Reusable Bags

Covered Products:

~~For the purposes of this category, reusable bags are bags designed and manufactured specifically for multiple uses. These bags are made of cloth or other machine washable fabric that has handles or is a durable bag with handles made for multiple uses.~~

State funded purchases of reusable bags.

Background:

State agencies commonly purchase reusable bags to provide as giveaways in order to support waste reduction outreach and education and similar initiatives at various events, venues and outreach opportunities. Providing reusable bags instead of single-use items is an environmentally sustainable practice and encourages consumers to practice waste reduction.

Goal:

~~The goal of this specification is to state the requirements for all reusable bags sold within New York State. These requirements include durability and strength standards, minimum reusable bag volume, reusable bag material, toxic metal contamination, and print that must be included on the reusable bag.~~

To assist and encourage New York State agencies to purchase environmentally sustainable reusable bags and therefore decrease their environmental impact by utilizing a reusable bag specification.

Definitions:

Cloth - Woven or felted fabric made from wool, cotton, or other fiber.

Durability - The ability for a reusable bag to withstand one lifespan (see lifespan definition).

Film Plastic – Thin flexible sheets of plastic or other material derivative that is then created into material having the characteristics of thin flexible sheets of plastic.

GSM - Refers to grams per square meter. A measure of the density of a chosen material used to manufacture a reusable bag.

HDPE bag - A bag made from high-density polyethylene.

Lamination – A coating applied to the interior, exterior or both the interior and exterior of a reusable bag.

LDPE bag – A bag made from low-density polyethylene.

Lifespan - A minimum of 125 uses. One use is equivalent to carrying a minimum of 22 pounds over a distance of at least 175 feet.

Mil - The unit of measurement used to identify the thickness of film plastic bags. One mil is one thousandth of an inch.

Non-woven polypropylene bag - A type of reusable bag made out of polypropylene plastic in which polypropylene polymer threads are pressed together.

Plastic - Any of various compounds produced by polymerization, capable of being molded, extruded, cast into various shapes and films, or drawn into filaments used as textile fibers.

Post-consumer recycled content - Post-consumer refers to a material or product that has served its intended use. If a reusable bag contains post-consumer recycled content it means that it has been made from post-consumer materials recovered from the waste stream for use in the product.

Recycled PET (Re-PET) bag - A type of reusable bag made with post-consumer recycled content that originates from recycled polyethylene terephthalate (PET/PETE).

Reusable Bag - A bag made of ~~cloth or other machine~~ non-film plastic (see film plastic definition) washable material ~~fabric~~ that has ~~handles~~at least one handle and is intended for multiple uses.~~, or a durable plastic bag with handles that is at least 2.25 millimeters thick and is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse.~~

Washable - Any method by which the reusable bag can be cleaned and/or disinfected.

Woven polypropylene bag - A type of reusable bag made out of polypropylene plastic in which polypropylene polymer threads are woven together.

~~**Durability** - In this case, durability will refer to the minimum number of uses that a particular reusable bag can withstand in one lifetime.~~

~~**Plastic** - Any of various compounds produced by polymerization, capable of being molded, extruded, cast into various shapes and films, or drawn into filaments used as textile fibers.~~

Specifications:

Affected entities shall, to the maximum extent practicable, purchase reusable bags which meet the following specifications:

1. Durability and Strength Standards

- Have a minimum lifespan of 125 uses. One use is equivalent to carrying a minimum of 22 pounds over a distance of at least 175 feet.
- Hold 22 lbs for the duration of the above mentioned lifespan of the bag.
- Have a volume capacity not less than 15 liters.
- Have a minimum fabric weight not less than 80 GSM.
- Have at least one handle that does not stretch and is fastened to the bag in such a manner that it allows the bag to meet the above outlined durability and strength standards.

2. Materials Used

- Comply with Environmental Conservation Law section 37-0205. The reusable bags shall not contain inks, dyes, pigments, adhesives, stabilizers, or any other additives to which any lead, cadmium, mercury or hexavalent chromium is intentionally added or contain incidental concentrations of lead, cadmium, mercury or hexavalent chromium which together are greater than 100 parts per million by weight (0.01%). These restrictions shall also apply to any components, coatings, or labeling.
- Are made from recycled PET, non-woven polypropylene, woven polypropylene or cloth.
- Contain a minimum of 40% post-consumer recycled content for bags made from recycled PET, non-woven polypropylene or woven polypropylene.
- Are made from a washable material and follow the definition of washable as outlined in the “Definitions” section.

3. Print

- Meet the EO4 Ink Specification.
- Print the following information on a permanently affixed tag or somewhere else visible on the bag, or provide appropriate documentation concerning such information to the purchaser:
  - The name of the manufacturer.
  - The location (country) where the bag was manufactured.
  - A statement that the bag is a reusable bag and designed for at least 125 uses.
  - If the bag is readily recyclable, it should include information on the appropriate recycling stream for disposition of the bag.
  - If the bag is not readily recyclable, it should have special instructions informing the user of appropriate end-of-life management methods for the bag.
  - A statement that the bag or any parts thereof (e.g. handle(s), lamination, inserts) do not contain lead, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, mercury or any other heavy metal in toxic amounts.
  - The percentage of post-consumer recycled content used.

Affected entities are encouraged to purchase reusable bags which meet the following

specifications:

1. Durability and Strength Standards
   - Have a minimum fabric weight not less than 120 GSM.

2. Materials Used
   - Have at least 50% post-consumer recycled content or greater for bags made from recycled PET, non-woven polypropylene or woven polypropylene.
   - Contain post-consumer recycled content for bags made from cloth.
   - When made from cotton are USDA certified organic or an equivalent certification program or agency.
   - Contain post-consumer recycled content for any lamination material used.
   - Are made of materials that will not stain easily or absorb odors and are easy for consumers to clean.

3. Print
   - If the bag is made from post-consumer recycled content, it is encouraged to have that printed on the exterior of the bag in a location visible to consumers.

~~**Durability and Strength Standards** – Reusable bags must have a minimum lifespan of 125 uses. One use is equivalent to carrying a minimum of 22 pounds over a distance of at least 175 feet~~

~~**Volume Standard** - Reusable bags must have a minimum volume of 15 liters, and if made of plastic must be at least 2.25 milliliters thick.~~

~~**Handle Construction** – Reusable bags must have handles that are fastened to the bag in such a manner that they allow the bag to meet the above durability and strength standards.~~

~~**Cleaning Standards** – Reusable bags must be machine washable or made from a material that can be cleaned or disinfected.~~

~~**Product Take Back/Recycling** – At the end of the useful life of the reusable bag, the bag must be readily recyclable or include special instructions informing the user of appropriate end-of-life management methods for the bag. Additionally, if the handles are constructed of a different material than the main part of the bag, there must be instructions on the appropriate methods of managing the handles.~~

~~**Toxics** – Reusable bags must not contain lead, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, mercury or any other heavy metal in toxic amounts, as defined by applicable state and federal standards and regulations for packaging or reusable bags.~~

~~**Recycled Content** – Reusable bag manufacturers are encouraged, when designing and manufacturing their bags, to utilize post-consumer recycled content.~~

~~**Required Print –** Reusable bags must have printed, on a tag or somewhere else visible on the bag, the name of the manufacturer, the location (country) where the bag was manufactured, a statement that the bag does not contain lead, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, mercury or any other heavy metal in toxic amounts, and the percentage of post consumer recycled material used, if any. Print is encouraged to meet the EO4 Ink Specification.~~

~~**Recommended Instruction** – Instructions should be printed on the reusable bags indicating that they should be washed between uses and that foods that are usually consumed raw should be separated from other food products and should also include any applicable product take back/recycling information.~~

Packaging

Packaging shall comply with Environmental Conservation Law section 37-0205. Packaging shall not contain inks, dyes, pigments, adhesives, stabilizers, or any other additives to which any lead, cadmium, mercury, or hexavalent chromium is intentionally added or contain incidental concentrations of lead, cadmium, mercury, or hexavalent chromium which together are greater than 100 parts per million by weight (0.01%). New York State encourages affected entities to adopt the following:

- The use of bulk packaging.
- The use of reusable packaging.
- The use of innovative packaging that reduces the weight of packaging, reduces packaging waste, or utilizes packaging that is a component of the product.
- That all packaging remain the property of the supplier and not become the property of the affected state entity under any circumstance or condition. The vendor shall certify that the packaging material will be reused, recycled, or composted, and managed in compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- Packaging that maximizes recycled content and/or meets or exceeds the minimum post-consumer content level for packaging in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines.
- Packaging that is recyclable or compostable.