

# EASTHAM RECYCLES

## Focus on "Plastic Bags"



### Eastham plastics bans

- **Single-use plastic shopping bags**
- Balloons
- Plastic Straws
- Single use plastic bottle
- Polystyrene
- Single-use take out containers & plastic utensils must be 100% recyclable or compostable in a natural setting.

### Upcoming dates

- Jun 8: World Oceans Day
- Jun 20: Eastham Farmers' Market opens!
- Jun 22-23: Hands on the Arts - Windmill Green



Photo by Brian Yurasits on Unsplash

### Plastic bag/film facts

- Plastic bags are among the most common sources of marine debris, where they can be mistaken as food by birds and fish.
- Plastic bags don't biodegrade, meaning it will take hundreds of years for them to decompose in a landfill. ([www.earth911](http://www.earth911))
- More than 4.83 million tons of plastic film has been generated before 2020 and only about 9.1% of that plastic is recycled. ([www.ecologycenter.org](http://www.ecologycenter.org))
- Today, we use about **100 billion** plastic bags each year in the US, with the average lifespan of just 12 minutes per bag. ([environmentamerica.org](http://environmentamerica.org))
  - That's 300 per person!





## June focus: Plastic

### Pop quiz: True or False:

Do you need to remove the caps from plastic bottles before recycling them?

## For more information

Check out these resources for more information.

- **RecycleSmartMA**  
<https://recyclesmartma.org/>
- **Eastham Transfer Station**  
<https://www.eastham-ma.gov/384/Solid-Waste->

## Contact us

The Recycling Committee is always looking for volunteers as well as members. Contact us via the Eastham Town webpage at: <https://www.eastham-ma.gov/611/Recycling-Committee>

- Jun 17 @ 5pm: Recycling Committee Meeting at Town Hall
- Jul 15 @ 5pm: Recycling Committee Meeting at Town Hall

## Reduce your consumption of plastic bags

**Plastic bags do NOT belong in the household recycling stream.** They are the number one problem at recycling facilities because they wrap around sorting machinery, shutting down the sorting line often multiple times per day.

### Reducing and reusing is best.

(Sources from [www.recyclesmartma.org](http://www.recyclesmartma.org)).

## What can I drop at the grocery store?

Various collection programs are used by local retailers. For example, Stop&Shop and Shaw's use NexTrex to recycle plastic wrap into "eco-friendly outdoor products". For the full list of items that NexTrex accepts, please visit [nextrex.com/view/educate](http://nextrex.com/view/educate).

### ACCEPTED (partial list)

- Please recycle only clean, dry plastic bags and film.
- NexTrex mainly accepts polyethylene (PE) plastic film (#2 and #4).
- Remove receipts and any other items from bags.
- If the package will stretch when you pull it, it can be included.
- Retail, carryout, produce, newspaper, bread, dry cleaning bags
- Zip-top food storage bags (clean and dry)
- Plastic shipping envelopes (remove labels), bubble wrap and air pillows (deflate)
- Product wrap on cases of water bottles, paper towels, diapers
- Plastic cereal box liners (but if it tears like paper, do not include)

### NOT ACCEPTED

- If it tears like paper, is shiny, or makes a crinkly/crunchy sound in your hand, don't put it in the bin.
- Black plastic bags are generally not accepted.
- Degradable/compostable bags or film packaging
- Pre-washed salad mix bags and frozen food bags
- Candy bar wrappers and chip bags

## What about the "compostable" produce bags?

"Compostable" bags are designed to break down in controlled settings, but they don't always decompose completely in home compost, leaving behind plastic-like fragments.