



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SAN JOSE TO VOTE ON LEGISLATION TO BAN EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE

### *City Council, Local Organizations, and Residents Support Policy to Clean Up San Jose Waterways and San Francisco Bay*

SAN JOSE, CA - **February 26, 2013** - San Jose - the largest city in the Bay Area and the third largest in California - is poised to pass landmark legislation today to halt the use of expanded polystyrene foodware (EPS) to reduce the trash that clogs local creeks and threatens the health of San Francisco Bay. The ordinance would phase out the use of polystyrene food ware in large restaurants by January 1, 2014 and for all restaurant establishments by January 1, 2015.

“When San Jose banned plastic bags, more Bay Area cities followed, said David Lewis, Executive Director of [Save The Bay](#). “By banning Styrofoam foodware, San Jose can prompt more region-wide action to benefit Bay wildlife and our neighborhoods.”

The city council vote will take place today at 2pm in the City Council Chambers at 200 E. Santa Clara Street, San Jose, CA.

Reasons to ban polystyrene foodware:

- This lightweight material is one of the most common items found in our waterways and the Bay
- It breaks down into small, toxic pieces that harm wildlife, wetlands, and water quality
- Save taxpayer money by eliminating cleanup costs
- Help San Jose comply with Water Board regulations to reduce trash in stormwater systems
- Help businesses become more eco-friendly
- Educate citizens about the problem of trash in our waterways and the Bay

“San José is taking a long-awaited step toward environmental sustainability, improving the water quality of our creeks and waterways, and reducing litter. Our expectation is that other cities around the region will follow suit,” said San Jose City Councilmember Sam Liccardo.

Polystyrene is a particularly insidious type of pollution because it is so lightweight that, even when disposed of properly, it tends to blow out of trash receptacles and into our creeks and waterways.

“My staff and I removed 216 pieces of Styrofoam from Coyote Creek one recent Saturday in just a couple hours. We saw first-hand the negative the impacts this harmful material is having on our wildlife. It is time for San Jose to be a leader in banning Styrofoam so that other cities can easily follow,” said Laura Kasa from [Save Our Shores](#).

Polystyrene that has food waste clinging to it is not recyclable. It is used once and discarded and ends up in our waterways or our landfills. Polystyrene is manufactured with styrene, which is listed as a carcinogen by the federal government. In landfills or in waterways, it breaks down and leaches dangerous chemicals into the environment.

"Foam is the worst choice for a packaging material from an environmental perspective," said Miriam Gordon, California Director of [Clean Water Action](#). She explained, "it wreaks havoc in the marine ecosystem and It's associated with higher levels of greenhouse gas emissions than other packaging choices when landfilled."

The City of San Jose is committed to being a [zero waste city by 2022](#). An important component of this goal is adopting programs to reduce the use of disposable, toxic, or non-renewable products by at least 50 percent in seven years.

### **About Save The Bay**

Save The Bay is the largest regional organization working to protect, restore and celebrate San Francisco Bay. As its leading champion since 1961, Save The Bay protects the Bay from pollution and inappropriate shoreline development, making it cleaner and healthier for people and wildlife. We restore habitat and secure strong policies to re-establish 100,000 acres of wetlands that are essential for a healthy Bay. We engage more than 40,000 supporters, advocates and volunteers to protect the Bay, and inspire the next generation of environmental leaders by educating thousands of students annually. [www.saveSFbay.org](http://www.saveSFbay.org)

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