

# SUPPORTING WELLESLEY'S TRANSITION TO THE PLASTIC REDUCTION BYLAW

The Wellesley Natural Resources Commission is helping residents and businesses transition to the new town bylaw that regulates plastic and paper shopping bags. We are developing, posting, and distributing:

- a guide to the bylaw
- a list of approved alternatives, and
- frequently asked questions.

Volunteers are meeting with groups and businesses; providing information through media and local organizations; and participating in events for sharing and purchasing reusable shopping bags. By helping the community understand the implications of the bylaw we hope to achieve a smooth transition.

Thank you for playing an active role in this process by using and taking care of your reusable bag.

## Contact Information

For more information about the bylaw, please visit [www.wellesleyma.gov/NRC](http://www.wellesleyma.gov/NRC) or contact us at:

Wellesley NRC

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Linden Square



## A Word of Thanks

These bags were designed in partnership with Roche Bros. Wellesley, Linden Square Wellesley and the Wellesley High School Evolutions program. The artwork was created by two Evolutions students.



**IT'S EASY BEING  
GREEN**

**TIPS FOR USING  
YOUR NEW  
REUSABLE SHOPPING  
BAG**



## CONGRATULATIONS: YOU'VE ALREADY TAKEN THE FIRST STEP

Your reusable bag will be invaluable as Wellesley makes the transition to life with less plastic. Under the plastic shopping bag bylaw adopted by Town Meeting last April and going into effect in January 2017, all retail establishments will no longer be able to hand out thin plastic carry-out bags, and paper bags must meet specific requirements.

The goal of this bylaw is to reduce litter and create a more environmentally sustainable community. It's up to each of us to help achieve the intended benefits.

You might think getting paper bags when you shop is the best solution. It isn't. Making these bags uses precious resources; they're costly and bulky for businesses to handle and store.

Reusable bags are the best solution for the environment. They help retailers save money and shoppers can use them hundreds of times. They can be easily cleaned, are safer from a public health perspective, and are environmentally friendly. With care and a little forethought, you'll get many years of safe use from your bag.

Congratulations...and thank you!

## TIPS FOR A SAFE, LONG LIFE FOR YOUR REUSABLE BAG

With the growing restrictions on the use of thin-film plastic shopping bags and the increased use of reusable bags, various entities have published recommendations for the safe use of these bags. The following tips include excerpts from the US Department of Health and Human Services and Health Canada materials:

- *Do not use reusable grocery bags for other purposes. Don't carry items such as baby bottles, toys, gym clothes, and other items in the same reusable bags that you take to the grocery store.*
- *Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood separated from other foods with bags, wraps, etc. to prevent juices from leaking out into the bags and contacting other food. Don't reuse these disposable bags/wraps.*
- *If you have multiple reusable bags, dedicate separate ones for meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, and ready-to-eat foods.*

- *Wash all fresh produce in soapy water and thoroughly rinse before eating or cooking.*
- *Machine- or hand-wash your reusable bags frequently – following any provided washing instructions for best results, especially after using them to carry fresh produce, meat, poultry, and seafood or if juices from food have leaked.*
- *Make sure the bags are thoroughly dry before storing them.*
- *Store reusable bags in a cool, dry place. If you keep bags in your car, be sure they are clean and dry, especially during hot weather.*
- *Avoid carrying unwrapped sharp objects that could puncture bags or rip them.*
- *The bags should be readily able to hold up to 25 pounds of goods. Avoid overloading them.*
- *Periodically check your bags for tears, weakened stitching, etc. and repair them.*

Following these simple tips should ensure your reusable bags safely meet your needs for years to come.