



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PRESS RELEASE

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DISPOSABLE CUP FEE GOES INTO EFFECT JULY 1

With the recent passage of Measure C, the County of Santa Cruz wishes to remind residents and businesses in the unincorporated areas that a single-use cup fee will be implemented July 1, 2022.

By encouraging customers to bring their own clean, reusable beverage container, the 25-cent fee helps protect the environment by reducing the use of single-use disposable hot and cold drink cups.

“Santa Cruz County is a leader in the efforts to reduce the flow of plastics and other disposable products into the environment,” Supervisor Zach Friend said. “This is a common-sense measure that should help reduce the 5 million disposable cups that are thrown away each year in our county while raising funds for essential environmental clean-up programs in our area.”

While the County ordinance impacts the unincorporated areas, the cities of Watsonville (10 cents) and Santa Cruz (25 cents) have implemented their own fees.

The ordinance impacts both permanent and temporary businesses, food trucks, events and other circumstances where beverages are served. Sellers may not waive or absorb the cup fees. The fees shall be identified separately on receipts and customers shall be notified of the fee on media including menus or ordering platforms (including online orders).

Under the ordinance, customers may bring their own, reusable cups, and retailers must accept them unless the container is cracked, chipped or corroded, or appears inappropriate in size, material or condition (including cups that are excessively soiled).

Initially, retailers will retain the 25 cent fee. Under Measure C, retailers will begin reporting cup sales and begin splitting the fee equally with the County on January 1, 2023.

For questions, email zerowaste@santacruzcounty.us or call (831) 454-2160.