

**ORDINANCE NO. 600**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF MORRO BAY, CALIFORNIA  
AMENDING THE MORRO BAY MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING  
CHAPTER 8.17 TO REGULATE THE USE OF EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE  
PRODUCTS WITHIN THE CITY**

**THE CITY COUNCIL  
City of Morro Bay, California**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Morro Bay (the "City") has the police power to protect the health, safety and welfare of the community, including the ability to protect and enhance the natural environment; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the California Department of Transportation, expanded polystyrene comprises approximately 15% of storm drain litter and is the second most common form of beach debris in California, and plastic products, including expanded polystyrene, make up 80 -90% of floating marine debris; and

**WHEREAS**, the City is situated adjacent to the Pacific Ocean and during regular beach clean-ups, expanded polystyrene products are found and discarded; and

**WHEREAS**, items made from expanded polystyrene are not biodegradable, compostable, or recyclable locally and expanded polystyrene as litter is highly durable; and

**WHEREAS**, expanded polystyrene breaks into small, lightweight pieces that may be picked up by the wind even when it has been disposed of properly, and flow or be flown into creeks and the Pacific Ocean, contributing to water quality and habitat protection concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, marine animals and birds often confuse expanded polystyrene with pieces of food, and when ingested, it can impact their digestive tracts, often leading to death; and

**WHEREAS**, expanded polystyrene is manufactured from petroleum, a non – renewable resource; and

**WHEREAS**, expanded polystyrene is not recycled at the Cold Canyon Landfill and there are no current plans to recycle it, and regulating the use of expanded polystyrene products will, therefore, maximize the operating life of the landfills; and

**WHEREAS**, take-out food packaging that is biodegradable, compostable, and recyclable is the most responsible and sustainable choice for the City's tourist economy, its citizenry and its environment and when those products are recycled, natural resources are spared and less energy is used for the production of new products; and

**WHEREAS**, regulating the use of expanded polystyrene products within the City will help protect the City's natural environment from contamination and degradation; and

**NOW, THEREFORE,** the City Council of the City of Morro Bay does hereby ordain as follows:

SECTION 1: The Morro Bay Municipal Code is hereby amended by adding, a new Chapter 8.17 to read, in its entirety, as follows:

**Chapter 8.17  
EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE**

**8.17.010 Definitions.**

The following words and phrases, whenever used in this chapter, shall have the meanings defined in this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

A. "ASTM standard" means meeting the standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) international standard D6400 or D6868 for biodegradable and compostable plastics, as those standards may be amended.

B. "Biodegradable" means compostable (separately defined) or the ability of organic matter to break down from a complex to a more simple form through the action of bacteria or to undergo this process.

C. "City facility" means any building, structure or vehicle owned and operated by the city of Morro Bay, its agents, agencies, and departments.

D. "City contractor" means any person or entity that enters into an agreement with the city to furnish products or services to or for the city.

E. "Compostable" means all the materials in the product or package will break down, or otherwise become part of usable compost (e.g., soil-conditioning material, mulch). Compostable disposable food containers must meet ASTM standards for compostable materials.

F. "Disposable food container" is interchangeable with "to go" packaging and "food packaging material" and means all containers that are used to hold prepared food or drinks. Disposable food containers include clamshells, bowls, plates, trays, cartons, boxes, and cups that are intended for single use, including, without limitation, food containers for takeout foods and leftovers from partially consumed meals prepared by food providers; provided, that single-use disposable items such as straws, cup lids, or utensils and single-use disposable packaging for unprepared foods are not intended to be part of this definition.

G. "Events promoter" means each person who applies for any event permit issued by the city or any city employee(s) responsible for any city-organized event.

H. "Expanded polystyrene" or EPS means blown expanded and extruded polystyrene or other plastic foams which are processed by any number of techniques including, but not limited to, fusion of monomer spheres (expanded bead plastic), injection molding, foam molding, and extrusion-blown molding (extruded foam plastic).

I. "Expanded polystyrene products" means any item such as coolers, ice chests, cups, bowls, plates, trays, clamshell containers, meat trays, shipping boxes, packing peanuts or any other

merchandise made from expanded polystyrene that is not wholly encapsulated or encased by a more durable material.

J. "Food provider" means any person or establishment located within the city that is a retailer of prepared food or beverages for public consumption including, but not limited to, any store, supermarket, delicatessen, restaurant, shop, caterer or mobile food vendor.

K. "Person" means an individual, business, event promoter, trust, firm, joint stock company, corporation, nonprofit, including a government corporation, partnership, or association.

L. "Prepared food" means food or beverages, which are served, packaged, cooked, chopped, sliced, mixed, brewed, frozen, squeezed or otherwise prepared within the city. Prepared food does not include raw, butchered meats, fish or poultry sold from a butcher case or similar food establishment.

M. "Recyclable" means any material that is specified in the franchise agreement with the city's solid waste removal provider including, but not limited to, aluminum, tin and bi-metal cans, clear and colored glass containers, high density polyethylene (HDPE), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), clear or rigid polystyrene, corrugated cardboard and mixed paper.

N. "Vendor" means any person, retail store or business who sells or offers goods or merchandise, located or operating within the city, including those referenced in the definition of "food provider."

#### **8.17.020 Expanded polystyrene disposable food containers prohibited.**

A. No food provider operating within the city may provide prepared food in or provide separately any disposable food container made from expanded polystyrene, except as exempted in Section 8.17.050.

B. No person shall use a disposable food container made from expanded polystyrene in any city facility.

C. City contractors in the performance of city contracts and events promoters may not provide prepared food in disposable food containers made from expanded polystyrene.

#### **8.17.030 Required biodegradable, compostable, or recyclable disposable food containers.**

A. Every person who is a food provider within the city who utilizes disposable food containers shall use biodegradable, compostable or recyclable products.

B. Any person who is a food provider within any city facility and utilizes disposable food containers shall use only biodegradable, compostable or recyclable products.

C. Every city contractor and event promoter who utilize disposable food containers shall only use biodegradable, compostable, or recyclable products while performing under a city contract or permit.

#### **8.17.040 Prohibited sales.**

No vendor or events promoter in the city may sell or otherwise provide any expanded polystyrene product which is not wholly encapsulated or encased within a more durable material, except as exempted in Section 8.17.050. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, cups, plates, bowls, trays, clamshells and other products intended primarily for food service use, as well as coolers, containers, ice chests, shipping boxes, packing peanuts, or other packaging materials.

#### **8.17.050 Exemptions.**

A. The city manager or designee, in his/her sole discretion, may exempt a food provider from the requirements set forth in Section 8.17.020(A) for one single, six-month period upon written application by the vendor or food provider showing this chapter would create an undue hardship or practical difficulty. The city manager or designee's decision shall be in writing, and the decision shall be final and not subject to appeal. The city manager or designee may approve the exemption application in whole or in part, with or without conditions.

B. In addition, exemptions to allow for the sale or provision of expanded polystyrene products may be granted by the city manager or designee, in his/her sole discretion, if the vendor can demonstrate, in writing, a public health and safety requirement or medical necessity to use the products. The city manager or designee shall put the decision to grant or deny the exemption in writing and the decision shall be final and not subject to appeal.

C. Each exemption application shall include all information necessary for the city manager or designee to make a decision, including, but not limited to, documentation showing factual support for the claimed exemption. The city manager or designee may require the applicant to provide additional information.

D. Foods prepared or packaged outside the city and sold inside the city are exempt from the provisions of this chapter.

E. Raw meat, fish and other raw food trays are exempt from the provisions of this chapter.

F. Products made from expanded polystyrene, which are wholly encapsulated or encased by a more durable material, are exempt from the provisions of this chapter. Examples include surfboards, life preservers, and craft supplies which are wholly encapsulated or encased by a more durable material, and coolers encased in hard plastic.

G. Construction products made from expanded polystyrene are exempted from this chapter if the products are used in compliance with Title 14, Buildings and Construction, and used in a manner preventing the expanded polystyrene from being released into the environment.

H. In a situation deemed by the city manager to be an emergency for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health or safety, city facilities, food providers, city contractors and vendors doing business with the city shall be exempt from the provisions of this chapter.

I. Expanded polystyrene packaging products, which have been received from sources outside the city, may be reused to be kept out of the waste stream.

#### **8.17.060 Violations.**

A. Any violation of the provisions of this chapter by any person is subject to administrative fines as provided in Chapter 1.03, which may be appealed pursuant to the procedures in that chapter.

B. For the first violation, the city manager or designee may allow the violating food provider, in lieu of payment of the administrative fine, to submit receipts demonstrating the purchase after the citation date of biodegradable, compostable, or recyclable products in an amount equal to the amount of the citation.

C. Each food provider and vendor who violates this chapter in connection with city permitted special events shall be assessed fines as follows:

1. A fine not to exceed two hundred dollars for an event of one to two hundred persons.
2. A fine not to exceed four hundred dollars for an event of two hundred one to four hundred persons.
3. A fine not to exceed six hundred dollars for an event of four hundred one to six hundred persons.
4. A fine not to exceed one thousand dollars for an event of more than six hundred persons.

D. In addition to other remedies provided by this chapter or by other law, any violation of this chapter may be remedied by a civil action brought by the city attorney, including but not limited to, administrative or judicial nuisance abatement proceedings, civil or criminal code enforcement proceedings, and suits for injunctive relief. The remedies provided by this chapter are cumulative and in addition to any other remedies available at law or in equity.

SECTION 2. This Ordinance is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code Section 2100 et seq.). Pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations because it can be seen with certainty there is no possibility the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. Further, the proposed Ordinance is exempt from CEQA on the separate and independent ground it is an action of a regulatory agency (the City) for the protection of the environment because, among other things, it will regulate the use and sale of expanded polystyrene products and reduce the amount of expanded polystyrene products that enter local landfill and waterways. Thus, this Ordinance is categorically exempt from the requirements of CEQA under Section 15308 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations as an action by a regulatory agency for the protection of the environment.

SECTION 3. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this Ordinance is, for any reason, held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, then such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council of the City of Morro Bay hereby declares it would have adopted this Ordinance and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases, or portions thereof may be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 4. This Ordinance shall take effect thirty days after its adoption, but not become operative until May 1, 2016.

SECTION 5: The City Clerk or her duly appointed deputy shall attest to the adoption of this Ordinance and shall cause this Ordinance to be published and posted in the manner required by law.

**INTRODUCED** at a regular meeting of the City Council of Morro Bay, held on the 26th day of January, 2016, by motion of Councilmember Headding, seconded by Councilmember Smukler.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** on the 9th day of February, 2016.

  
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JAMIE L. IRONS, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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DANA SWANSON, City Clerk


APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
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JOSEPH W. PANNONE, City Attorney

I, Dana Swanson, City Clerk for the City of Morro Bay, hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was duly and regularly introduced at a meeting of the City Council of the 26th day of January, 2016, and hereafter the said ordinance was duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the City Council on the 9th day of February, 2016, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES: Irons, Headding, Johnson, Makowetski, Smukler  
NOES: None  
ABATAIN: None  
ABSENT: None

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City of Morro Bay, California, this 10th day of February, 2016.

  
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City Clerk of the City of Morro Bay