

# HOW WE DRINK IS CHANGING

## STRAW CHANGES EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 2022

### What types of plastic straws are banned?

With the exception of flexible plastic straws individually wrapped in paper, which may be provided upon request for accessibility, the bylaw bans plastic straws that are:

- Made from fossil fuel products.
- Labeled or described as compostable or degradable.
- Labeled or described as plastic made from plants or other biological materials (example: corn, potatoes, sugarcane).

Single-use straws made of other materials (e.g. paper) are to be made available by request only.



✗ PLASTIC

### Who and what is exempt from the plastic straw ban?

Hospitals and Community Care Facilities: The plastic straw ban does not apply to food service to patients in hospitals or residents of community care facilities licensed under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*. The plastic straw ban does apply to food vendors with a business license whose premises are located in hospitals or community care facilities (example: cafeterias, cafes) that serve prepared food to customers.

Drink boxes and pouches: The bylaw does not apply to plastic straws attached to drink boxes and drink pouches.

### Does the City of Chilliwack approve or certify straws that meet the bylaw requirements?

No. It is up to business license holders to ensure the straws they distribute meet the bylaw requirements.

### How does the Single-Use Item Reduction Bylaw protect accessibility?

The bylaw includes an exemption for businesses, charities and not-for-profits to provide Accessible Beverage Straws (individually wrapped in paper) to people who need them to safely consume beverages and nutrition. For some people, flexible plastic straws are an important medical tool. The City strongly encourages businesses to have some of these straws available.

Flexible plastic straws must be stored behind a counter to save them for people who need them. Anyone who asks for a flexible plastic straw should receive one. People are not required, and should not be asked, to provide any medical information to prove their need.



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# STRAWS CONTINUED



## **Why are flexible plastic straws, made wholly from fossil fuel products and individually wrapped in paper, the most accessible type of straw?**

People experiencing age-related physical restrictions, arthritis, auto-immune disease, autism, cerebral palsy, dental and oral conditions, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, neurological disease, spinal cord injuries, stroke recovery and rehabilitation, surgery recovery, and other illnesses and injuries, may rely on flexible plastic straws to safely consume beverages and nutrition.

Flexible plastic straws can be bent at the correct angle to reach the mouth, and then hold their position. This is essential for people who cannot use their hands (or have difficulty using them), or are reclined or lying down. Plastic straws can last as long as people need to consume beverages and liquid meals, which can sometimes take several hours. When individually wrapped in paper, flexible plastic straws are hygienic and protect people with compromised immune systems.

Paper, pasta, metal, glass, acrylic, silicone, and compostable plastic straws are not accessible substitutes because they can cause injury and even death. Paper and pasta straws can be chewed into small pieces and pose a choking hazard. People with motor impairments may clamp down or jar themselves against metal, glass and acrylic straws, causing injury. Pasta and some plastics derived from biological materials like plants may cause allergic reactions. Compostable and degradable plastics may dissolve in warm liquids. Silicone straws and straight plastic straws can be forced to bend but they don't hold their position; doing so restricts the flow of the beverage and not everyone has a care aid to hold up a cup at the correct angle.



## **Do customers have to ask for straws, or can staff offer them to customers?**

Staff can offer them to customers. Businesses, charities and not-for-profits can give out straws when:

- A customer requests them.
- A customer confirms they want a straw when offered by the food vendor.

The bylaw applies to all orders, including in-person, online, and telephone orders.

## **Can straws be provided at self-serve stations?**

Yes. A “self-serve station” is an area on the premises where customers can choose straws for themselves.

## **Can straws be set out at dining tables?**

No. Straws cannot be set out at individual place settings or in a container on dining tables. Straws must only be provided if customers ask for them, or at self-serve stations in a separate area on the premises.