



PRESS RELEASE

Arlington MA
May 25, 2022

Zero Waste Arlington, a Town of Arlington Committee, announces the May 4, 2022 passage of a single-use plastic water bottle ban. Zero Waste Arlington brought the article to Town Meeting after it was initiated by a long-time town resident. Town Meeting supported the article with an overwhelming vote of 199-42.

Arlington is the 24th and largest municipality in Massachusetts to pass bottled water restrictions, starting with Concord in 2012. "This ban reflects a growing concern from residents and consumers about the adverse effects plastic pollution has on greenhouse gas emissions, litter, public health, and the environment," said Charlotte Milan, Town Recycling Coordinator.

The new bylaw will prohibit the sale of plastic bottles of non-carbonated, non-flavored water in sizes of 1 liter or less. The ban applies to any business in Arlington that sells bottled water, as well as to event planners, houses of worship, and Town departments such as schools. It takes effect November 1, 2022.

More than 1.5 billion beverage bottles are sold each year in Massachusetts, however only around 20 percent get recycled. The rest end up as litter or in incinerators and/or landfills which pollute our air and water. Discarded plastic destroys habitats, harms wildlife, and affects public health by contaminating the food chain. Plastic is petroleum based and a contributor to climate change. We can't recycle our way out of the single-use plastic pollution crisis—we need to reduce our consumption. "Taking water bottles out of the waste stream could be a beneficial change and reduce what we're putting into incinerators or landfills," said Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager.

"Zero Waste Arlington's work is not finished. We are committed to working with Town officials to plan and install outdoor water filling stations in strategic public locations and also conduct outreach to help residents and businesses adapt to the ban," said Larry Slotnick Co-Chair of Zero Waste Arlington. Zero Waste Arlington encourages residents to use reusable water bottles which can be filled at home, in restaurants, and at water filling stations found in most municipal buildings. For more information, visit <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/town-governance/boards-and-committees/zero-waste-committee>.