan, Singapore, Melbourne, and a number of East African countries. **A quarter of the world's population has stopped using plastic bags.**

Just last week, Whole Foods, Inc., announced that it will phase out the use of plastic bags in all of its stores nationwide by Earth Day, April 22, 2008. City Car Share, which helps reduce air pollution and gasoline consumption by reducing the number of cars on the road through car sharing in Oakland, Berkeley, and San Francisco, now provides reusable bags for grocery shopping in all of its cars.

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