

Campaign

Our goal is to cut down on Newfoundland and Labrador's plastic use and pollution by banning single-use plastic bags at the provincial level.

Strategy

To achieve this goal, the sector needs to show a unified commitment for a provincial ban and build momentum that will demonstrate public support for a provincial single-use plastic bag ban. MNL has garnered widespread support for this position in the public, within the environmental sector and with business groups, but we need to keep the pressure on and overcome lobbying and influence by continuing to show popular support.

Media

Use traditional media whenever you see the opportunity. What journalists report about the provincial bag ban is an indicator of public opinion on this issue. The more favourable articles/opinion pieces we can get printed about the provincial bag ban the better. Submit an opinion piece or "letter to the editor" to your community newspaper in support of a provincial plastic bag ban. In addition, you can ask volunteers or your local Tidy Towns Committee to write letters to the editor and hold events that will help generate media stories.

Sign the Petition

The petition process is a great avenue to get our community concerns heard and remind politicians that we vote into office what we want in our local communities. MNL is providing you with a PDF of this petition that you may print and share with as many supporters as possible. The petition will be collected in time to be presented during the spring sitting of the House of Assembly.

- Please show your support and sign our Plastic Bag Ban petition to the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly about a provincial ban on single use plastic bags.
- Spread the word and tell your fellow councillors, staff, and residents to SIGN THE PETITION!
- Keep the petition accessible at your town hall and encourage residents to drop in and sign it.

Business owner endorsements

One of the industry's favourite arguments to use against plastic bag bans is that small businesses will be negatively impacted by such a ban. One way to combat this will be to get business owners to endorse the ban so we can show the provincial government where real small business owners stand on the issue. One of your tactics might be to get as many grocery and convenience store owners in town to sign the petition in support of banning plastic bags.

You may also have a conversation with small business owners in your town about the Province's proposal to give municipalities the jurisdiction to ban distribution. A patchwork ban such as this will cause problems for businesses with storefronts in multiple municipalities. A provincial ban would eliminate that concern.

Write your MHA

A personal letter to your MHA can be an effective tool for change. MNL is providing you with a template letter that you may personalize. Feel free to share this template with other groups and/or businesses that also wish to participate in this letter writing campaign. To find out who your member is and their address please go to www.assembly.nl.ca

Key Messages

- At the 2017 AGM 83% of municipalities voted in support of a provincially-mandated ban on single-use plastic bags. This vote reaffirms the sector's commitment to an existing policy position determined in 2015.
- There is widespread public support for this position, within the environmental sector and with business groups.
- The province is agreeable to a plastic bag ban, but downloading the burden of this responsibility onto municipalities is the wrong approach. We need a provincial ban.
- Regulation of the retail sector is clearly a provincial responsibility.
- Downloading this responsibility onto municipalities will cost the taxpayers more.
 - Enforcing this kind of a ban will cost municipalities more per capita than if the province does it so property taxes will have to go up and the overall cost will be higher.
- Most municipalities don't have the administrative capacity to implement or enforce this ban at the local level.
 - 74% of municipalities in NL have one or fewer staff.
 - Most don't have enforcement officers or staff who can monitor plastic bag use.
- Both resolutions passed by the MNL Membership support a **PROVINCIAL** ban. A municipal ban will not work.
 - There are 275 municipalities across the province. Leaving it to each and every one of them to design and implement a ban just means 275 different bans across the province.
 - For businesses that operate in multiple municipalities it will be an administrative and financial nightmare.
 - It will result in an uneven patchwork of potentially conflicting municipal regulations.
- A distribution ban won't be as effective as an all-out ban on use.
- A provincial ban could be seen as an important first step in educating Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to use reusable products rather than disposable ones.
- Waste diversion is an increasingly important component of our provincial solid waste management strategy and single-use plastic bags remain a persistent waste stream in our communities and an especially serious hazard for marine life.
- A provincial ban would go a long way in helping the municipalities of this province prevent thousands of tonnes of plastic from entering the waste stream.
- There are still 100 million single-use plastic shopping bags used each year in the province that require approximately 1.6 million litres of oil to produce, adding considerably to our carbon footprint.
- Almost 50% of all windborne litter escaping from landfills is plastic, much of it single-use plastic bags that end up tangled in trees or floating in our inland and coastal waters.

Social Media

- Plastic Bag Ban NL
 - Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/PlasticBagBanNL/>
 - Twitter account: [@PlasticBagBanNL](https://twitter.com/PlasticBagBanNL)
- Hashtag #BantheBag
- Other people tweeting about Plastic Bag Ban
 - Deputy Mayor Sheilagh O’Leary (City of St. John’s) - @Sheilagholeary
 - Mayor Craig Scott (Town of Torbay) - @TorbayToday
 - President Tony Keats (MNL) - @tonyrkeats
 - VOCCM Openline Host Paddy Daly - @VOCCMOpenline
 - CBC On The Go - @OnTheGoCBC

Facebook:

Watch for Plastic Bag Ban NL posts on Facebook then share them to your municipality’s Facebook page and start the conversation in your town.

Possible Tweets:

1. We need a PROVINCIAL plastic bag ban. It's no longer a question of “IF” but “WHEN & HOW” and the time is NOW! March 11th is #BantheBag Day of Action @MAE_GovNL @PremierofNL @GrahamLetto @PlasticBagBanNL
2. Let's hear from you! March 11th is #BantheBag Day of Action calling on @GovNL @PremierofNL @GrahamLetto @MAE_GovNL to develop a province-wide ban on single-use plastic bags.
3. Nearly all marine life including half the world’s turtles & nearly all seabirds have ingested plastic. #BanTheBag March 11, 2019 DAY OF ACTION @PlasticBagBanNL @MAE_GovNL @PremierofNL @GrahamLetto
4. Almost 50% of all windborne litter escaping from landfills is plastic, much of it SUPB that end up tangled in trees or floating in our inland & coastal waters @PlasticBagBanNL @MAE_GovNL @PremierofNL @GrahamLetto March 11, 2019 #BanTheBag DAY OF ACTION
5. March 11, 2019 #BanTheBag DAY OF ACTION! @GovNL must get onboard! It only makes sense for this to happen at the provincial level. Doing it at the municipal level will be more \$\$, more complicated, & just won’t work. @PlasticBagBanNL @MAE_GovNL @PremierofNL @GrahamLetto
6. At @MunicipalNL 2017 AGM 83% of #nlmunis voted in support of a provincially-mandated ban on single-use plastic bags. This vote reaffirms municipal commitment to #BantheBag Day of Action: March 11, 2019 @PlasticBagBanNL @MAE_GovNL @PremierofNL @GrahamLetto
7. We need a PROVINCIAL plastic bag ban. Downloading this responsibility onto #nlmunis will increase cost to taxpayers. March 11, 2019 #BanTheBag DAY OF ACTION @PlasticBagBanNL @MAE_GovNL @PremierofNL @GrahamLetto
8. March 11, 2019 DAY OF ACTION on a provincial-wide ban on SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS. Show your support! #BanTheBag @PlasticBagBanNL @MAE_GovNL @PremierofNL @GrahamLetto

Resolutions

23-2015 / Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags - Portugal Cove - St. Philip's

Whereas in an effort to keep Newfoundland and Labrador as pristine as our award winning tourism ads portray our beautiful province; and,

Whereas in 2007, Leaf Rapids, Manitoba (population 500) was the first municipality in Canada to ban single use plastic shopping bags, thus inspiring many others to follow including the State of California (40 million population) and recently, close to home, Fogo Island (population 2400); and,

Whereas all together this helps to keep millions of plastic bags out of our landfills, towns, forests and oceans.

Therefore Be It Resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador request the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador prohibit all retail stores from providing customers with single-use plastic carry out (shopping) bags EXCEPT those, which are compostable, biodegradable, or photodegradable.

Staff Comments:

Waste diversion is an increasingly important component of municipal waste management. Notwithstanding store bag recycling programs, biodegradable bag experiments, and widespread incentives to adopt reusable bags, single-use plastic bags remain a persistent waste stream in communities. This resolution advocates a provincial ban in order to address the problem at source.

6-2017 Provincial Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags, Town of Torbay

Whereas waste diversion is an increasingly important component of municipal waste management;

Whereas almost 50% of all windborne litter escaping from landfills is plastic, much of it single use plastic bags that end up tangled in trees or floating in our inland and coastal waters;

Whereas single-use plastic bags remain a persistent waste stream in our communities and an especially serious hazard for marine life notwithstanding store bag recycling programs, biodegradable bag experiments, and widespread incentives to adopt reusable bags;

Whereas due to prohibitive costs there is no economically feasible recycling solution available for single-use plastic shopping bags in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador;

Whereas municipalities are active participants in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's Turn Back the Tide Campaign to combat climate change, but the 100 million single use plastic shopping bags used each year in the province require approximately 1.6 million litres of oil to produce, adding considerably to our carbon footprint; and,

Whereas a province-wide ban on single-use plastic shopping bags would afford businesspeople the most reliable, consistently-implemented and cost-saving basis for adapting their operations in Newfoundland and Labrador;

Therefore be it resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador request the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to prohibit all retail stores from providing customers with single-use plastic carry-out (shopping) bags.

Staff Comments:

This resolution reaffirms the sector's commitment to an existing policy position determined in 2015. After two years of advocacy, this topic is once again eligible for debate on the floor of the AGM. MNL has garnered widespread support for this position in the public, within the environmental sector and with business groups. The provincial government is getting closer to a decision on how or whether to move forward on a ban. This resolution and a strong show of support from the membership would be important for our continued advocacy.