



City of San José Bag Ban Metrics Summary

The City of San José uses three key perspectives to evaluate its single-use bag ordinance:

- The business community: How are local businesses complying with the ordinance?
- The public: Are local shoppers changing their habits to use reusable bags?
- The environment: Are fewer bags being littered on City streets/sidewalks and in creeks?

Business Community Compliance

Surveys of the business community are conducted annually throughout the City. Within each of the City's 10 council districts, inspectors randomly select a large, medium, and small retail business. Within the 4 largest shopping malls, inspectors randomly select a large, medium, and 3 small retailers. Observations are conducted without engaging customers or store personnel. The most recent observations occurred in November 2015. The results are summarized below. The next field compliance survey is tentatively scheduled for winter 2016.

Consumer Behavior

The City also uses a survey methodology developed by the Bay Area Recycling Outreach Coalition (BayROC) to assess consumer behavior. The methodology involves observing customers exiting a store for one hour and recording the type and number of bags utilized or the absence of bags. Data is collected from stores of various types. Some of the data points reported from this effort are described below:

- average use of single-use bags (averages single-use bag usage by total customers observed pre and post ordinance);
- reusable bag use (provides percentage of total bags observed that were reusable or reused);
- no bag used (provides data on customers hand carrying their items or placing them back in the cart without bags); and
- paper bag use (averages paper bag usage by total customers observed).

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Bag Litter Assessment

Data from creek conditions is derived from City-conducted hot spot cleanups required by the City's Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit. Under this permit the City must clean 32 hot spots annually. Starting in 2010, trash was characterized at a subset of these cleanups. Since 2011, trash from 10 hot spot cleanups is sorted every year.

Pre-ordinance storm drain trash characterization data was collected during a regional project through the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP). In June 2016, SCVURPPP completed a post ordinance storm drain trash monitoring and characterization project comparing 40 of 119 storm inlets sampled to the 2011 BASMAA storm inlet study to determine the effectiveness of the city's bring your own bag ordinance. **BYOB Litter Assessment and Business/Consumer Behavior - November 2016**

Results:

- **Reduction in number of bags found at creek/river clean ups** -In 2016, 179 bags were collected representing 1.3% of total litter. Many of the bags collected were legacy trash. The percent change pre-ban to post ban as of November 2016 is an 86% decrease in bags found in creeks.
- **Storm Drain Characterization Study** - In June 2016, the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program completed the Storm Drain Trash Monitoring and Characterization Project. Of the 119 monitoring sites equipped with small-full capture devices sampled for project, 40 sites in San Jose were also part of the 2011 BASMAA Study and used to evaluate the rate at which bags were observed prior to and after the ordinance went into effect. **The average rate of single-use plastic bags decreased by 69%.**
- **Increase in reusable bag use**
 - o Approximately 46.6% of bags are reusable bags post ban vs. 3.1% pre-ban;
 - o 42.9% of customers are not using a bag to carry out items vs. 12.9% pre-ban;
 - o No single-use bags were observed being used at retail or grocery stores.
- **Business/Retail observations**
 - o No SJ businesses surveyed are providing non-compliant thin film plastic bags (single-use carry-out bags).
 - o Most SJ businesses surveyed (~97%) are supplying some type of compliant carryout bag, with most (~58%) supplying paper bags.
 - o Since 2013, the percentage of SJ businesses supplying thick plastic bags (reusable bags) has steadily increased while the percentage of SJ businesses supplying paper bags has steadily decreased.

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