

WAKEFIELD DAILY ITEM

FORUM



Let's step away from plastic waste!

As the founders of the recently formed Sustainable Wakefield, we strongly support passage of the plastic bag reduction Article (Article 4) being presented at Monday's Town Meeting.

If passed, the Article will greatly limit the use of thin-film single-use plastic bags defined as 2.25 mil thickness and under by stores. This Article does not apply to thicker plastic bags which can be re-used dozens of times. This Article does not apply to other uses such as dry-cleaning bags or produce bags. Affected businesses will have a generous time period to consume their existing thin-film bags and stock alternatives.

The point of this Article is simply to take a first step in reducing the tremendous growth of plastics into our environment. It does this by encouraging alternatives such as paper bags, many-use plastic bags or re-usable cloth bags. It also encourages better habits in use of plastic bags in our daily lives, much as say re-usable bags at grocery stores already do.

When you think about it, each one of us accepts a staggering amount of thin-film plastic bags: in the course of a year, our town alone consumes literally several million of them! Only a few percent are ever recycled - when was the last time that you tried?

Instead they end up in the trees and woods, in our streams and lakes, or left on the ground and washed into storm drains. Other countries around the world and coastal areas in the U.S. already suffer greatly from the impact. Worse, most of our bags are simply left in landfills. Plastic never rots away, it simply breaks down into smaller pieces that end up back in the environment, up into our food chain and ultimately within us. We are just starting to

realize what those plastic particles and their toxic by-products are doing to us.

The Board of Selectmen and their working committee are to be applauded for crafting a bill that not only helps the environment by eliminating a major source of plastic in our environment, but also for doing it in such a way that gives our businesses time and options to adapt, with minimal financial impact.

This Article is not a perfect

Need A Tow?

solution to all of the plastic in our environment. It's not the last step but the first. Yet it's an easy step to take for all of us. Over 55 other Massachusetts towns have already passed similar bylaws, and taken that first step. We can join them and, in so doing, encourage

the rest of the state to follow - and then we'll take the next steps together.

On November 6, we hope that Wakefield will join those other communities and become leaders in sustainability, by voting in favor of Article 4 at the Fall Town

Meeting.

Sincerely,
Bob Vogtli
Jasmine Vogtli
Julie Smith-Galvin
Founders, Sustainable
Wakefield

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