



LA bans plastic bags

Los Angeles has become the largest American city to curb use of plastic bags, in a move that could see other American cities follow suit. An alderman in Chicago introduced a similar measure, and a councilman in New York said he plans a ban.

America's second largest city of 3.9 million citizens uses more than 2 billion plastic shopping bags a year, with most ending up as litter or in landfills, according to a Sanitation Bureau report.

Officials in all three cities say their goal is a coast-to-coast ban on the bags, which some compare to the polystyrene foam

sandwich containers that McDonald's Corp. (MCD) phased out in the 1990s.

"It does send a message that the second- and third-largest cities in the country are going to act," said Chicago Alderman Joe Moreno, author of that city's proposal. "Local officials are dealing with this because they have to deal with the plastic bags on the sidewalks and in the waterways."

The plastic-bag industry is fighting the bans. The American Progressive Bag Alliance, its lobbying arm, said ordinances like Los Angeles threaten a business that employs 30,800 people in 349 communities that has embraced recycling and other measures to cut pollution.