

Appendix F – Single-use plastic items for exemption

For the time being, staff recommend that the following items should be exempted from a plan to discontinue the distribution of single-use plastic items at the TDSB. Rather than substituting these items with alternative materials, the TDSB should instead focus its efforts on waste reduction where possible.

1. Plastic cutlery
 - a. Given that clean plastic cutlery can be recycled and at present, alternatives such as wooden or compostable cutlery cannot be processed in Toronto's organics or recycling waste streams, the TDSB should continue to distribute plastic cutlery in its cafeterias, the Distribution Centre and student nutrition programs on an as-needed basis.
2. Plastic coffee lids
 - a. TDSB cafeterias have phased out black plastic coffee lids, which cannot be recycled in Toronto, and replaced them with recyclable white plastic coffee lids. Given that compostable coffee lids cannot currently be processed in Toronto's organics or recycling waste streams, the TDSB should continue to distribute plastic coffee lids on an as-needed basis.
3. Plastic gloves
 - a. For health and safety purposes, the TDSB should continue to use/distribute plastic gloves.
4. Plastic waste bags
 - a. For health and safety purposes, the TDSB should continue to use plastic bags for waste disposal.
5. Plastic straws
 - a. Serving size restrictions for elementary-aged students limit alternative packaging options for juice. For this reason, the TDSB should continue to distribute plastic straws that accompany carton beverages (e.g., juice boxes).
6. Plastic water bottles
 - a. In special circumstances (e.g., field trips) where water may be unavailable or unreliable or the safety of a student or staff is at risk, the TDSB should allow staff to use their professional judgement to determine when providing access to single-use plastic water bottles would be appropriate.

7. Re-sealable plastic bags

- a. Schools use re-sealable bags for health and safety purposes (e.g., ice) and often more than once (e.g., library book bag). For this reason, the TDSB should continue to distribute plastic re-sealable bags from the Distribution Centre.

8. Plastic food wrap

- a. In TDSB cafeterias, some food items must be individually packaged for health and safety purposes. Additionally, student nutrition programs with “limited facilities” are not able to use re-useable containers for food storage. For these reasons, the TDSB should continue to use plastic food wrap in cafeterias and student nutrition programs and encourage the use of re-useable containers where possible.