

**INFORMAL STAFF REPORT TO
MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

SUBJECT

Use of Styrofoam in city facilities.

BACKGROUND

At the March 27, 2018, City Council meeting, Mayor Watts requested an update from staff regarding options to reduce the amount of Styrofoam and plastic going into the landfill from city facilities. The items most readily used within City facilities are breakroom supply items such as Styrofoam and plastic cups, plates, and cutlery.

In October 2007, the City Council approved Resolution 2007-032 relating to Environmentally Preferable Purchasing which provides the basis to develop a policy that would give preference to environmentally preferred products. This could limit or prohibit the purchase of Styrofoam and certain plastic related products. Changing to biodegradable or compostable products that will breakdown more efficiently in our landfill, due to the Enhanced Leachate Recirculation system, is the most immediately available option. Almost every product purchased over the last year identified as a breakroom supply has an ecofriendly alternative.

Incorporating environmentally preferred breakroom products into the City's operations would allow staff to work with our vendor to limit the type of items purchased and possibly allow for a reduction in the cost differential to buy ecofriendly products. This has never been fully explored through our vendor, but Purchasing has indicated it is something we can explore if so directed.

A review of breakroom supply purchases for the last year from both the City Warehouse and Staples, our office supply vendor, revealed a wide variety of items purchased. Costs vary significantly by quantity and type of product purchased. The total amount spent through both sources was \$22,293 over a 12 month period. Items from both sources include Styrofoam, plastic and biodegradable products.

- Almost 100 different products were purchased from Staples for a total of \$9,588.
- Eleven different items were purchased from the warehouse for a total of \$12,705.
- City departments purchased more than 30 different types and sizes of cups which totaled more than 100,000 cups.
- City departments purchased more than 75,000 pieces of disposable cutlery.

Further analysis is needed to estimate the financial impact to switch to biodegradable products. As an example, the cost increase to switch from a standard Styrofoam coffee cup to a biodegradable cup would be more than double (Styrofoam \$0.035 average per cup versus a biodegradable \$0.075 per cup). Using 100,000 cups annually this represents an increase from \$3,500 to \$7,500 for this item alone.

Staff recommends presenting a Work Session item to the Committee on the Environment with the above information, the financial analysis, and a draft policy. This would allow the Committee to review the information, provide feedback, and give Staff additional direction on how to proceed.

Attachment 1 - Resolution 2007-032

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