



# City of Malibu News

23825 Stuart Ranch Road • Malibu, California • 90265-4861  
Phone (310) 456-2489 • Fax (310) 456-3356 • [www.malibucity.org](http://www.malibucity.org)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact:** Casey Zweig, Environmental Programs Coordinator

(310) 456-2489 ext. 236

[czweig@malibucity.org](mailto:czweig@malibucity.org)

## Malibu City Council Passes Historic Ban on Single-Use Plastic Straws, Stirrers and Cutlery to Reduce Plastic Pollution

(Malibu, CA) – The City Council voted to prohibit the sale, distribution and use of single-use plastic straws, plastic stirrers and plastic cutlery within the City during the City Council meeting on Monday, February 12 in order to protect the environment from plastic pollution. The ordinance goes before the Council for a second reading and vote on February 26, and, once finally adopted, will go into effect June 1, 2018.

“Malibu is a leader in environmental protections, and we’ve made great progress in addressing plastic pollution, including bans on plastic bags, plastic sandbags, and polystyrene foam,” Mayor Rick Mullen said. “We are now adding plastic straws, stirrers and cutlery to the list of plastic pollution that we will stop at the source so it doesn’t reach our beaches and the open ocean. The ocean, beaches, and natural surroundings are a central part of life in Malibu, and we are absolutely committed to keeping them clean for ourselves, our children, and their children in the future.”

The ordinance is part of the City’s campaign to eliminate the use of all kinds of single-use plastic items in order to reduce the plastic pollution that has become pervasive and devastating to the environment. An estimated 500 million plastic straws are used and discarded every day in the United States — enough to wrap around the earth 2.5 times. In California, the annual “Coastal Cleanup Day” has tracked the amount of trash collected since 1992, and plastic straws and stirrers are the sixth most common item collected. Plastic cutlery is the fifth most common item collected.

The ordinance also covers the commercial use and distribution of compostable and biodegradable petroleum or biologically based straws, stirrers, forks, spoons, and knives, since these items are not easily composted and often cause issues at compost facilities. In other words, the City will only allow the commercial use and distribution of straws, stirrers, forks, knives, spoons, and spoons that are made from non-plastic materials, such as paper, wood, bamboo, etc.

Plastic straws, stirrers, and cutlery never biodegrade. The plastic is broken down into smaller pieces that become difficult to manage in the environment. Nearly all plastic, regardless of whether it has been recycled, still exists. It is estimated that there are over five trillion pieces of plastic in the ocean. Tiny plastic fragments in the ocean are eaten by marine wildlife and enter the food chain.

To raise awareness among the business community of the need to eliminate single-use plastic straws, the City will provide a box of environmentally safe paper straws to each local food service business. The paper straws, which carry the City’s “Keep it Clean Malibu” slogan, will demonstrate to both businesses and consumers that the single-use plastic straw can be easily replaced. For those who wish to use them, sustainable, reusable straws and cutlery are available in metal, wood, glass, bamboo and other materials.

To read the staff report or learn more about the City's efforts to reduce plastic pollution, visit <https://www.malibucity.org/683/Codes-Standards>.

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