

# Wellfleet Commercial Plastic Beverage Bottle Ban effective: MAY 1, 2023

## What does it mean?

Effective on MAY 1, 2023, it shall be unlawful to sell non-alcoholic, carbonated beverages in plastic bottles of less than 21 ounces in the Town of Wellfleet. Consider donating remaining stock to a local community kitchen/charity. Empty plastic beverage bottles can be recycled at the Wellfleet Transfer Station/Recycling Center.

## Why ban plastic bottles?

The production of plastic bottles involves massive amounts of fossil fuels — up to an estimated 17 million barrels of oil annually. Plastic beverage bottles are the third most common pollutant found on beaches (after cigarette butts and food wrappers). Plastic leaches harmful chemicals and damages ecosystems around the globe. It's estimated that more than one million marine creatures are killed every year by plastic waste.

[surfrider.org](http://surfrider.org)

## What sustainable alternative products can my business offer? / What alternative containers are available?

The market continues to adapt as plastic reduction measures go into effect.

- Sell stainless steel reusable bottles or cups featuring your logo.
- Beverages are now widely available in aluminum cans, glass bottles, and cartons.
- Expand your coffee and tea area. Sell chilled beverage refills from a dispenser.

## What about the existing Plastic Water Bottle Ban?

The Commercial Plastic Water Bottle Ban bylaw went into effect on September 1, 2021. It is currently in effect in 8 of the 15 Cape towns and alternatives to plastic water bottles are widely available. The original 2021 bylaw continues to target sales of still water in plastic containers of less than 1 gallon.

## Why add plastic beverage bottles to the plastic water bottle ban?

As with plastic water bottles, there are alternative containers for soda and other carbonated beverages. Reducing plastic single serve containers incrementally allows time for businesses and consumers to identify greener products and practices. It also allows time for the market to adapt by offering alternative products.

## Why target beverage bottles less than 21 ounces?

Most single-serve beverage bottles are less than 21 ounces. Beverages sold in sizes equal to or larger than 1 liter or 1 quart are exempt, as they are more likely to be recycled, and less likely to become plastic pollution.

## Does Wellfleet have other Plastic Reduction bylaws?

Wellfleet has led the way since 2016 with bylaws to reduce plastic pollution.

2023 – sale of non-alcoholic carbonated beverage bottles of less than 21 oz.

2021 – sale of non-carbonated, unflavored drinking water in plastic bottles of less than one gallon

2020 – sale or distribution of plastic, latex, rubber, or mylar balloons; outdoor disposal or discharge

2018 – use or sale of polystyrene disposable food containers, cutlery, or new packing peanuts

2016 – sale or distribution of plastic shopping bags less than 3.5 mils

Ref. General Bylaws, Chapter 187, Section 4.

Approved by Wellfleet voters at Special Town Meeting, 9/10/ 2022.

The Wellfleet Recycling Committee is available to help businesses and individuals transition to greener alternatives. Please reach out to [wellfleetrecycles@gmail.com](mailto:wellfleetrecycles@gmail.com)