

Wednesday, April 2, 2008

## **Mayor wants shopping-bag tax; ban on plastic-foam boxes**

Puget Sound Business Journal (Seattle)

Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels wants the city's grocery, drug and convenience stores to start charging a 20-cent tax on disposable bags beginning next year and he also wants to ban plastic-foam food containers in the city.

The Seattle City Council would have to approve the measures, which would take effect Jan. 1, 2009.

Nickels says that both paper and plastic bags are "harmful to the environment" and banning foam food containers will reduce the use of "environmentally harmful plastics and cut the production of greenhouse gases."

Stores would keep 5 cents of the 20-cent tax for administrative costs and those retailers with less than \$1 million in annual revenues would keep all 20 cents.

Both paper and plastic bags "harm" the environment, Nickels said, saying that paper bags, because of the "environmental costs" of logging and shipping, "are actually worse for the planet" than plastic bags.

"The answer to the question 'paper or plastic' is neither ... The best way to handle a ton of waste is not to create it ... Taking a reusable bag to grocery stores and pharmacies is a simple thing that has an enormous impact," Nickels said in a statement.

Banned foam products would include plates, trays, "clamshells," and hot and cold beverage cups. Seattle Public Utilities will hire inspectors to check stores to make sure they weren't using the products, Nickels' office said.

**Find this article at:**

[http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/stories/2008/03/31/daily23.html?ana=from\\_rss](http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/stories/2008/03/31/daily23.html?ana=from_rss)

© 2008 American City Business Journals, Inc. and its licensors.