



DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

Opt-In for Single-Use Items

Single-use plastic straws,
Single-use plastic stirrers, single-use plastic utensils and
so much more!

Policy Committee – February 11, 2021

It's only 1 bag...1 straw...1 spoon...



Bring Your Own Bag Update

- Passed December 2019 to go into effect on July 1, 2020
- Delayed by Council to July 1, 2021 due to the pandemic
- Marketing team is working on education and bag giveaway campaign prior to July 1st

Reminder...From 2.12.20

- Polystyrene food and drink containers
 - Exemptions for patient care, food prepackaged prior to receipt at restaurant or food service establishment and grocery store packaging for raw meat, seafood, sheet cakes and other bakery items
- Plastic coffee stirrers
- Plastic drinking straws
- Plastic utensils
- Reducing SUP (bottle and food packaging) within city
- Solid Waste stakeholder engagement (and possible ballot measure)
- Sustainable packaging for marijuana products

Plastic Waste in the U.S.

36

million tons

Total plastic
waste in the
U.S.

27

million tons

Amount that
goes to the
landfill

8.5%

Percentage of
plastic waste
that is recycled

The market for online restaurant delivery in the U.S. is booming:

2019

\$31 billion

2020

\$44 billion

(projected)

2024

\$77 billion

(projected)

What a Difference a Year Makes

COVID

Food deliveries 

SUP Waste 

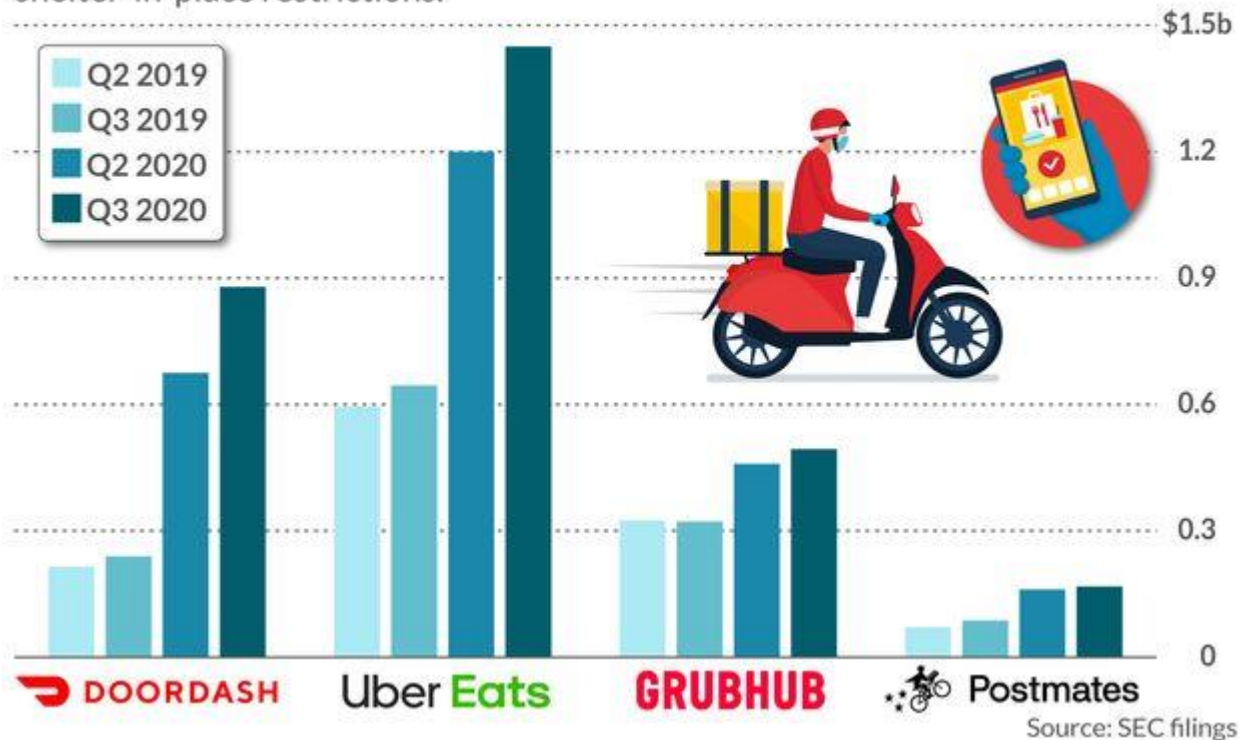


International Solid Waste Association estimates that consumption of **single-use plastics** may have grown **250-300%** during the pandemic



The COVID-19 delivery boom

The four top U.S. food-delivery apps saw revenue rise \$3 billion collectively in the second and third quarters, as the coronavirus pandemic required shelter-in-place restrictions.



Don't Forget...

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CD4 Fall 2020 survey results show **70%** of residents who responded are concerned about the increase in waste.



"Fear the increase in single-use packaging due to safety concerns has taken us back 10 years."



"I want to support local business as much as possible, but the waste has made me very sad."



"Some restaurants do a better job than others with packing to go."

Efforts to Reduce Restaurant SUP

- **Reuse**
 - *Somebody People* Restaurant, Denver
 - Deliver Zero, New York City
 - Terra-Cycle and Burger King Partnership, Portland & NYC
- **Compost**
 - Berkeley, CA
 - Seattle, WA
- **Recycle**
 - Many items are not recyclable, and even if they are, only **8.5%** of plastics are recycled
- **Reduce**
 - By asking customers to opt-in



Denver Post, 11.25.20



Americans throw away
enough plastic to fill a football
stadium every 16 hours!

Opt-In to Reduce SUP Waste

- Most restaurants automatically include cutlery, straws, napkins and condiments.
- Customers often don't want or need them, so they get thrown in the trash.
- By simply giving customers the option to opt-in for these items, their use and waste will be reduced.

"I now have a lifetime supply of plasticware from takeout orders. Even when I tell them we don't need them, they usually include them. It'd be nice to have a campaign to reduce this useless waste." – CD4 Resident

Will This Save Restaurants Money?

Clean Water Action ran a case study with *El Metate* in San Francisco where they replaced disposable cutlery and condiment cups (salsa) for reusable for dine-in guests

- Reduced disposable food ware by 493,711 items per year
- \$8,957 in annual savings
- 3,651 pounds of waste reduced annually
- More diners stayed on-site to dine with reusable items
- Less litter prone food packaging leaving the restaurant
- No additional labor required

How Does Opt-In Work?

- Restaurants and Third-Party Delivery Companies cannot provide the items without the customer consenting
- Restaurants and 3rd party delivery companies may ask the customer if they would like the items or not
- Online orders, for both restaurants and 3rd-party companies must have an opt-in/check-off for customers



Uber
Eats

Uber Eats and Postmates both ask their customers to opt-in for single-use items.



What SUP Items?

Possible Items:

- Straws
- Stirrers
- Drink stoppers
- Utensils
- Chopsticks
- Condiments/Portion cups
- Napkins
- Serving utensils for family style meals



Possible Exclusions:

- Self-service dispensers
- Prepackaged food
- Schools
- Facilities providing patient care
- Service providers (Meals on Wheels and shelters)
- Hotel Room Service
- Drive-thru

Other SUP Ordinances

- San Francisco – bans plastic straws, stirrers and picks (must be natural fibers or reusable), all others (utensils, etc.) on request
- Portland and Eugene, OR – plastic straws, stirrers, utensils or individually packaged condiments by request only (2019)
- Los Angeles – Introduced bill January 2021 to opt-in for utensils, napkins and condiments (straws are by request, CA state law)
- California – Straws by request (2019)
- New Jersey – Straws by request (2020)
- NYC – Updated language for a similar bill in December 2020
- Mexico City – banned plastic bags, straws, utensils, cups, picks, portion cups, single-use coffee pods and balloons (01.01.2021)
- EU – will ban plastic utensils, plates and straws 07.03.2021
- Canada – by end of 2021 bans plastic straws, stirrers, utensils, six-pack rings, and food ware made from hard to recycle plastic

- Colorado Restaurant Association
- Eat Denver
- 3rd Party Delivery Apps
 - DoorDash
 - Uber Eats
- Constituent Survey
- Office of Climate Action, Sustainability & Resiliency
- Eco-Cycle
- Grass Roots Organizations
 - Youth 4 a Future
 - Congress Park Green Team

2021 Survey Results and Comments

- 90% order take-out/delivery 0-2 times per week
- 75% order directly from the restaurant
- 84% of the orders come with utensils or condiments that were provided without asking
- 67% of the utensils and condiments received are thrown away
- 97% support the proposed legislation
- Comments:
 - *“I hate the idea of putting them in the trash.”*
 - *“Thanks so much for trying to address this. It’s atrocious!”*

- **State Plastic Preemption**
 - Passed in 1989 to encourage recycling by encouraging the use of items that can be recycled
- **Single Use Plastic Legislation at the State level**
 - Incentivize Development Recycling End Markets
 - Passed 2020 (SB 20-055)
 - Study Group currently in progress
 - Extended Producer Responsibility
 - In review
 - Stakeholder engagement currently
 - Proposed for 2021 Session: The Plastic Pollution Reduction Act (Rep. Cutter, Rep. Valdez and Sen. Gonzales)
 - Ban polystyrene
 - Ban plastic carry out bags, fee on recycled paper bag
 - Strike the state preemption

