



# Montgomery County's Ban on Polystyrene

April 4, 2016

# Why Did Montgomery County Ban Polystyrene?

- To improve the quality of life for County residents, businesses and visitors by reducing the amount of litter on our land & in our watersheds
- To decrease the potential for harm to aquatic life, which may mistakenly ingest polystyrene
- To increase the use of recyclable & compostable items which are more sustainable alternatives
- To avoid potential health effects which may result from styrene



# Background

- **July 31, 2012 – Resolution No. 17-522 supports elimination of expanded polystyrene food service ware in County government; encourages other public and private entities to do the same**
- **September 9, 2014 - Bill 41-14: Solid Waste (Trash) Food Service Products Packaging Materials – Requirements: Introduced by Councilmember Hans Riemer**
- **Bill 41-14 Enacted by County Council on January 20, 2015 and signed by County Executive on January 28, 2015**



# Summary of Bill 41-14

- **Prohibits the use of certain expanded polystyrene food service products by food service businesses**
- **Requires the use of compostable or recyclable food service ware by the County, County contractors or lessees, and food service businesses**
- **Prohibits the sale of certain expanded polystyrene food service products and polystyrene loose fill packaging**

# Effective Dates

## January 1, 2016

- Food service businesses must not use expanded polystyrene food service products, but may exhaust supplies purchased before that date until January 1, 2017;
- A person must not sell expanded polystyrene food service products or packaging materials;
- A County agency, contractor, or lessee must use compostable or recyclable food service ware, but may exhaust supplies purchased before that date until January 1, 2017.

## January 1, 2017

- All food service business must use recyclable or compostable food service ware.

# Who Does the Law Apply To?



- **Food Service Businesses, including not-for-profit and government:**

- Restaurants (full & limited service)
- Fast food establishments
- Coffee shops
- Food trucks/vending carts
- Cafeterias (business & institutional)
- Others that sell or provide food for consumption on/off premise



- **Retailers:**

- Grocery stores/markets
- Pharmacies
- Office supply vendors
- Membership warehouses
- Packing and shipping material suppliers

# Exemptions

- Exempts food service businesses from using compostable or recyclable disposable food service ware if there is no suitable or affordable alternative (item will be specified on an exemption list and exemption list will be reviewed and updated annually)
- Food or beverages filled and sealed in expanded polystyrene containers outside of Montgomery County
- Materials used to package raw/uncooked/butchered meat, seafood, or poultry for off-premise consumption

# Outreach and Education on Bill 41-14

- Developed website with information which is updated regularly
- Created an email listserv to provide updates and notifications electronically
- Researched availability of recyclable and/or compostable product alternatives and vendors & posted listing on website
- Created Q & A flyer with important details
- Conducted webinars & posted presentation on website
- Presented information & support to government facility recycling coordinators
- Coordination with the Chambers of Commerce, Maryland Restaurant Association, Maryland Retailers Association
- Educational notice mailed to food service establishments & retailers
- Translated educational notice into Spanish for one-on-one distribution

# Outreach and Education (continued)

- Information pertaining to Bill 41-14 included in four electronic newsletters to businesses, organizations, multi-family properties, & single-family households
- Coordinated with County Health & Human Services to hold a training/Q&A session for Health Department inspectors who inspect & certify food service businesses
- Presentations in upcoming business recycling and multi-family recycling seminars
- In Process:
  - Focused multi-media education campaign
  - Brochure for distribution to businesses and organizations during events, seminars and site visits
  - Educational materials translated into additional languages as needed
  - Ongoing coordination with the Chambers of Commerce, Maryland Restaurant Association, Maryland Retailers Association