

Appendix A: Definitions

Single-use plastic products are those designed or likely to be used by a consumer only once before being discarded. Single use plastic products may be made from fossil fuel-based plastics or biobased materials (bioplastics) or a combination of both. They may be recyclable or compostable. Single-use plastic products include, but are not limited to, the following products:

Plastic is “a lightweight, hygienic and resistant material which can be moulded in a variety of ways and utilized in a wide range of applications.” Most plastics are not capable of undergoing biological decomposition in a compost facility but will photodegrade and create microplastics.

- i) **Biobased materials or bioplastics** are those that are produced from renewable raw materials. Biobased materials are not necessarily biodegradable or compostable. Often, biobased materials are made from fiber crops such as hemp and flax, bamboo, sugarcane, etc.
- ii) **Biodegradable plastics** are plastic materials that will decompose through biological processes, resulting in harmless bi-products. They may be made from renewable raw materials but may also be made using crude oil or natural gas.
- iii) **Fossil fuel-based plastics** are the most commonly used. These items are often comprised of polyethylene terephthalate (PET), high-density polyethylene (HDPE), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), low-density polyethylene (LDPE), polypropylene (PP), polystyrene (PS), expanded polystyrene foam (EPS) poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA), non-BPI certified polylactic acid (PLA), and paper or paperboard lined with wax or any of the listed plastics.

Photodegrade: this process occurs when plastics break down into smaller and smaller pieces due to UV irradiation, eventually becoming microplastics, which release harmful chemicals into the environment.

Recyclable is able to be recycled. Although many products may be marketed as recyclable, the ability to recycle a product depends upon the availability of a recycling system for that product in combination with a secondary market for the recycled materials. Recycle Right New York (<https://recyclerightny.org/>) provides information on what can and cannot be recycled in each municipality.

Composting is “the natural process of recycling organic matter, such as leaves and food scraps, into a valuable fertilizer that can enrich soil and plants.”

Compostable in Industrial Facility items are designed to be composted under aerobic conditions in municipal and industrial aerobic composting facilities, where thermophilic conditions are achieved.

Compostable plastic is plastic that meets the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) D6400 standards.

Wax-lined products are paper and paperboard products that have been lined with wax, commonly paraffin wax, a petroleum derivative, to improve moisture resistance. Wax lining prevents these products from being recyclable or compostable.

Plastic-lined Products are paper and paperboard products that have been lined with a thin film of plastic to improve moisture resistance. The plastic lining prevents these products from being recyclable or compostable.

Appendix B: Sample guidelines:

1. Implement operational and behavioral changes to **eliminate** the use of disposable products;
2. Select disposable products that do not contain plastic to **replace** single use plastic products;
3. Select disposable products that are **BPI Certified compostable** to **replace** single use plastics. BPI Certified compostable products are considered single use plastics until the campus has established a composting program and is ensuring BPI Certified compostable products are being composted and managed in accordance with manufacturer and composting facility instructions;
4. Where plastic products are unavoidable, those made from recycled plastic are to be given preference;
5. Where an alternative to single use plastics is not yet available, an appropriate Material Recovery Facility is not available, or replacement is not practical, **exceptions** to this policy may be available;
 - a. Accessibility needs allow for an exception to all parts of the policy;
 - b. Other exceptions to this policy will be extremely limited. Exceptions should be reviewed at least annually for continued applicability; and
 - c. Additional exceptions may be necessary to support emergency operations, such as public health emergencies or extreme supply chain disruptions. This exception should only be used in the short term, institutions must return to following policy promptly when the emergency has ended.