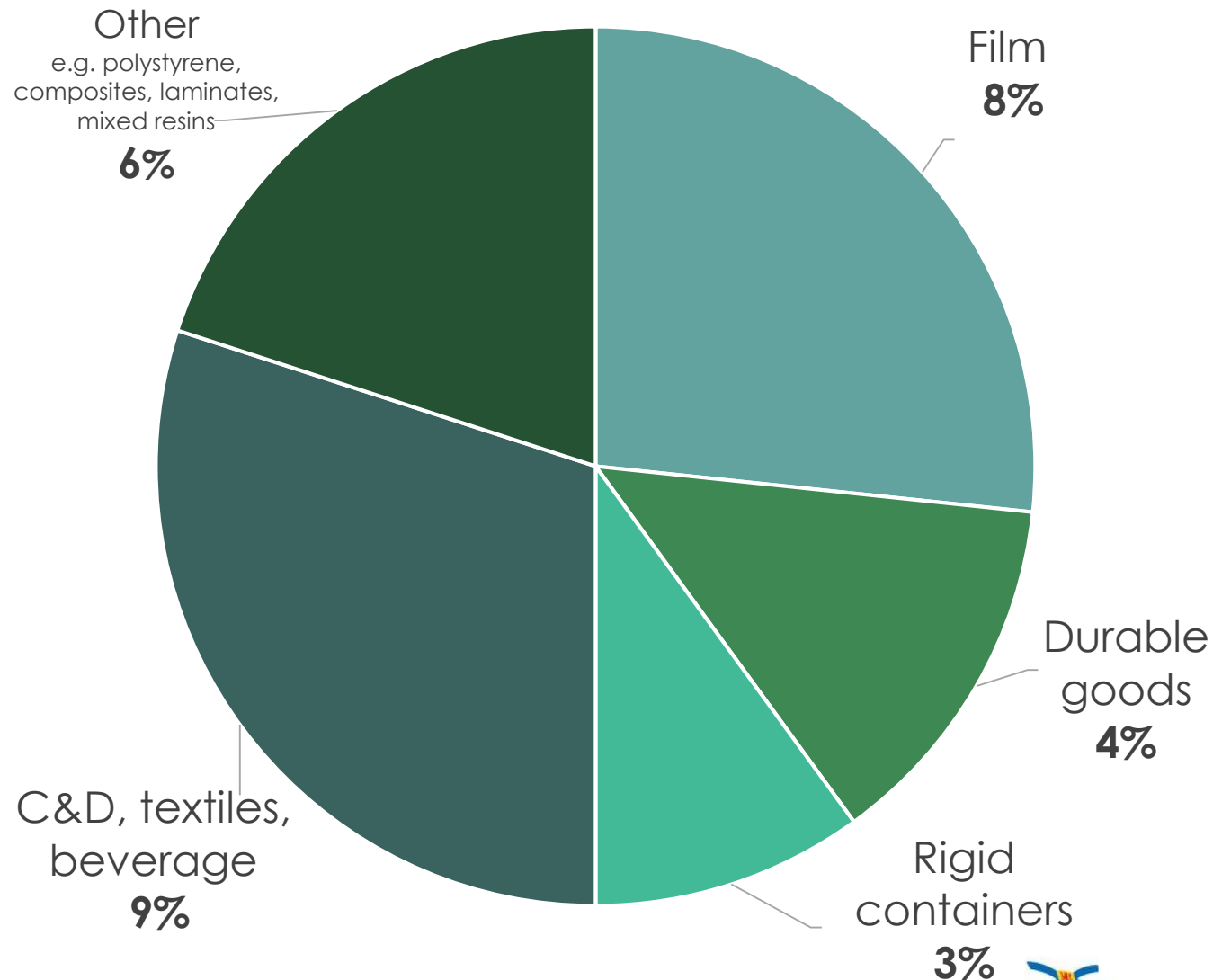


# Plastic Reduction

THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2020

# Plastic in Nova Scotia landfills

- ▶ Approximately 30 per cent of landfill waste is plastics
- ▶ Large proportion is packaging-related
- ▶ Remaining 70 per cent of landfill waste contains materials other than plastic such as organics, fiber/paper, construction and demolition waste and textiles.



# Plastic in Nova Scotia landfills

- ▶ Disposable cups/pods: 2.6 per cent
- ▶ Plastic shopping bags: ~1 per cent
- ▶ Other film bags: ~5 per cent



# Plastic in the residential recycling stream

- ▶ The most common type of plastic recycled by Nova Scotia residents is packaging-related
- ▶ **Film plastic:**
  - ▶ Difficult to market; increasing the request for landfilling
  - ▶ ~20 per cent is single-use plastic shopping bags
  - ▶ ~80 per cent includes such items as blue bags, food bags and plastic wrap
- ▶ **Rigid plastics:**
  - ▶ Challenging markets

# Plastic litter

- ▶ Approximately 90 per cent of litter contains plastic
- ▶ Increasing concerns regarding the impacts to the environment, harm to humans and wildlife health
- ▶ Lots of litter is packaging-related such as food wrappers, bags, foam/plastic packaging, cups, and straws

# Challenges

- ▶ Packaging has many benefits such as food safety and convenience
- ▶ Recycling/marketing challenges increase as new resins and laminates are introduced
- ▶ Under Extended Producer Responsibility for Paper and Packaging, fees do not adequately affect recyclability
- ▶ Many durable products also contain plastic

# Actions

- ▶ Extended Producer Responsibility for Paper and Packaging can use targets and other mechanisms to work with industry to increase recyclability
- ▶ Companies are taking steps to reduce plastics, such as creating targets for recycled content and recyclability
- ▶ Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment are advancing Strategy on Zero Waste
- ▶ In Nova Scotia- Plastic Bags Reduction Act

# Plastic Bags Reduction Act

Starting **October 30, 2020**, businesses will no longer be able to provide customers single-use plastic bags at the checkout in NS

## **Purpose:**

- ▶ To encourage waste reduction at the source – which helps to keep plastic out of our environment and landfills
  - ▶ Each Canadian uses around 425 plastic bags a year
  - ▶ Up to 3 per cent of land-based litter is plastic bags
- ▶ Allows the Minister to regulate more single-use items in the future



# What is banned?

- ▶ **Single-use plastic bags**

This includes biodegradable and compostable plastic bags; regardless of thickness



# What is permitted?

- ▶ **Paper bags**
- ▶ **Reusable bags**
  - ▶ Durable and designed to be reused multiple times
  - ▶ Can be washed/disinfected



# Who has to comply?

- ▶ **All businesses** (e.g. grocery stores, retail shops, farmers markets, pharmacies, corner stores).
- ▶ Does not apply to **charities**

# What about fees?

- ▶ Businesses can decide whether to charge a fee for alternative bags, and what they do with the money

## Exemptions include:

- ▶ Certain food items (e.g. bulk foods, vegetables, baked goods, poultry)
- ▶ Small hardware, such as nails
- ▶ Prescription drugs
- ▶ Dry cleaning
- ▶ Wrapping flowers or potted plants
- ▶ Protecting tires
- ▶ Transporting live fish
- ▶ Garbage and recycling bags

# Planned Future Work

## **Continued Promotion**

- ▶ Posters being created for retailers to download and put in stores to let customers know of the upcoming ban
- ▶ Social media awareness posts and news release leading up to Oct 30

## **Evaluation of bag ban**

- ▶ Reduction in single-use shopping bags (litter, recycling facilities and landfill)
- ▶ Improvement in bag reuse
- ▶ Public feedback

# Questions?

**Ashley David**

Solid Waste-Resource Management Coordinator

[Ashley.David@novascotia.ca](mailto:Ashley.David@novascotia.ca)

902-266-9420