

# Ulster County 2021 Climate Smart Communities Recertification Documentation

## Action Name: PE5: Waste Reduction Education Campaign

**Background:** Ulster County has enacted several laws focused on reducing waste through mandatory recycling; a plastic bag ban (prior to New York State's Bag Waste Reduction law) and adoption of a five-cent paper carry-out bag reduction fee; food service waste reduction via a polystyrene ban; "Skip the Straw", a law requiring restaurants and fast food service establishments to only provide plastic beverage straws, stirrers, utensils and condiment packets to customers upon request; and food waste prevention and recovery by large food waste generators.

The County actively promoted the County bag ban in 2019 with the "Bring Your Own Bag" (BYOB) campaign and the "Skip the Straw" law via a campaign that ran from late 2019-early 2020. The associated documentation is included for these two waste reduction education campaigns, as well as related materials and hyperlinks.

### Documentation:

- Ulster County hyperlinks:
  - Waste Reduction:
    - <https://ulstercountyny.gov/environment/waste-reduction>
  - Ulster County Bring Your Own Bag Act:
    - <https://ulstercountyny.gov/environment/waste-reduction/bring-your-own-bag-act>
  - Ulster County Skip the Straw Law:
    - <https://ulstercountyny.gov/environment/waste-reduction/skip-the-straw-law>
  - Ulster County Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Act:
    - <https://ulstercountyny.gov/environment/food-waste-prevention-and-recovery-act>
  - Food Service Waste Reduction Act flyer (included in documentation packet)  
<https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/health/Polystyrene%20Broch%20Rev%20%2008.19.pdf>
- **Ulster County Bring Your Own Bag Act (BYOB Act):**
  - *Communications Report:* Prepared by ReAgency: June 2020. Ulster County contracted with ReAgency, a public relations and communications firm, to manage the BYOB Campaign.
  - Campaign brochure (included in documentation packet):  
[https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/environment/UCDoE\\_Bag%20Ban\\_Brochure\\_Final\\_PR.pdf](https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/environment/UCDoE_Bag%20Ban_Brochure_Final_PR.pdf)
- **Skip the Straw Law:**
  - Campaign summary report
  - Poster: (included in documentation packet):  
[https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/UC\\_Skip%20the%20Straw%20Poster\\_Final.pdf](https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/UC_Skip%20the%20Straw%20Poster_Final.pdf)
  - Tent Card

**Ulster County's Food Service Waste Reduction Act was enacted for the following reasons:**

- Polystyrene foam (commonly referred to as Styrofoam, a Dow Chemical Company trademarked form of polystyrene foam insulation) is a common environmental pollutant and non-biodegradable substance commonly used as food service ware.
- Polystyrene foam is non-renewable, non-recyclable, and non-compostable.
- Environmental Protection Agency has found that the polystyrene manufacturing process is the fifth largest creator of hazardous waste in the United States.
- Evidence suggests that a component of polystyrene foam, styrene, is a carcinogen and neurotoxin. According to EPA studies, styrene is now detectable in the fat tissue of every man, woman and child in the United States.
- Alternative cost-effective biodegradable, compostable and/or reusable food service ware is readily available. Such alternatives are less toxic and more environmentally friendly than polystyrene foam.
- Use of biodegradable, compostable food, and/or re-useable service ware will reduce the waste stream and reduce waste costs.

**It is your responsibility to know the entirety of the law:**

The information provided in this pamphlet is only a summary of Ulster County's Food Service Waste Reduction Act, Local Law Number 4 of 2015: A Local Law regulation the Use of Polystyrene Foam Disposable Food Service Ware By Food Service Establishments in Ulster County. Please refer to the law in its entirety.

**Note:**

A Chain Food Service Establishment or Food Service Establishment may seek an exemption from the prohibition due to a "unique packaging hardship" under Subsection A due to a "financial hardship" under Subsection B of Section 5 of Local Law Number 4 of 2015, County of Ulster.



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Dr. Carol Smith, Commissioner  
(845) 340-3150**

**UC Department of the Environment  
Amanda LaValle, Coordinator  
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**[ulstercountyny.gov](http://ulstercountyny.gov)**

Printed on Recycled Paper

# SUSTAINABLE ULSTER COUNTY



## A SUMMARY OF ULSTER COUNTY'S FOOD SERVICE WASTE REDUCTION ACT

LOCAL LAW NUMBER 4 OF 2015



Regulating the Use of Polystyrene Foam Disposable Food Service Ware By Food Service Establishments in Ulster County

## What does this law do?

The Food Service Waste Reduction Act bans all food service establishments from using expanded polystyrene foam (commonly referred to as Styrofoam) when preparing, selling or providing food and beverages in Ulster County.

## Who does this law apply to?

- A. Chain Food Service Establishments
- B. Food Service Establishments
- C. County Permitted Events & County Sponsored Events

*\*County permitted events & County sponsored events shall also no longer use non-recyclable plastic.*

Penalties range from written warnings to up to \$1000 per day for repeat violations

*\*see Local Law 4 of 2015 section 7 for details*

## Examples of unacceptable products:



**NOT ACCEPTABLE**

## Examples of acceptable products:

- Plastics made from non expanded polystyrene (preferable recyclable and compostable)
- Paper products (preferably recyclable and compostable)
- Cardboard (preferable recyclable and compostable)
- Metal (preferable recyclable) and aluminum/tin foil
- Glass (preferably recyclable)



**ACCEPTABLE**

Products made from non expanded polystyrene may be used. Products that are recycled, recyclable and compostable are preferable. For a list of products that are certified compostable, visit the Biodegradable Products Institute website:

<http://products.bpiworld.org/>

## Definitions:

### Chain Food Service Establishment

Any food service establishment or food service establishments operating in Ulster County that is or are part of a group of fifteen or more food service establishment.

### Food Service Establishment

Any establishment, located or providing food within the County of Ulster, which sells or otherwise provides prepared food and/or beverages for public consumption on or off its premises and includes, but is not limited to, **any store, shop, sales outlet, restaurant, bar, pub, coffee shop, cafeteria, caterer, convenience store, liquor store, grocery store, super market, delicatessen, catering truck, mobile food truck, cart or vehicle, or any other person who provides prepared food; and any organization, group or individual which regularly provides food as a part of its services.**

### Prepared Food

Any food or beverage which is (1) served in Ulster County or (2) which is packaged, cooked, chopped, sliced, mixed, brewed, frozen, squeezed, or otherwise prepared on the premises. Prepared food does not include raw meats, poultry and/or seafood sold for the purpose of cooking off premises.

\* See a complete list of definitions under Section 3 of Local Law Number 4 of 2015, County of Ulster.



## Skip The Straw Law

The Ulster County "Skip the Straw Law" makes single-use plastic straws, stirrers, cutlery and condiment packets on-demand items at eateries and establishments across Ulster County. The law went into effect in December of 2019 and it covers all of Ulster County.

## Ulster County Skip the Straw Law webpage:

<https://ulstercountyny.gov/environment/waste-reduction/skip-the-straw-law>

## Skip the Straw Campaign

Strategy: The goal of this campaign was to provide material and information to Ulster County food service establishments related to Local Laws 2 & 7 of 2019.

Ulster County Department of the Environment staff visited various food-service establishments county-wide, including restaurants, bars, fast food establishments, grocery stores, gas stations, convenience stores, and food trucks. Information about the law and its execution by local businesses was explained, and establishments were provided Skip the Straw posters and tent cards. Establishments were informed that they could either display these materials or create their own. They were also made aware that failure to comply with this law could lead to a warning and then a subsequent fine.

- Campaign: The online campaign began in the summer of 2019, with visits to food service establishments starting in early 2020. The visits were cut short however in March 2020, due to the shutdown related to the COVID-19 global pandemic.
- The following reflects the number of food service establishments visited, by community, with a total of 392 visits performed:
  - All restaurants in the Town of Woodstock (19)
  - Lake Katrine (10)
  - Saugerties (57)
  - New Paltz (59)
  - Esopus (2)
  - Ulster Park (4)



- Port Ewen (8)
- Kingston (172)
- West Park (2)
- Hurley (2)
- West Hurley (4)
- Highland (33)
- Milton (6)
- Marlboro (14)

- Feedback:

- The feedback collected during the visits was mostly positive.
- Many businesses had material posted and were already in compliance with the laws.
- Small businesses were happy to make the switch and liked the idea of being more environmentally friendly.

- FAQs

- What does the Ulster County Skip the Straw “Law” do?: This law requires that single-use plastic beverage straws, plastic stirrers, plastic utensils or plastic condiment packs only be provided to customers upon the customer’s request.
- What types of establishments must comply with this law?: Any establishment providing prepared food for a customer, either to be eaten on site or for take-out/take away, is required to comply.
- Can establishments just leave these items (straws, stirrers, utensils, condiment packs) out for customers to help themselves?: Establishments may not leave single-use plastic straws, stirrers, or utensils out for self-service (i.e passive distribution). Single use plastic straws, stirrers, or utensils must be kept “behind the counter” and only provided upon the customer’s request. Establishments may leave condiment packs out at a self-service station.

# SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

BEVERAGE STRAWS, CUTLERY, STIRRERS, <sup>AND</sup><sub>OR</sub> CONDIMENT PACKETS\*

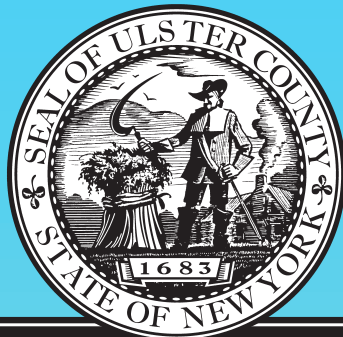


## AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Here in Ulster County, we pride ourselves on beautiful natural areas. But plastic pollution is a threat to our environment. Plastic litters our waterways, finds its way into our soil or food and can even impact human health.

The Skip the Straw law empowers individuals to help reduce plastic pollution in our environment by only requesting these items if needed. **Small steps add up!**

SPREAD AWARENESS



# SKIP THE STRAW

## LAW #2019-7

ULSTER COUNTY · NY

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

please see FAQ website  
[ulstercountyny.gov/SkipTheStraw](http://ulstercountyny.gov/SkipTheStraw)  
or email  
[environment@co.ulster.ny.us](mailto:environment@co.ulster.ny.us)

UC Health Department  
(845) 340-3010

UC Department of Environment  
(845) 338-7287  
[ulstercountyny.gov](http://ulstercountyny.gov)

\* Single-use condiment packets will be made available upon request, and may also be displayed for customers to help themselves.

USE LESS PLASTIC

SPREAD AWARENESS

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
please see  
FAQ website  
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SkipTheStraw  
or email  
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ULSTER COUNTY · NY

LAW #2019-7

**SKIP THE  
STRAW**



USE LESS PLASTIC

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AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST



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BEVERAGE STRAWS, CUTLERY, STIRRERS,

**SINGLE-USE PLASTIC**

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SPREAD AWARENESS



**SKIP THE  
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LAW #2019-7

ULSTER COUNTY · NY

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USE LESS PLASTIC



## Ulster County, nature at its finest.

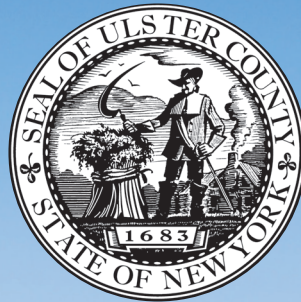
Here in Ulster County, we pride ourselves on having some of the most beautiful natural areas in New York State. It is easy to understand why generations have been drawn to the area for recreation as well as inspiration. But plastic bags, and plastic pollution, are a threat to our environment. Plastic pollution litters our waterways, finds its way into our soil or food and can even impact human health. Not to mention litter cleanup is estimated to cost American taxpayers over \$11 billion every year. By enacting legislation in 2018, we are the first county in NY to implement a single-use plastic bag ban.

Ulster County's BYO Bag Act builds on our 2015 County-wide ban of polystyrene foam for use by food service establishments. And the Ulster County Legislature recently passed "Skip the Straw" legislation which will limit the distribution of plastic straws to only upon request. Plastic pollution is a problem in every community and we are proud to that Ulster County continues to lead the way to protect and preserve our environment.

### For more information:

please see FAQ website  
[ulstercountyny.gov/BYOBagFAQ](http://ulstercountyny.gov/BYOBagFAQ)

or email  
[BYOBagAct@co.ulster.ny.us](mailto:BYOBagAct@co.ulster.ny.us)



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(845) 338-7287

[Ulstercountyny.gov](http://Ulstercountyny.gov)

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SPREAD AWARENESS, NOT PLASTIC

PHOTO CREDITS: Kingston Farmer's Market by Eric Kreeger, Ashokan Reservoir by Julian Colton, Valley View by Mike Bloom



BRING YOUR OWN BAG ACT • LOCAL LAW NUMBER 5 OF 2018

**Promoting the use of reusable bags  
and regulating the use of  
plastic carryout bags  
and recyclable paper carryout bags**



## THE ACT

The BYO Bag Act will result in the ban of single use plastic bag distribution at most retail locations, encouraging all residents to use reusable bags when buying food or merchandise.

**This Act will go into effect on July 15, 2019 and will cover the entirety of Ulster County.**

As of July 15th, 2019, you will not be able to get single use plastic bags from grocery or retail stores. We encourage you to bring your own reusable bags, however if you forget, there will be a minimum 5¢ fee for paper bags upon checkout.

This Act will go into effect before the New York State Plastic Bag Ban in March 2020. Based on the similarities of our laws, once the New York State Law comes into effect, there should be very few overall changes, especially for consumers. Make sure to check our FAQ website for more information on the state ban as it becomes available.



### Bring your own bag for no fee

Any type of bag that the customers bring to the store themselves is encouraged.



### Available for a 5¢ minimum fee

Recyclable paper bags, bags made of cloth or washable material, or durable plastic over 4mm thick.



### Not available for use

Single use plastic bags less than 4mm thick and provided to customers at a point of sale.

## How Will this Affect You?

### For Businesses:

All businesses selling personal, consumer or household items will withhold the distribution of plastic bags, however recyclable paper bags can be supplied for a minimum 5¢ fee.

Businesses affected will include: drug stores, grocery stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, apparel stores, home centers and hardware stores, stationary and office supply stores, farmers markets, and open-air flea markets. *However, food service establishments such as restaurants, are not included in this law.*

### For Consumers:

Consumers should start carrying reusable bags with them when shopping, as this is the most environmentally responsible approach. This bag can be any type of bag, however for durability, we recommend canvas bags. Recyclable paper bags will be available at checkouts for a minimum 5¢ fee.

Ulster is taking steps to minimize inconvenience to residents by making reusable bags accessible and promoting the law to the public.





# Ulster County

## *Bring Your Own Bag Act (BYOB Act)*

### Communications Report

Prepared by ReAgency: June 2020

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## Thank You!

A sincere thank you to the Ulster County Department of Environment for choosing to work with ReAgency on the BYOB Act campaign. It was a privilege to work together with Amanda LaValle (Coordinator), Nick Hvozda (Deputy Coordinator), and your pioneering team on this important sustainability issue.

We have prepared this report to summarize the results of our work together over the past 12 months. This report has two parts:

1. A Review of Ulster County BYOB digital audience
2. A Report on our communications efforts across social, digital, and traditional media.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted everyone in different ways. It should be noted that the final months of this campaign were truncated, as New York State focused on addressing the pandemic. An engaged digital community of Ulster County residents still exists, and may be leveraged as a useful tool in future outreach efforts.

## PART ONE: The Ulster BYOB Audience

During the BYOB Campaign, Ulster County launched new avenues of engagement across social and digital media. This offers Ulster County a new way to get to know its residents. But exactly who has been engaging with the campaign?

Analysis of data allows us to make some generalizations about the audience demographics most likely to engage with Ulster County messages of environmental sustainability.

### Based in Ulster County

As hoped, the Ulster BYOB social media platforms are effective at reaching residents of Ulster County. We were most likely to receive engagement from Kingston, followed by New Paltz, Woodstock, and Saugerties as well as users identified only as living in New York State.

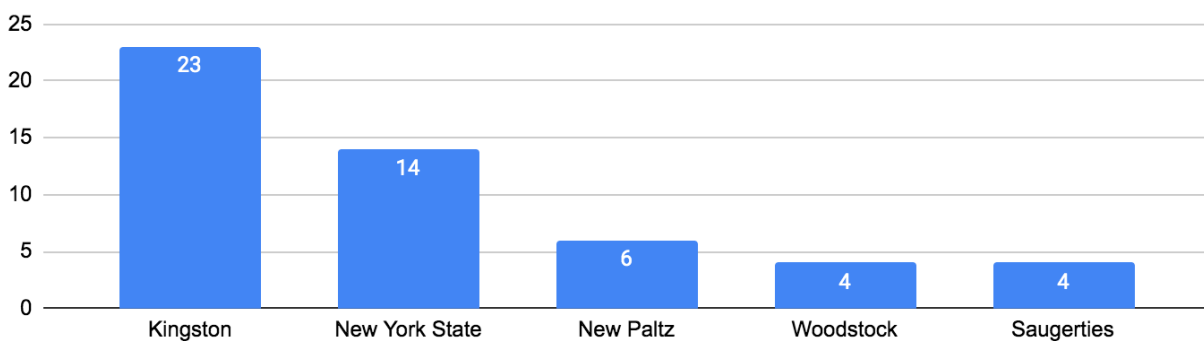


Chart: % Audience location, across Facebook and Instagram.

### Predominantly Of Working Age

The majority of our audience is aged 35-54, suggesting the social media platforms are most likely to reach a professional-aged audience. Interestingly for social media, more than one-in-five followers on Facebook and Instagram are over 55 years of age.

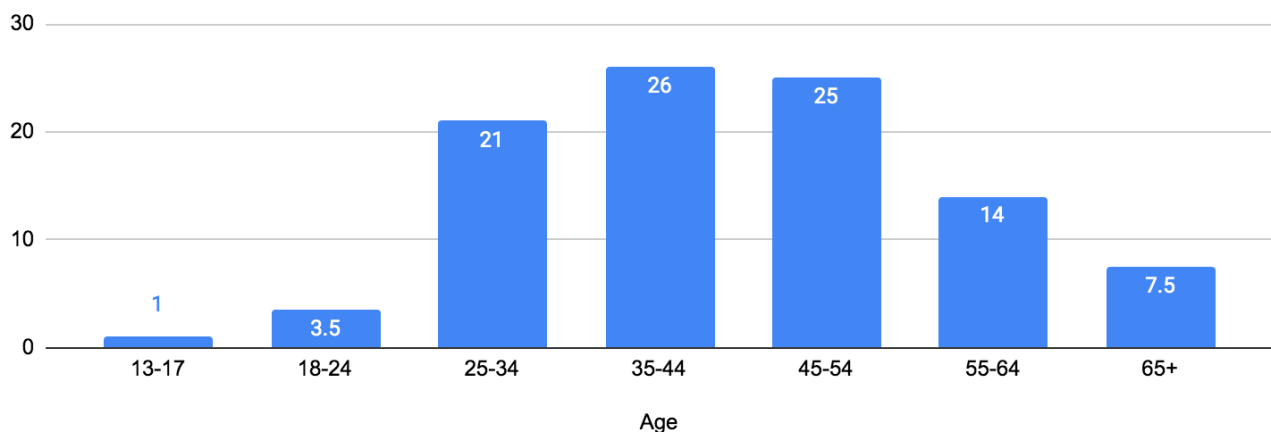
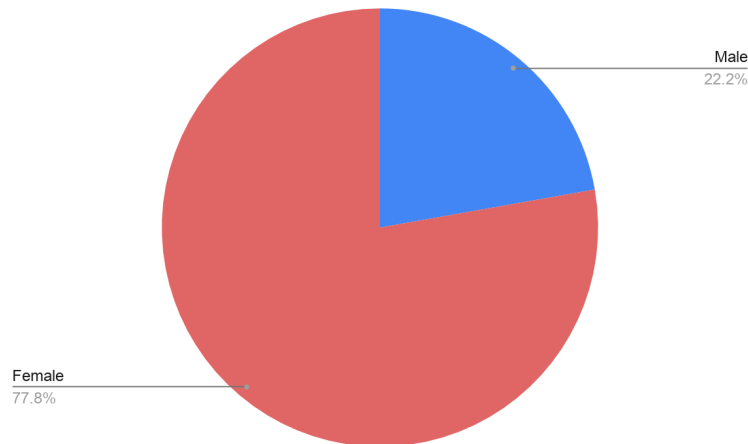


Chart: % Audience age across Facebook and Instagram.

## Predominantly Female

Across all platforms, women were far more likely to 'like' or engage with BYOB content. In fact, four-in-five interactions came from women:

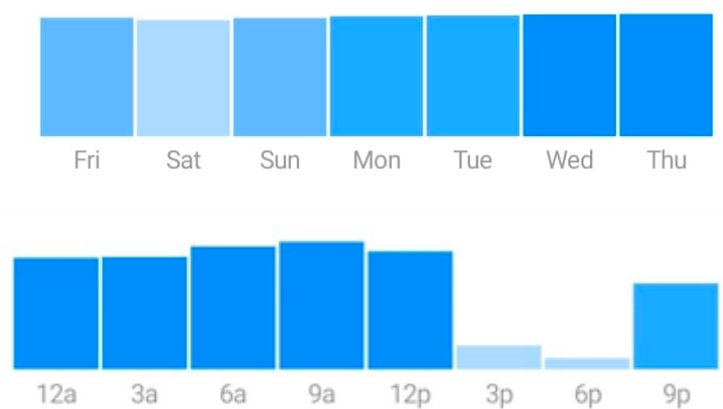


*Chart: Audience gender across Facebook and Instagram.  
Non-binary gender is unable to be calculated with current data.*

## Likely To Engage Anytime, Except Afternoons

Our audience is active every day of the week, with richer activity taking place midweek (Wednesday and Thursday). However, the time of day matters a great deal: our audience are likely to engage with new posts until the midday lunch period, then become markedly quiet until after the end of the work day.

We suggest posting content Tuesday - Thursday, in the morning before noon, and in the evening after 6:00pm.



*Chart: Audience activity by day, and by time of day.*

## PART TWO: The Ulster County *BYOB* Act Campaign

### Research & Campaign Development

ReAgency's broad brief was to “*Educate Ulster County residents about the BYOB change in law*”, and “*encourage behavior change*”.

Our audience was defined as primarily Consumers, with a sub-focus of businesses adapting to changes required under the BYOB Act.



*Extract from 'Social Strategy Overview', July 16th, 2019:*

In conjunction with Ulster County, we defined a specific **Behavior Change Goal**: *That consumers would bring reusable bags when shopping.*

The tone or ‘voice’ for the BYOB campaign was defined as:

**POSITIVE & FRIENDLY:** Present the Act as a positive movement that people *want* to engage in, not just because they have to.

**PERSONAL:** Personalize the messaging as specific to Ulster County, showing why the residents should care about the change and want to participate.

**KNOWLEDGEABLE:** Position Ulster County as ‘experts’; informative, but not in an overbearing or annoying manner.

Based on this desired behavior change, research, and in consultation with Ulster County, a target campaign message was developed:

***Spread Awareness, Not Plastic. Bring Your Own Bag When You Shop.***

This campaign tagline was reiterated in each social media post.



Working with Fabia Wargin (Graphic Designer), ReAgency gave input on the BYOB logo design and style guide. Using this imagery, tone, and keeping our behavior change goal in mind, we developed a series of 'Frequently Asked Questions', or FAQ's, and an associated '**Did You Know?**' campaign.

## Digital & Social Media

### Content: FAQ Page

The introduction of the BYOB Act created a knowledge-gap for both consumers and businesses. To help close this gap, we developed simple, straightforward information summarizing the implications of the Act, in the form of 'FAQs'. These '**FAQs for Consumers**', and '**FAQs for Businesses**' were written, and laid out for both print and online distribution.

A spanish-language edition of the FAQs was made available online for spanish-speaking residents.

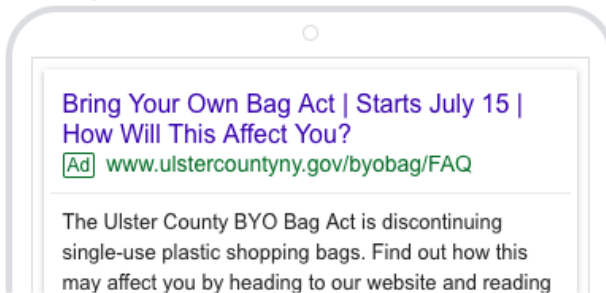
### Digital Media: Search

Anticipating an increase in searches for more information on the BYOB Act in the lead-up to the official implementation on 15 July 2019, we ran a Google Ads campaign targeting Ulster County residents. We targeted only those searches originating from within Ulster County, targeting key search terms such as 'Plastic bag ban' and 'Ulster County bag law'.

Choosing to focus on the period in the lead up to, and immediately after, the BYOB Act implementation date, the campaign focused on the ten-day time period July 10th - July 20th.

Results from this campaign period:

<b>Spend</b>	\$1,177.45
<b>Ad Impressions</b>	50,166
<b>Clicks</b>	1,149
<b>Conversion rate</b>	2.3%



This paid Google search campaign was supplemented with social media advertizing on Facebook and YouTube (see below).

Overall, a combination of paid Search and Social advertizing resulted in over **2,593** unique visits to the BYOB page on the UlsterCountyNY.gov website.

## Social Media Content

Based on audience research and in conjunction with Ulster County, ReAgency extended its FAQs into informative social media content, as a “*Did You Know?*” Campaign.

More than 50 ‘*Did You Know?*’ graphics were created for the campaign, leveraging the popularity of visual content over text-only. These graphics were strategically published across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

*Images: Examples from the ‘Did You Know’ campaign:*



## Social Media Advertizing

To establish a Facebook and Instagram audience, and to inform Ulster County residents, we supplemented our Google search advertizing with Facebook advertizing. This advertising specifically targeted Facebook Users located within Ulster County.

Our goals for Facebook advertising included:

- Drive traffic from Facebook to the Ulster County BYOB web page.
- Increase the BYOB audience - a community of residents interested in the BYOB Act
- Increase views of important information

We discovered that the conversion rate from impressions to clicks was higher through Facebook Ads, which averaged a 6.8% conversion in comparison to Google Ads 2.3% conversion. As such, Facebook ads became our advertising platform of choice following the BYOB Act implementation; from late July, throughout 2019.

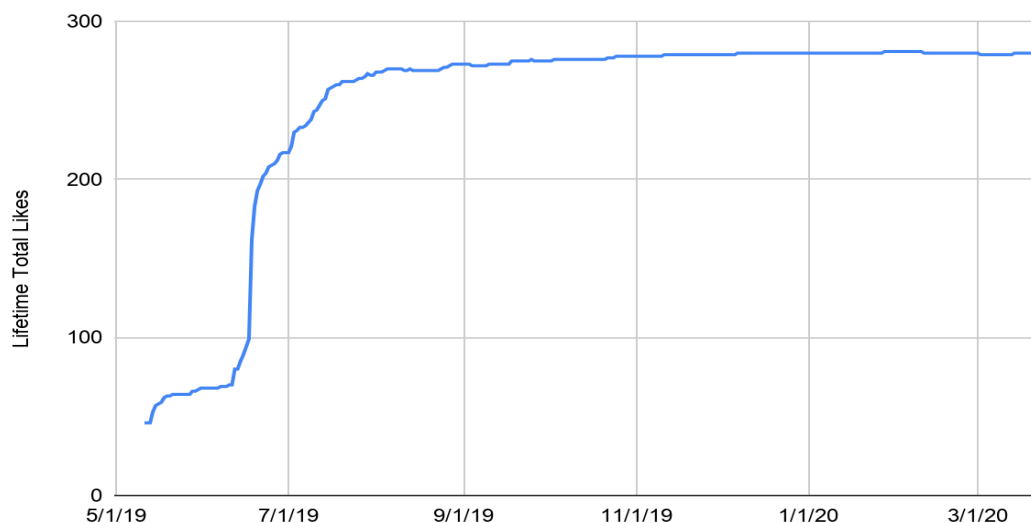
Facebook advertising was highly effective at reaching Over 55's. Four-out-of-five impressions originated from a mobile device; likely because 'Facebook Advertising' includes distribution to Instagram; a mobile-first platform.

## Social Media Results: Facebook & Instagram

Note: [Access to social media raw data is available.](#)

Using a combination of quality content and paid advertising, we were able to grow the fledgling BYOB social media accounts across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Due to the intensive paid campaign in June/July, page metrics peaked around the BYOB Act implication date of July 15th, 2019.

### Overall Page 'Likes': May 2019 - March 2020

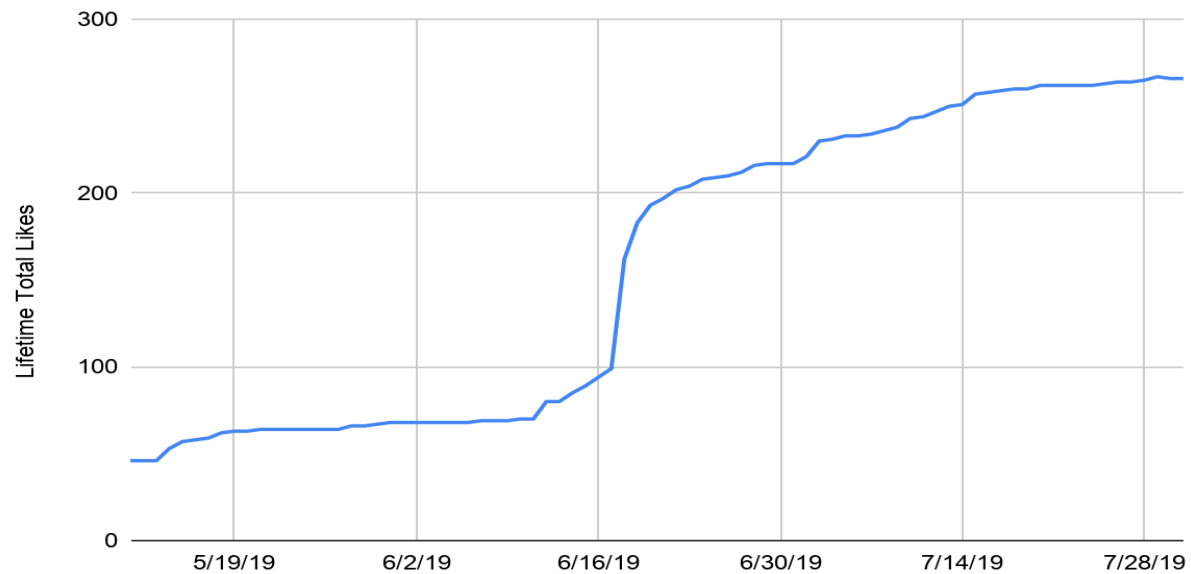


Note: Facebook metric tracking begins only once a page reaches a threshold level of activity. Thus, data from period 1 May - 10 May 2019 is not visible.

Focusing on the target campaign period of May - July 2019, we can see the visible jump in Facebook page ‘likes’ during mid-June, immediately preceding implementation of the BYOB Act.

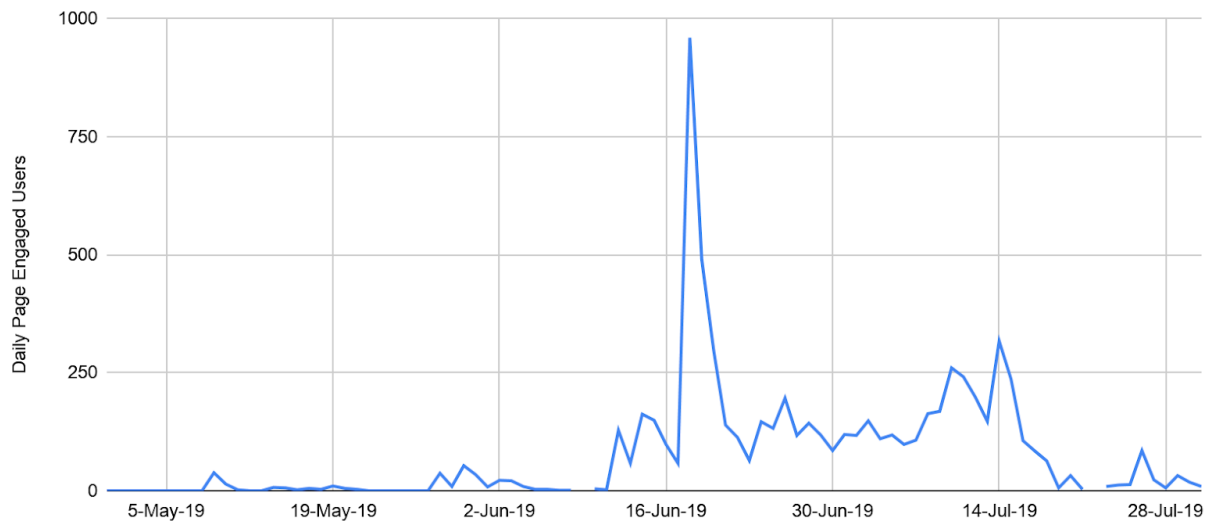
**Page ‘Likes’:**

Target Period 11 May - 31 July 2019



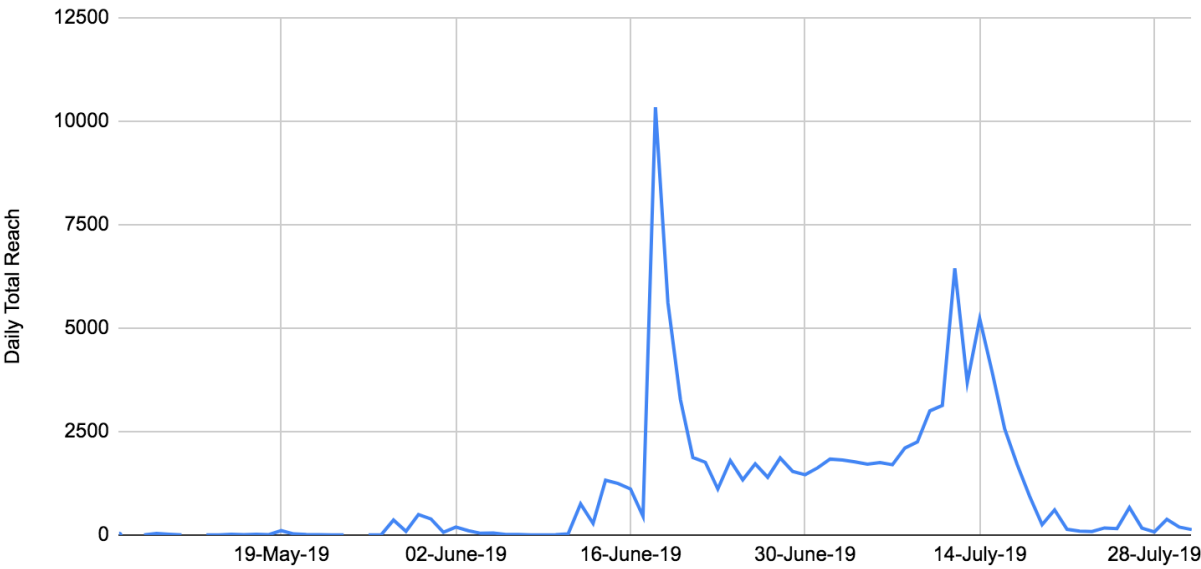
**Daily Engaged Users:**

Target Period 11 May - 31 July 2019



**Daily Reach:**

Target Period 11 May - 31 July 2019

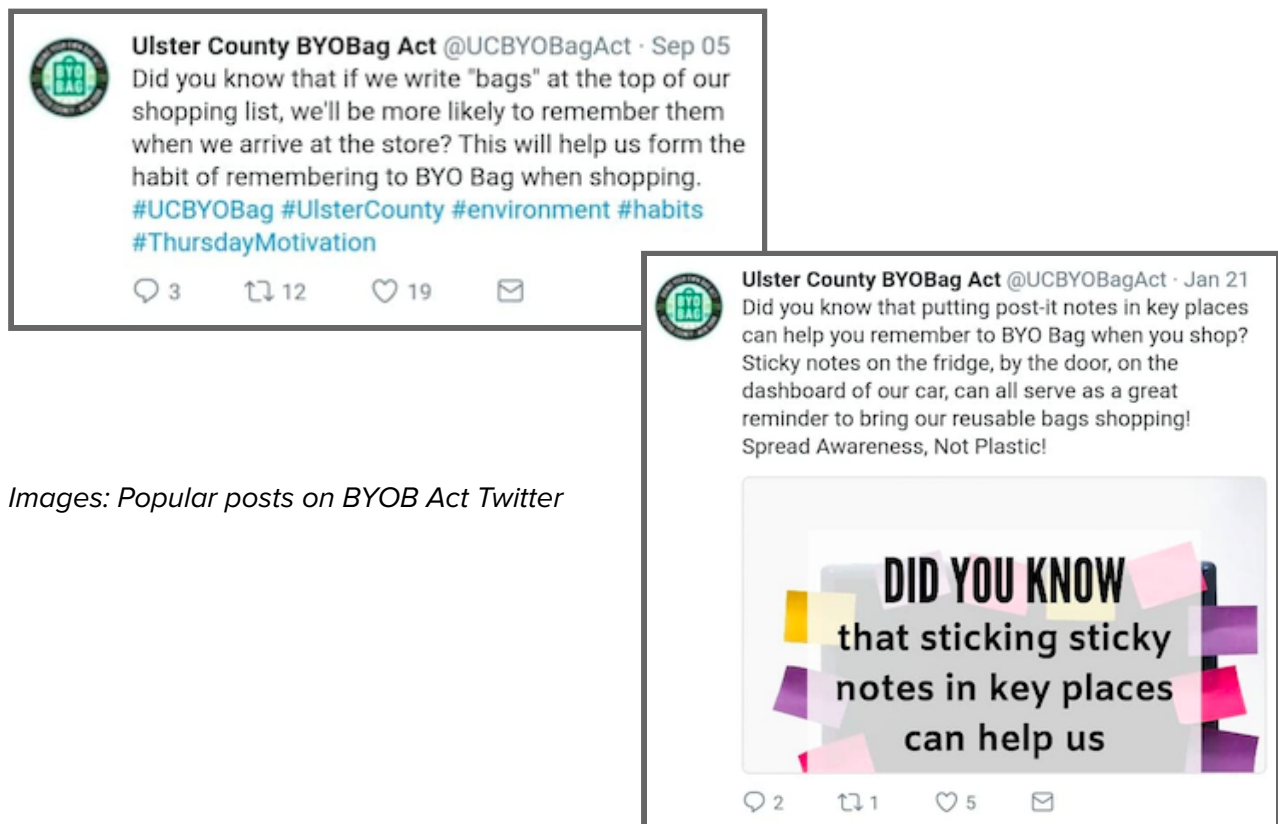




## Social Media: Twitter

The BYOB Act Twitter platform became a supplementary method of communicating with our target audience, as well as an ideal platform for supporting and engaging with partners in Ulster County. All interactions were organic, as there was no paid advertising allocated to the BYOB Twitter.

Interestingly, simple tips on how to remember to BYOB became the most popular content on Twitter. Posts with a more 'casual' tone were also popular, including sharing content from our partners, as well as ideas for personalized reusable bags and up-cycled crafts.



*Images: Popular posts on BYOB Act Twitter*

## Social Media: YouTube Teaser

A five-second YouTube teaser video was developed by ReAgency, including scripting, character design, and animation. This animation was promoted as a 'skippable' pre-roll commercial to YouTube viewers in Ulster County.

The video was highly successful in reaching our target demographic. A YouTube spend of \$46.55 resulted in 20,123 video views, as well as 36 click-throughs to the BYOB website.

*Images: Frames from the 'Did You Know' YouTube teaser:*



## Bus Advertizing

Working in conjunction with the BYOB team and following the existing brand style, ReAgency designed a series of graphics for local busses in Ulster County. The exterior wrap was formatted in half-wrap and quarter-wrap size, and ready to print in June 2019. Artwork focused on reiterating the call to action: 'By placing reusable bags at our front door we'll remember to bring them to the store'.



Above Image: Preliminary proposed design for BYOB bus artwork



Images: Final designs for 'Full Wrap' and 'Half Wrap' BYOB bus artwork

## Traditional Media

ReAgency was delighted to provide occasional PR support. For example, our BYOB Project Manager Maca Corizosa represented Ulster County in Spanish language radio interview. This was an opportunity to share the BYOB key messages with Ulster's spanish-speaking residents.

As the COVID-19 pandemic impacted New York state, we provided PR advice on ways to adapt to the changing landscape and public sentiment.



**Images:** ReAgency's Macarena Carrizosa appearing on Kingston's Spanish-Language radio, on behalf of the BYOB Act Campaign.

## Conclusions

Using a combination of strategy, digital, social, and traditional media, ReAgency were able to support the education BYOB Act, and engage Ulster County residents in the movement towards sustainability. Through our online outreach efforts, more than 2,500 residents were able to access information on the law change and find the answers they needed. A strategically-timed Google Search campaign allowed those seeking information to be led directly to reliable information sources and printable resources. New BYOB platforms were built across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, with YouTube pre-rolls proving extraordinarily effective as a reminder to *Bring Your Own Bags*.

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the campaign (and implementation of the BYOB Act), lasting positive changes remain. Importantly, Ulster County has built social media communities that reach directly to environmentally-engaged residents within the county. We recommend that these fledgling communities be further nurtured with sustainability-focused content and updates from Ulster County Department of the Environment; in particular, showcasing creative DIY sustainability projects from residents. These platforms can then be leveraged to engage the community and as a pathway for information proliferation in future.

We thank you for choosing to work with ReAgency, and we look forward to collaborating again with the pioneering team at Ulster County.

Prepared by ReAgency

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## **PE5 Action: Waste Reduction Education Campaign**

**2 Points**

### **A. Why is this action important?**

Local governments play an important role in educating the public about the benefits of climate-smart materials management. Reducing waste, reusing materials, repairing items, composting food scraps, and recycling are all actions that can reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by preventing waste from ending in landfills. These actions also reduce “upstream” emissions associated with the extraction, processing, and transportation of materials. In addition, residents and business can often save money by implementing these actions.

### **B. How to implement this action**

Steps to develop a campaign may include the following:

- Determine the scope and purpose of the campaign and whether it should focus on waste reduction broadly, or on a specific aspect of waste management, such as composting or reusable bags.
- Survey existing educational efforts of the local government and external stakeholders ranging from local to national organizations (e.g., a local nonprofit may already host a “how to” composting series). Local governments should build upon local, regional, state, and national waste reduction, composting, and recycling campaigns when designing their own programs.
- Use existing methods of communication to distribute campaign marketing materials, and determine which new methods are necessary to quickly and effectively engage the community in the campaign.
- Develop the content and solicit feedback from a select group of stakeholders such as an existing energy or climate external advisory board.
- Ask the highest ranking elected official to launch the campaign—consider hosting it on a milestone such as Earth Day, New York Recycles Day or the anniversary of the release of the climate action plan.
- Alternatively, the local government can actively support and promote to its community an existing campaign of another organization or community. Active promotion would include an official launch and development or dissemination of marketing materials.

### **C. Time frame, project costs, and resource needs**

Creating the campaign can take as little as a few months or more than a year to develop and implement. Project costs can range from staff and volunteer time, marketing materials, launch event costs, and developing and hosting a website. For supporting another entity’s campaign, the project costs would involve staff time and potentially the development of marketing materials.

### **D. Which local governments implement this action? Which departments within the local government are most likely to have responsibility for this?**

This action is applicable to all types of local governments. The department or office with the responsibility for leading the climate efforts is most likely to be responsible for this action. These activities are typically led by the chief elected official’s office, the city manager’s office, or the departments of the environment or public works.

### **E. How to obtain points for this action**

Two points are available under this action for implementing a waste reduction, composting, and/or recycling campaign to educate the public and encourage waste reduction and recycling.

#### **F. What to submit**

Submit a description of the scope of the campaign, including the timeframe, the topics covered, and which audiences in the community were targeted. Provide information regarding attendance at events and copies of the primary outreach materials of the campaign (e.g., website link, flyer). The campaign must have taken place within the past three years.

All CSC action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submittals should not include any information or documents that are not intended to be viewed by the public.

#### **G. Links to additional resources or best practices**

- [Onondaga County Resource Recovery Education Program](#)
- [DEC Recycling Outreach and Education](#)
- [US EPA Tools for Local Government Recycling Programs](#)
- [US EPA Tools for Local Government Recycling Programs - Outreach Materials](#)

#### **H. Recertification requirements**

The recertification requirements are the same as the initial certification requirements.