

**Ulster County's Food Service Waste Reduction Act was enacted for the following reasons:**

- Polystyrene foam (commonly referred to as Styrofoam, a Dow Chemical Company trademarked form of polystyrene foam insulation) is a common environmental pollutant and non-biodegradable substance commonly used as food service ware.
- Polystyrene foam is non-renewable, non-recyclable, and non-compostable.
- Environmental Protection Agency has found that the polystyrene manufacturing process is the fifth largest creator of hazardous waste in the United States.
- Evidence suggests that a component of polystyrene foam, styrene, is a carcinogen and neurotoxin. According to EPA studies, styrene is now detectable in the fat tissue of every man, woman and child in the United States.
- Alternative cost-effective biodegradable, compostable and/or reusable food service ware is readily available. Such alternatives are less toxic and more environmentally friendly than polystyrene foam.
- Use of biodegradable, compostable food, and/or re-useable service ware will reduce the waste stream and reduce waste costs.

**It is your responsibility to know the entirety of the law:**

The information provided in this pamphlet is only a summary of Ulster County's Food Service Waste Reduction Act, Local Law Number 12 of 2014: A Local Law regulating the Use of Polystyrene Foam Disposable Food Service Ware By Food Service Establishments in Ulster County. Please refer to the law in its entirety.

**Note:**

A Chain Food Service Establishment or Food Service Establishment may seek an exemption from the prohibition due to a "unique packaging hardship" under Subsection A due to a "financial hardship" under Subsection B of Section 5 of Local Law Number 12 of 2014, County of Ulster.



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**BUILDING A HEALTHIER  
ULSTER COUNTY**

A Summary of Ulster County's  
**Food Service Waste  
Reduction Act**

**Local Law Number 12 of 2014**



Regulating the Use of Polystyrene Foam Disposable Food Service Ware By Food Service Establishments in Ulster County



COUNTY EXECUTIVE

MICHAEL P. HEIN

## What does this law do?

The Food Service Waste Reduction Act bans all food service establishments from using expanded polystyrene foam (commonly referred to as Styrofoam) when preparing, selling or providing food and beverages in Ulster County.

## Who does this law apply to?

### A. Chain Food Service Establishments

**Effective: November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015**

### B. Food Service Establishments

**Effective: May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

### C. County Permitted Events & County Sponsored Events

*\*County permitted events & County sponsored events shall also no longer use non-recyclable plastic.*

**Effective: November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015**

## Examples of unacceptable products:

- Expanded polystyrene



**NOT ACCEPTABLE**

## Examples of acceptable products:

- Plastics made from non expanded polystyrene (preferable recyclable and compostable)
- Paper products (preferably recyclable and compostable)
- Cardboard (preferable recyclable and compostable)
- Metal (preferable recyclable) and aluminum/tin foil
- Glass (preferably recyclable)



**ACCEPTABLE**

Products made from non expanded polystyrene may be used. Products that are recycled, recyclable and compostable are preferable. For a list of products that are certified compostable, visit the Biodegradable Products Institute website:

<http://products.bpiworld.org/>

## Definitions:

### Chain Food Service Establishment

Any food service establishment or food service establishments operating in Ulster County that is or are part of a group of fifteen or more food service establishment.

### Food Service Establishment

Any establishment, located or providing food within the County of Ulster, which sells or otherwise provides prepared food and/or beverages for public consumption on or off its premises and includes, but is not limited to, **any store, shop, sales outlet, restaurant, bar, pub, coffee shop, cafeteria, caterer, convenience store, liquor store, grocery store, super market, delicatessen, catering truck, mobile food truck, cart or vehicle, or any other person who provides prepared food; and any organization, group or individual which regularly provides food as a part of its services.**

### Prepared Food

Any food or beverage which is (1) served in Ulster County or (2) which is packaged, cooked, chopped, sliced, mixed, brewed, frozen, squeezed, or otherwise prepared on the premises. Prepared food does not include raw meats, poultry and/or seafood sold for the purpose of cooking off premises.

\* See a complete list of definitions under Section 3 of Local Law Number 12, County of Ulster.