



On September 5, 2019 the City of Key West passed, City Code of Ordinances 26-312, banning the distribution or sale of plastic and bioplastic straws and stirrers in the City of Key West effective immediately. The City will commence enforcement of this ordinance starting 8:00 AM January 1, 2020.

Q: Who does this apply too?

A: Retail establishments, meaning any person or entity engaged in the retail sale of food, drinks, or goods. Including any supermarket, grocery store, bar, restaurant, convenience store, shop, service station, farmer’s market vendors, special event vendors and any other sales outlet where a customer can directly purchase goods, materials, and products.

Q: What type of straw and stirrer is prohibited from use?

A: Single –use plastic straw or stirrer intended for a one time use, that is made with or contains any plastic derived from either **petroleum or a biologically based polymer**, including polymers derived from agave, sugar cane, corn or other plant sources.

Q: What type of straw or stirrer is allowed by ordinance?

A: Any that are made from non-plastic materials, such as paper, wheat, bamboo, noodle, metal or similar material.

**For more information please contact Solid Waste Coordinator at
305-809-3776 or recycle@cityofkeywest-fl.gov**

Materials included in the prohibited single-use plastics:

Plastic- material consisting of any of a wide range of synthetic or semi-synthetic organic compounds that are malleable and so can be molded into solid objects. PE, PET, PP, etc.

Bioplastics- plastics derived from renewable biomass sources, such as vegetable fats and oils, corn starch, straw, woodchips, food waste, etc. **Bioplastic** can be made from agricultural by-products and/ or from used plastic bottles and other containers using microorganisms.

Bio-based plastics– PE, called **bio-PET**, **bio-PP**, or **bio-PE** is same as plastic, just different feedstock. Not compostable. Not biodegradable. Not marine degradable.

Bio-derived plastic– mixture of plastics and derived from both feedstocks, plants and fossil fuels. Not compostable. Not biodegradable. Not marine degradable.

Biopolymers– biodegradable plastic. PHA, PLA most common in consumer goods, only considered compostable in industrial compost facility. Not compostable in backyard compost or the environment. Not biodegradable in backyard compost or the environment. Not marine degradable.

Bio-based and bio-derived plastics. (see above) Not compostable. Not biodegradable.

Oxo-biodegradables–plastic that is generally plant based and made to decompose quickly. Not compostable. Not biodegradable. Not marine degradable.

Greenwashing– Companies use words and claim biodegradable or non-plastic when they are. Claims are not always correct example “revolutionary and renewable biopolymer made through entirely plant-based and biologic processes – not chemical processing.” Biopolymer is a plastic.

Background for prohibiting bio-plastics:

Compostable materials that biodegrade in commercial composting facilities and meet established standards (ASTM D6400 and D6868) are widely available as an alternative for many plastic packaging and food service ware products. While these are a step away from fossil fuel-derived plastics, biopolymers do not perform well in the environment, land or sea, and one of the objectives of this policy is to reduce the amount of plastics littering our environment.

The primary **difference between compostable and biodegradable** is that **compostable** products require a specific environment or conditions to break down, whereas **biodegradable** products break down naturally. Typically **composting** is a faster process, but only under the right conditions.

For example, a **biodegradable plastic bag or plastic straw** in a **compost** pile or in the ocean will not decompose, the temperature won't get hot enough. But **compostable plastic bags and straws** will turn into **compost** over time leaving behind microplastics. If they end up in the stormwater system or marine water, they will still have the same devastating effects that plastic bags have.