



Single-Use Plastic Bottle and Paper Carton Ordinance Frequently Asked Questions

Why was this ordinance adopted?

The Single-Use Plastic Bottle and Paper Carton Ordinance was adopted to address community concerns about litter and waste in Truckee. Plastic bottles were among the top 5 types of litter found in the Tahoe Basin and neighboring South Lake Tahoe, and a Town audit of litter samples from Truckee Day 2023 found that over half of littered single-use plastic bottles were water bottles. Further support and recommendations on what to include in the ordinance were gathered through community surveys, workshops, and a stakeholder advisory committee. If you would like to learn more about the community engagement process that took place to develop the ordinance, please visit KeepTruckeeGreen.org/Bottles or read the [staff report and text of the ordinance](#).

After the ordinance has gone into effect, can businesses sell and/or distribute their remaining inventory of water in single-use plastic bottles or paper cartons?

No, the prohibition on the sale and distribution of these items takes effect on April 22, 2025. If a business has remaining inventory on the effective date, this water can no longer be distributed or sold within the Town of Truckee. We recommend businesses ensure they have used up the remainder of their inventory before the ordinance goes into effect.

Can I still sell a case of single-use plastic water bottles if the total volume of the case is a gallon or larger?

No, you cannot sell packages of single-use plastic water bottles if each individual bottle is less than 1 gallon in volume. The ordinance only allows the sale of water in plastic containers that are 1 gallon or larger, regardless of how many are packaged together.

What about emergencies?

Exemptions to the ordinance include emergencies, patient care at healthcare facilities, and organizations providing social services who may distribute single-use water bottles to protect the health and safety of community members. Containers of water one gallon or larger in volume are not regulated by the ordinance and can still be purchased at any time. To learn more about these exemptions, please read the [staff report and the full text of the ordinance](#).

Under the ordinance, can single-use plastic water bottles be sold in vending machines in Truckee?

No, the prohibition on the sale of single-use plastic bottles and paper cartons containing unflavored, non-carbonated water under a gallon in size includes vending machines.

Can hotels or other businesses still provide plastic water bottles if they are free of charge?

No, the commercial distribution of single-use plastic water bottles is prohibited starting April 22, 2025.

Can an individual sell single-use plastic bottles in Truckee? Can an individual give water bottles away for free at a sports game or other events?

Individuals cannot sell single-use plastic water bottles (the ban on sale applies to any entity)



starting April 22nd, 2025, but they can distribute them at no cost if it is not on behalf of a commercial organization. However, it is discouraged to provide single-use plastic bottles because they often become litter that can cause harm to both people and the environment.

Are individuals prohibited from *using* single-use plastic water bottles in Truckee after the ordinance takes effect?

No, individuals are not prohibited from using single-use plastic water bottles in Truckee. However, it is discouraged to use single-use plastic bottles because they often become litter that can cause harm to both people and the environment.

Does the ordinance apply to special events?

Yes, the ordinance applies to special events. Special events will be prohibited from selling and distributing single-use plastic water bottles beginning April 22, 2025. If you are a special event organizer who would like to provide free tap water to event attendees, please consider [reserving a water bottle filling station](#) for free through the Town of Truckee.

Can special events provide water bottles for volunteers or participants for free?

No, the commercial distribution of single-use plastic water bottles is prohibited. If you are a special event organizer who would like to provide free tap water to event volunteers or attendees, please consider [reserving a water bottle filling station](#) for free through the Town of Truckee.

I've seen people with single-use plastic water bottles at special events in Truckee. Why is this still allowed?

The use of single-use plastic water bottles is not prohibited, only the sale and commercial distribution. Some people may continue to buy plastic water bottles outside of Truckee after the ban takes effect.

Also, the Town of Truckee does not have jurisdiction over some events. For example, Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District (TDRPD) and Truckee Donner Unified School District (TTUSD) are special districts and are not under the jurisdiction of the Town of Truckee. This means that they do not have to comply with the ordinance if their event is held at their own facilities. However, the Town of Truckee is working closely with TDRPD and TTUSD to decrease their single-use plastic water bottle usage.

It's possible that vendors may be unaware of the regulations or otherwise continue to sell water bottles in violation of the Town's ordinance. If you think an event is in violation of the ordinance, please email Sustainability@TownofTruckee.com or call 530-582-2928

There is a business in Truckee still selling water bottles after April 22, 2025 – how can I report this?

If you see a business selling single-use plastic water bottles on or after April 22, 2025, please email Sustainability@TownOfTruckee.com or call 530-582-2921