

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**City of Toronto Bag Ban
CPIA Launches “All About Bags” Website**
<http://www.allaboutbags.ca>

TORONTO (September 24th, 2012) – The Canadian Plastics Industry Association (CPIA) today launched a first-ever information website examining the facts and myths regarding plastic shopping bags. Toronto City Council will consider the ban of plastic shopping bags at its meeting October 2-3, 2012.

The “All About Bags” website is a resource tool designed to provide information on plastic shopping bags that will help Council to make an informed decision to reject the plastic bag ban. AllAboutBags.ca reports on the status of plastic bag management around the world. It includes research, trends, studies and life-cycle assessments on all types of shopping bags. Research confirms the failure of total bans to protect the environment and shows that such bans can cause economic and social harm.

The industry is calling on the City to overturn the bag ban.

“Reversing the ban on plastic shopping bags in the City of Toronto is the responsible decision for City Council to make from a social, economic and environmental perspective” says Marion Axmith, Director General of CPIA. “This is a complex issue. All bags, whether used as carry bags or to manage household waste, have environmental impacts. Toronto’s decision to ban plastic shopping bags was made based on misconceptions about bags and the environment and without analysis of the facts and the consequences of a ban.”

“All About Bags” has been structured around common myths that can impede informed decision-making. For example:

- Plastic shopping bags are not made from oil, but a waste strand of natural gas.
- Absolutely no bag – reusable, cotton, paper or conventional plastic -- will degrade in a properly engineered landfill.
- Reusable bags are **not** recycled in Canada and will end up in Toronto’s landfill at the end of their useful life.
- Reusables are not necessarily better unless used many times. A cotton or canvas bag must be reused 131 times to match the lower environmental impact of a plastic shopping bag.

The industry believes that all decisions about the environment must be based on science and fact and consider the intended and unintended consequences of that decision. The facts in Toronto do not support implementation of a bag ban:

- 58% of residents have switched to reusables.
- Plastic bag usage has declined 53% over the past three years.
- 44% of the bags are reused to recycle green bin organics (33% of landfill).
- 36% of the bags are used for household waste.
- 15% of plastic shopping bags are recycled in the blue bin.
- Plastic bags are 0.13% of litter and 0.6% of Toronto's waste stream.

Further, the City of Toronto has a world class recycling system that properly manages plastic bags, which makes a ban unnecessary.

“Based on the evidence, a ban is unnecessary and will have negative consequences that will not reduce the City’s waste costs, extend the life of the landfill, or reduce litter, but it will make life more difficult for Torontonians and cost them more,” adds Axmith. “Bags are not just a convenience, but a necessity for residents to manage organic, pet and household waste and for everyday impulse purchases which is why the reuse rate on bags in Toronto is close to 80%.”

According to the industry, the ban will **not** eliminate plastic bags from the city’s waste system because residents will now have to purchase bin liners for their household waste, which are likely to contain considerably more plastic than conventional shopping bags and will cost them anywhere from 10 to 20 cents a bag.

“The ban will cause needless economic hardship for small, local retailers like convenience stores and over 10,000 Ontarians employed in plastic bag manufacture,” added Axmith. “These are Canadian-owned, small, family-run companies with five thousand jobs in the Toronto area that will be affected.” There are 2,500 convenience stores in Toronto.

The Canadian Plastics Industry Association is the national voice of Canada’s plastics industry, representing the interests of processors, material suppliers, equipment manufacturers, recyclers, and brand owners across the country.

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Niki Kerimova
416-777-0368

Leslie Challis
416-767-0167

Sally Potter
416-928-0560

5955 Airport Road, Suite 125, Mississauga, ON L4V 1R9

t. 905.678.7748 • f. 905.678.0774 • www.plastics.ca

5955 Airport Road, Suite 125, Mississauga, ON L4V 1R9

t. 905.678.7748 • f. 905.678.0774 • www.plastics.ca