



# McDonald's Switching To Paper Cups For Hot Beverages At All Restaurants

Chris Morran | Sep. 26, 2013

After decades of selling coffee and other hot beverages in polystyrene cups — and 23 years after it stopped using that material for its sandwich boxes — McDonald's has decided to make the switch to paper in all of its restaurants.

The fast food behemoth has been testing double-walled paper cups at numerous McDonald's stores on the West Coast since 2012.

"Moving to a paper-based cup across 14,000 restaurants translates to a significant impact," a rep from McDonald's HQ tells *Plastics News* (your source for news about plastics). "The reasons for this change include customers' changing preferences and increased recyclability."

McDonald's also felt pressure to ditch polystyrene in one of its biggest markets, New York City, where Mayor Michael Bloomberg wants to ban the use of the material in food containers.

Extruded polystyrene — colloquially called Styrofoam, though that is actually the brand name for certain type of extruded polystyrene — is already banned or highly regulated in its use for food containers in several municipalities in California.

**As You Sow**, the organization that originally issued the 2011 shareholder proposal regarding the switch from polystyrene to paper, says that this news is a "great start... We hope they will also incorporate recycled fiber in the cups and develop on-site systems to collect and recycle food service packaging."

The decision to move away from PS coffee cups comes more than a generation after McDonald's famously stopped using the material in its clamshell burger containers in 1990.



*Photo: amyadoyzi/flickr*