

Plastic-Free Community Engagement Ideas

Approaching Businesses

- 1) Find one or two businesses willing to partner with EC on banning single use plastic bags
- 2) Share the research on why it's pertinent to eliminate single use plastic bags. Encourage owners to take the Plastic Reduction Audit
<https://www.productstewardship.us/page/RestaurantGuide>
- 3) Add signage in parking lots and store entrances with the question: "Did you remember your reusable bag?"
- 4) Retrain cashiers to ask "Do you need a bag for this item?"
- 5) Use these case studies and tell that story to the community (other businesses & township council)

Programs such as Rethink Disposal provide more working examples!

<https://www.cleanwater.org/campaign/rethink-disposable>

Approaching Township Council

- 1) Identify at least one township council member that's open to listening and being a champion for single use plastic bag ordinance
- 2) Share the research on why it's pertinent to eliminate single use plastic bags including local business case studies. Use **PHOTOS** from your town of plastic litter
 - North Bergen newspaper did comprehensive reporting about single use plastics problem in NJ called the War on Plastics
<https://www.northjersey.com/topic/14622eb6-d24f-4304-a237-709f72662963/war-on-plastics/>
- 3) Data Collection - making the business case on why ordinance is needed (collaborate with DPW, watershed organizations for data gathering)
 - (1) The amount of carryout bags in the residential waste and recycling streams;
 - (2) The amount of carryout bags identified as litter on streets, sidewalks and in parks;
 - (3) The amount of carryout bags found in city storm drains;

As per NJ.com - "Spodafora, a retired cost analyst for the U.S. Army, said an analysis he conducted before imposing the ban found that **plastic bags add as much as 30 percent to the cost of recycling** because they constantly clog sorting machines and force operations to halt, a figure that Gaerta officials said sounded about right."

https://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2018/10/dont_recycle_these_items_china.html

4) Pass an ordinance: Reference ANJEC's model bag pollution reduction ordinance

Approaching Schools & Students

- 1) Coordinate with school's environmental club or science teachers
- 2) Show movies and ask students and the school community to get involved: Bag It (ANJEC's lending library), Plastic Pollution (ANJEC's lending library) or Kids Can Save the Planet
- 3) Coordinate with art teachers and have poster "contest" on bringing your own bag
- 4) Students can also develop an educational flyer to distribute to local stores and hand out at town events.
- 5) Speak to teachers about incorporating environmental literacy specifically plastics into curriculum design. This is NOT outside of current course load, more of an integration.

<https://plasticpollutioncoalition.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/categories/202673118-Education>

** Work regionally with neighboring ECs and Green Teams

** Contact legislators and invite them to clean up events and ask them to ban single use plastics

For additional information: <https://anjec.org/action-alerts/> or info@anjec.org

