

ISRI Position on Paper Bags¹

The position was developed in response to several high-profile municipalities either banning or placing fees on paper bags. As this is a controversial topic and municipalities are debating whether to implement a fee on this material, this position gives ISRI staff guidance on how to navigate this issue. It also provides stakeholders information on where ISRI stands on the issue.

Paper bags are a highly recyclable resource which has viable, sustainable markets which is highly sought after for its fiber strength and is used in the manufacture of many types of products. Paper bags are renewable, recyclable, reusable and compostable. Banning or placing uneconomic fees on this material reduces the ability of it to be recovered.

It is the position of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc (ISRI) that:

- Promotes a free and fair, competitive, market-based system for the trade of recyclable materials such as paper bags
- Supports a competitive marketplace that does not restrict, direct, or interfere with the free flow of recyclable materials.
- Opposes bans and fees on paper that are being manufactured into useful commodity grade materials and sold into viable, commercial markets without subsidies or noncompetitive, fixed pricing.
- Promotes the proper recycling and economic opportunities associated with the collection, processing, and reuse in finished products such as paper bags.
- Encourages the addition of paper bags to curbside collection programs.
- Strongly support the use of recycled content to the maximum percentage that is mechanically and commercially viable.

¹ As adopted by the ISRI Board of Directors on July 24, 2020.