

 <p>New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Section: Operations</p>	<p>Policy Title: Single-Use Plastic Reduction Policy</p> <p>Directive: OPR-POL-013</p> <p>Effective Date: 12/02/2024</p>
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Summary

The natural, ecological, historic, cultural and recreational resources managed by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) are vital to the state's environment and significantly enhance both the quality of that environment and our lives. The mission of OPRHP is to provide safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors and to be responsible stewards of our valuable natural, historic and cultural resources.

OPRHP recognizes that plastic product pollution causes significant environmental harm, poses a health hazard to human, wild and marine life, and creates an aesthetic blight in New York State parks and historic sites (OPRHP Facilities). This policy bans the sale and distribution of several single-use plastic items at all OPRHP Facilities, and describes educational efforts intended to encourage park patrons to reduce the use of plastic products.

Policy

The goal of this policy is to reduce plastic pollution in OPRHP Facilities. This ban applies to concessionaires, private nonprofit, and for-profit partners, and OPRHP operations (referred to collectively as “vendors”). The following plastic items have been categorized into three phases which specify the timeline for their complete elimination. Vendors should begin phasing these items out as soon as possible with the goal of being fully compliant by the deadline indicated.

Phase 1:

Initially restricted in 2019

Timeline: Any remaining items in this category must be removed from vendor operations immediately.

- Plastic Bags:** Vendors are restricted from providing single-use plastic bags to the consumer. “Plastic Bags” means all single-use plastic carry-out bags provided to consumers at the point of sale.

This prohibition does not include: (a) reusable bags that are not made of plastic film; (b) single-use bags that are made of compostable materials; or (c) operational-type plastic bags such as trash and garbage bags, etc.
- Plastic Straws:** Vendors are restricted from providing plastic straws to the consumer, except upon special request to those with special needs for whom plastic straws are important for ease of drinking. Non- plastic and compostable straws may be provided at vendors’ discretion.

- **Plastic Stirrers:** Vendors are restricted from providing plastic stirrers to the consumer. Non-plastic or compostable stirrers may be provided at vendors' discretion.
- **Condiment Packets:** Vendors are restricted from providing plastic condiment portion control packets such as individual ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and relish packets to consumers. Condiments may be provided in bulk packaging or dispensers at vendors' discretion.
- **Polystyrene:** Vendors are restricted from providing any polystyrene or styrofoam products to the consumer, as previously established in OPRHP policy.

Phase 2:

Initially restricted in 2024 to adhere to Executive Order 22.

Timeline: Complete removal from vendor operations by December 31, 2025.

- **Plastic Splash Sticks:** Vendors are restricted from providing single-use plastic splash sticks to the consumer. Splash sticks are a device that are put in the hole of a beverage container to stop the beverage from spilling out and are intended to be disposed of after one use.
- **Plastic Utensils:** Vendors are restricted from providing single-use plastic utensils to the consumer. "Utensils" includes all single-use plastic utensils such as forks, knives, spoons, sporks, serving spoons, serving forks, and serving tongs intended to be disposed of after one use.
- **Plastic Food Service Products:** Vendors are restricted from providing single-use plastic food service products to the consumer. Single-use food service products include hot cups, cold cups, lids, portion cups, take-out containers, bowls, trays/boats, and plates that are intended to be used once prior to disposal. This includes products used for immediate or on-site consumption.
- **Balloons:** Vendors are restricted from utilizing, offering for sale, or providing balloons to patrons and staff. Balloons are flexible bags made of materials including, but not limited to, rubber, latex, polychloroprene, metalized plastic, mylar, and nylon fabric.
- **To-go Containers:** For all prepackaged food items, including snacks, to-go food, sandwiches, etc., preference must be placed on products with non-plastic packaging or minimal plastic packaging. If the food item is packaged by vendors, then the item must be packaged in non-plastic materials.

Phase 3:

Initially Restricted in 2024

Timeline: Removal from vendor operations by December 31, 2027.

- **Water Bottles:** Vendors are restricted from providing, distributing, or offering for sale single-use plastic water bottles to the consumer. Water in non-plastic containers, such as aluminum, cardboard boxes, or other eco-friendly alternatives must be utilized instead. Where feasible, vendors should consider offering bottle filling stations or water dispensers.
- **Other Beverages:** All other beverages must be procured in non-single-use plastic containers when available. Preference must be given to beverages with non-plastic containers, such as aluminum, cardboard boxes, or other eco-friendly alternatives, over those offered only in single-use plastic containers.

This policy does not restrict patrons from bringing single-use plastic products into OPRHP Facilities. However, park patrons can play a role in reducing plastic product pollution by not bringing single-use plastic products into parks or historic sites and by removing and properly recycling any single-use plastic products that they do bring into OPRHP Facilities. Through social media, website, and appropriate signage, OPRHP will encourage patrons to utilize reusable, recyclable, or biodegradable materials in lieu of single-use plastics, and to carry out and appropriately dispose of any single-use plastic products that they do bring into OPRHP Facilities.

This policy will result in a cleaner, more sustainable park system. Moving forward, OPRHP will continue its efforts to responsibly reduce plastic pollution as additional reusable, recyclable, and biodegradable options become available.

Other Related Information

No other related information.

History

12/02/2014 Corrected typographical error.

10/01/2024 Policy revised to meet standards established in NYS Executive Order 22.

01/14/2019 This policy supersedes “OPRHP Policy on Use of Biodegradable Materials,” which discontinued the use and sale of polystyrene materials at all New York State Parks Concessions effective December 31, 1989.