

London Drugs Takes Next Step to Phase Out Plastic Bags and Reduce Waste

October 16, 2017 – Canadians use between nine and 15-billion plastic bags every year; enough to circle the Earth more than 55 times.¹ In addition to the environmental impact in producing these bags with non-renewable resources, many of these bags end up in our landfills and oceans.

However, research shows that Canadians are embracing a future with no plastic bags as concerns about their impact on the environment continue to grow.

With this in mind, Canadian retailer and industry leader in environmental programs and stewardship, [London Drugs](#), is taking the next step to prepare for a future free of single-use plastic bags as more municipalities look at implementing bans.

Starting on January 1, 2018 London Drugs will implement a five-cent per bag charge, which will be applied to a customer's bill for all plastic bags used with the exception of those required in the pharmacy and cosmetics departments.

Charging a nominal fee for plastic bags has proven to be a highly effective way to reduce the use of plastic bags.

"As more municipalities discuss implementing plastic bag bans, we're taking the next step to eventually phase out single-use plastic bags in order to make the transition easier for our customers while also helping to reduce waste," said Clint Mahlman, London Drugs executive vice president and chief operating officer. "Years ago, we started to phase out the use of plastic bags by introducing our customers to alternatives including reusable, fabric bags. We've been able to reduce plastic bag use by about 60 per cent by doing this, and we know from our research that we will continue to see a reduction by introducing a fee for plastic bags."

While [the great bag debate](#) has been strong in recent years with many people unhappy to see a per bag charge at their favourite stores, research shows that 53 per cent of Canadians feel that stores should charge a fee for plastic bags. Moreover, 59 per cent of Canadians believe it should be forbidden for retailers to even offer plastic bags.²

Mahlman says he realizes not everyone will be happy with the new plastic bag charges, but getting ahead of the growing plastic bag ban trend is key to give customers time to transition, and making alternative options accessible to customers.

In the United States, 133 city- or country-wide plastic bag ban regulations have been passed, with more in progress or under consideration.³ In Canada, municipalities such as Vancouver, Victoria, Fort McMurray and Montreal⁴ have either imposed bans, or are in the process of a plastic bag reduction plan.

The announcement comes as London Drugs kicks off [Waste Reduction Week](#) in Canada. To further encourage reduction of plastic bag use, London Drugs will be offering their LDEXtras loyalty program members one complimentary, reusable fabric bag*, to be redeemed anytime during the month of January, at all locations across Western Canada.

London Drugs celebrates 2017 Waste Reduction Week as a leader in Canada for its waste reduction efforts in all stores and with programs designed to easily enable customers to recycle through its [Bring Back the Pack](#) program. The company's sustainability efforts have resulted in a 92.8% waste diversion rate chain-wide, with more than 12.5 million pounds of waste diverted from city landfills across Western Canada. Partial proceeds from the 5 cent fees collected will go towards London Drugs' ["What's the Green Deal?"](#) program. After successful pilots at select stores for a "community cleanup" in 2017, all London Drugs stores will be facilitating community clean up events in 2018.

*Terms and conditions apply.

¹ Source: Greener Footprints Society <http://www.greenerfootprints.com/plastic-bag-facts/>

² Source: Angus Reid Poll, Canada, 2012 http://angusreidglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2012.06.13_Bags_CAN.pdf

³ http://www.earth-policy.org/plan_b_updates/2014/update123

⁴ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/denis-coderre-plastic-bag-ban-future-montreal-1.3458240>



ABOUT LONDON DRUGS

Founded in 1945, B.C.-based London Drugs has 80 stores in more than 35 major markets throughout British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba including its online store www.londondrugs.com London Drugs offers consumers a range of products from digital cameras and cosmetics to computers and televisions. Renowned for its creative approach to retailing, the company employs more than 7,500 people with pharmacy and health care services being the heart of its business. Committed to innovation and superior customer service, London Drugs has established itself as a reputable and caring company and continues to position itself for future growth and development. For more information, visit www.LondonDrugs.com.

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