

Palo Alto, Calif., Votes to Ban Plastic Bags

By [Mike Verespej](#) | PLASTICS NEWS STAFF

Posted March 17, 2009

PALO ALTO, CALIF. (March 17, 10:15 a.m. ET) -- Palo Alto has voted to ban plastic carryout bags at supermarkets beginning Sept. 18, but the Save the Plastic Bag coalition says it will challenge the ban in the court in the hopes of overturning the ban, just as it did in Manhattan Beach, Calif., in February.

The coalition said that the city did not conduct an environmental impact review before enacting the ban as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. Stephen Joseph, a lawyer with SaveThePlasticBag.com, said the ban, which was approved by city council in a 7-1 vote March 16, will have a negative impact on the environment.

Pharmacies and convenience stores are not subject to the ban. However, city council is investigating as to whether it should extend the ban to all stores and restaurants before the ban goes into effect. It is also looking into the possibility of placing a fee on paper bags to encourage shoppers to use reusable bags.

Three of the seven supermarkets in the city — Whole Foods, Piazza's and Country Sun — currently do not provide shoppers with plastic bags, and a fourth, Mollie Stone's, encourages its customers to use reusable bags.