

Foodware Outreach Services

Transitioning food facilities away from single-use plastic



ENVIRONMENTAL
INNOVATIONS

The widespread use of single-use plastic foodware presents significant environmental and public health challenges, while burdening municipalities with excess waste. In response, single-use plastic reduction efforts, including local foodware ordinances and voluntary incentive programs, are rapidly emerging across California. These initiatives focus on reducing disposable plastic foodware by promoting reusable alternatives, replacing plastic with compostable options, and reducing wasteful distribution of foodware accessories.

EI offers comprehensive outreach, marketing, technical assistance, and incentive program distribution and oversight to help municipalities implement their single-use plastic reduction initiatives. Our innovative foodware campaigns and business assistance programs have received national attention and are being widely replicated by many municipalities in California and beyond. We can support your efforts to help food service businesses transition away from single-use plastic foodware while achieving a variety of benefits such as cost savings, customer satisfaction, marketing opportunities, and regulatory compliance.

ReUse Assist

EI facilitates food service businesses and institutions to transition away from single use foodware items to reusables through education, technical assistance, financial incentive distribution, service provider collaboration, marketing, and promotions. We measure the results to demonstrate significant cost savings, waste reduction, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Pre-Ordinance Survey Work

EI can survey your community on barriers and needs while building support for reusable and compliant compostable foodware, and present findings to decision makers to inform ordinance development.

Food Facility Education and Outreach

EI will run a comprehensive outreach program to educate food service businesses, develop useful resources and collateral materials, and provide detailed technical assistance and incentives in making the transition to reusable or compliant disposable products.

Ordinance Development and Program Design

EI has learned many lessons from working on ordinance implementation and can provide expert advice on ordinance development and supporting initiatives, specifically in light of emerging state legislation such as SB 54.



Our Services

- Small Business Environmental and Resiliency Outreach
- SB 1383 Outreach and Compliance
 - Organics Diversion
 - Edible Food Recovery
- ReUse Assist
 - Reusables Transition Support
- Foodware Ordinance Implementation and Compliance
- Green Business Certification Program Management
- Green Schools Initiative
- Stormwater Permitting, Inspection and Technical Assistance
- Waste Management Planning, Policy and Materials Recovery
- Energy Efficiency and Electrification Outreach
- Marketing Campaign Design and Implementation
- Financial Incentives Program Management
- Equity Program Design
- Business Sustainability Services

“Environmental Innovations staff created and implemented an engaging and resource-driven outreach program for the County of San Mateo to support food businesses affected by the County’s Disposable Foodware Ordinance. EI’s staff have extensive experience working with food businesses, they provide services that demonstrate a keen understanding of the needs and perspective of the food business community, and they are flexible in their approach.”

Christopher Slafter, Senior Sustainability Specialist, Office of Sustainability, County of San Mateo

San Mateo County Foodware Aware Campaign

EI engaged in a multi-year collaboration with the San Mateo County Office of Sustainability, shaping a comprehensive program for their Disposable Foodware Ordinance. The initiative featured a compelling brand and identity, a user-friendly website, informative and engaging materials, and supporting initiatives like a successful Foodware Expo with leading compostable foodware vendors as well as a comprehensive product purchasing guide. EI informed 4,000 food facilities, directly engaging over 2,000 managers, offering technical assistance to 400 facilities to transition to compliant products. The campaign's success was augmented by a mini-grant program, language-specific resources, and collaboration with local Community-Based Organization partners. The program earned acclaim and has served as a model for other municipalities.



Ordinance Readiness Food Facility Surveys

City of Cupertino and City of Sunnyvale

EI designed and delivered an ordinance readiness survey for the City of Cupertino to gain insight from local food service businesses regarding practices, perspectives, and barriers that would affect ordinance implementation. The resulting report was presented to the City Council and informed the adoption of the City’s Single-use Disposable Foodware Ordinance. EI then worked with the City to conduct outreach, technical assistance, and distribute financial incentives to facilitate compliance to over 400 food service businesses. Similar survey work was conducted for the City of Sunnyvale, along with a reusable pilot project which transitioned 15 businesses to use reusable foodware or try a third-party cup and container borrowing service. Based on the results, EI is now undertaking a comprehensive Reuse Assist program with the City to transition 50 businesses to reusable foodware.



Turn the Tide on Plastic

City of Seaside

EI collaborated with The City of Seaside to launch a comprehensive outreach and education program for food services businesses in advance of enforcement activities related to their Priority Impact Plastic Pollution Prevention Ordinance. The initiative helped over 60 food facilities become compliant with the ordinance with 18 restaurants switching to reusable foodware for dine-in. Over 36 mini-grant incentives were distributed to facilitate this transition. Partnering with regional coalitions, this program has now expanded to the Monterey Bay Area and Central Valley with support from the US EPA, and has expanded beyond food service businesses to include reduction of balloons and other single use plastics in auto sales and retail shops.



Contact us to see how we can help you implement a foodware outreach program to meet your sustainability goals.