

Local Merchants: Sign Up Today!



APRIL 22, 2023

Owen Sound Waste Watchers Launches New Merchant “We Reduce” Window Stickers

In 2020*, over 2,136 tons of garbage and 1,808 tonnes of recycling were collected by the City of Owen Sound. In addition to concerns about running out of landfill space and possible future pollution from these sites, studies have shown that only 10% of what goes into recycling is actually turned into usable future products. *Latest stats available.

Inspired by Canada Reduces, local community volunteer group Owen Sound Waste Watchers is launching a FREE merchant window sticker program for local businesses who want to show their support for reducing unnecessary waste in our community.

Show You Care to Reduce!

Encouraging your customers to bring their own containers is a great first step to reducing carbon emissions linked to the production, transport and post-use handling of these items AND saving you money you spend to purchase them.

Proudly displaying one of these FREE window stickers will show you care!

How To Sign Up? It's as simple as 1-2-3

1. Identify what you will/already do to reduce waste in your business
2. Sign up online at: <https://oswastewatchers.ca/merchant-contact-page>, providing your contact info and what you are doing to reduce waste (see ideas on reverse)
3. Proudly display the FREE window sticker (your choice of option 1 or 2) and encourage customers to support your BYO actions!

Then, an OSWW Community Volunteer will come take a photo of your window decal and promote what you are doing on the Owen Sound Waste Watchers' website and social media efforts!

Thank you for caring!

Owen Sound Waste Watcher Volunteer
oswastewatchers@gmail.com



You've Got Questions? We've Got Answers!

Q: Why should I bother participating in this program?

More and more, consumers are moving towards less waste. That's because media coverage is increasing about the growing problem of excessive single-use plastic and food packaging and its impact on the environment (both related carbon emissions and post-use handling issues). Implementation of The Single-Use Plastic Prohibition (Dec. 2022-23) is also making changes to the way merchants provide their products.

The goal of this program is to highlight the work being done in our community to reduce single-use plastics and packaging by local merchants.

THE REASON: The plastic we use and throw away everyday is poisoning the planet. Plastic garbage can be found everywhere, including as microscopic pieces in our food and water. This is because plastic does not decompose*, it only breaks down into smaller pieces. Plastic packaging is almost always new plastic, and we produce more of it than we can recycle. The good news is, much of the plastic we use can be avoided. One easy way for everyone to do their part is to minimize single-use plastic by using reusable containers such as coffee cups, water bottles, string bags for produce, cloth bags for bread and bulk food, reusable containers for takeout food and deli items such as meat, fish and cheese and of course a reusable shopping bag.

*Regretfully, this is also true for "compostable" plastic: commercial composting is required to break down these items and is not currently available in Owen Sound and "plant-based" plastics are often not effectively recycled in the existing Blue Box program.

Q: How can I be part of the Owen Sound Reduces team?

Allow and encourage customers to bring their own bulk food and take-away containers. Highlight other things your business is doing to reduce single-use plastic and packaging waste.

Q: What if I don't sell food?

Offer reusable containers, highlight the other efforts in place at your location and promote this program.

Q: What happens when I join?

You will be asked to display the "BYO" (Bring Your Own) sticker at your door to let customers know they are welcome to bring their own containers when they shop. We'll promote your waste reduction efforts on our online platforms.

Q: What else can I do to minimize my waste?

- Offer incentives for people to bring their own bags/reusable containers
- Increase the amount of bulk food you offer
- Eliminate plastic shopping bags, plastic straws, cutlery and non-reusable chopsticks
- Reduce food waste and donate unpurchased products/left over food
- Offer more plant-based options on your menu
- Purchase from suppliers who use minimal packaging
- Reduce your display packaging and unnecessary wrapping
- Sell more reusable products
- Promote the environmentally friendly products you offer
- Offer sustainable products (e.g., local food items and consignment items)
- Any other great ideas you are willing to implement – let us know, and we'll share them on our Owen Sound Waste Watchers' social media channels (Facebook Page, Group + YouTube!)