

CITY OF CONCORD

General Services Department

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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Concord PAYT Bag Program Returns June 22nd

CONCORD — Concord residents with curbside trash collection will be required to return to using purple pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) trash bags starting on Monday, June 22.

The City of Concord temporarily suspended the PAYT Bag Program on April 20 in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The temporary suspension was enacted by City Council in an effort to help residents alleviate costs and minimize risk of possible exposure to COVID-19 by removing the need for residents to go to the store to buy bags. Residents were advised that they could use any trash bag of choice for curbside collection up to a week after Governor Sununu ends the emergency stay-at-home order.

On Monday, June 15 the stay-at-home order was lifted by the governor and City Council voted unanimously to reinstate the PAYT Bag Program as scheduled. Trash not in PAYT bags will no longer be collected starting on and after June 22. “This program has been highly successful for many years. People are very used to it now and I’m glad that we are re-implementing it, quickly,” stated Councilor Werner. “There is a cost and I think this is important to recognize. It was about \$136,520 per month that it cost the City to suspend this program,” stated Mayor Bouley. “So overall, we’re looking at a \$273,000 cost for the suspension of this program... I still think it was a good choice.”



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Some residents elected to continue using PAYT bags despite the suspension, which helped to continue funding the costs of services with Casella, the City's vendor for trash and recycling. "I want to make sure we draw attention to the people that elected to continue to use purple bags during the pause," stated Councilor Kretovic. "People that did continue to participate, because ultimately that cost that we incurred, all of us as taxpayers, would have been far more elevated if those individuals that were not paying attention didn't use the purple bags during that time period. So, I want to make sure that we at least thank those that did, because it was important and meaningful."

The PAYT Bag Program was introduced in July 2009 as a way for residents to be in direct control of how much they pay for trash based on what they individually put to the curb instead of being charged a flat rate in their property taxes. Yearly revenue from the program amounts to \$1,561,225 and helps offset the tax rate.

Considering the alternative option of sustaining services through property taxes, councilors showed their support of the existing program. Councilor Pierce stated, "I really work hard to find fault with this program, and it's either that or the taxpayers dollar, or it's paid for where they buy the bags, but I'm convinced that this is the right thing to do."

Find more information about the City's solid waste services at www.concordnh.gov/trash.

