

Mexico City Requires Biodegradable Plastic Bags

by [Amanda Wills](#)

Mexico City's new law requiring all plastic bags to be biodegradable was put into place on Aug. 19, according to [The CNN Wire](#). The ban affects retailers within the Federal District, which boasts a population of about 9 million, while another 10 million live just outside the city limits.

The new law makes Mexico City the second metropolitan area of its size in the Western Hemisphere to ban non-biodegradable plastic bags; [San Francisco](#) was the first to implement the ordinance in March 2007. Similar bans and plastic bag fees are on the table in other cities, such as [Los Angeles](#) and [Seattle](#).



Mexico City banned all plastic bags that are not biodegradable, affecting retailers in the metropolitan area. Photo: Flickr/Greenery

The banning of plastic bags continues to be a hot topic around the globe. In a recent report, Achim Steiner, executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme, said plastic bags are the second-most common form of litter behind cigarette butts and are the greatest form of litter in the [world's oceans](#), as reported by CNN.

The American Chemistry Council (ACC) encourages recycling plastic bags as it conserves energy by replacing virgin material necessary to manufacture of new products. In fact, it takes 91 percent less energy to recycle a pound of plastic than it takes to recycle a pound of paper, according to the ACC.

Mexico City's mandate is a part of the its [initiative](#) to improve its overall environmental impact. Along with the new plastic bag law, the government announced this month that it will place more than 1,100 bicycles at 84 stations throughout the city for residential use, according to The CNN Wire.



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