

# Rolling Out Maryland's Foam Ban



**SIERRA  
CLUB**

**Maryland Chapter  
Zero Waste Team  
July 15, 2020**



# Why ban foam food containers?

- Used for minutes, they break into small pieces that last forever
- Harm to wildlife and the environment
- Growing harm to human health
- Not recyclable, not biodegradable
- Take up space in landfills
- There are plenty of alternatives that are less harmful



# What's in the state-wide foam ban? (1)

## What's banned?

- Sale of expanded polystyrene food service products in the State  
(as of July 1, 2020)
- Sale or provision of food or beverages in an expanded polystyrene food service product by a food service business or school  
(as of October 1, 2020)

## What is a food service business?

- A business that sells or provides food or beverages for consumption on or off the premises
- It includes a business or institutional cafeteria, including those operated by or on behalf of state or local government

# What's in the state-wide foam ban? (2)

## What is an expanded polystyrene food service product?

- A product made of expanded polystyrene used for selling or providing food or beverages and
- Intended by the manufacturer to be used once, for eating or drinking, or recognized by the public as an item to be discarded after one use.
- Includes: food containers, plates, hot and cold beverage cups, trays, and cartons for eggs or other food.

## What is exempted?

- Food or beverages that have been packaged in expanded polystyrene containers before receipt by a food service business
- A product made of expanded polystyrene used to package raw, uncooked, or butchered meat, fish, poultry, or seafood
- Non-foam polystyrene products

# What's in the state-wide foam ban? (3)

## Who publicizes and enforces the ban?

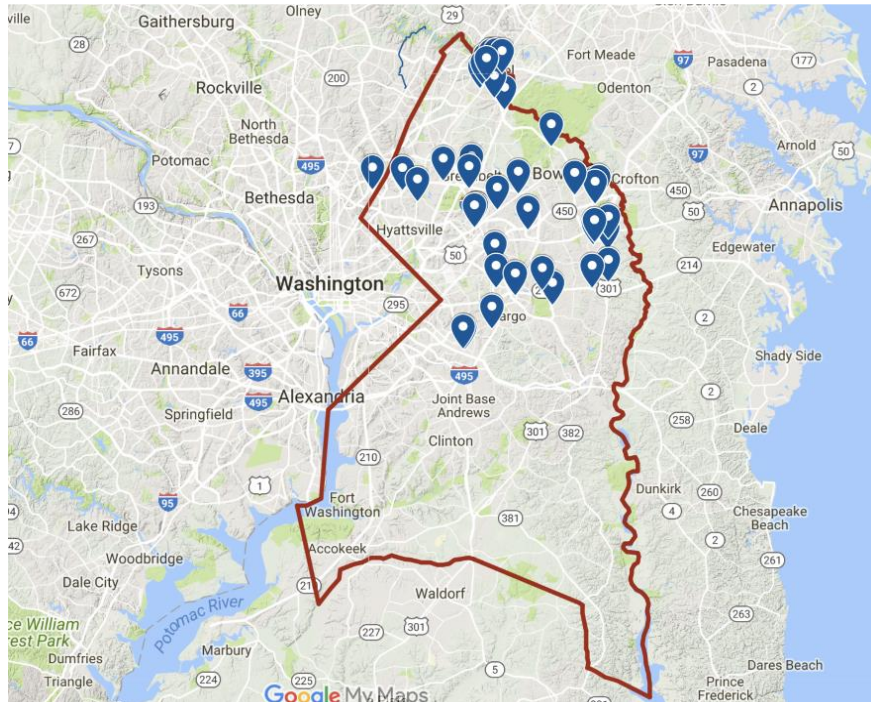
- MDE - public education and outreach campaign before and during implementation, including:
  - Contact with food service businesses, in consultation with relevant units of county government and trade organizations
  - Contact with schools, in consultation with MD Dept of Education
  - Distribution of information by internet and web-based resources
  - News releases and news events
- A unit of county government enforces, including a local health or environment department

## What's the penalty?

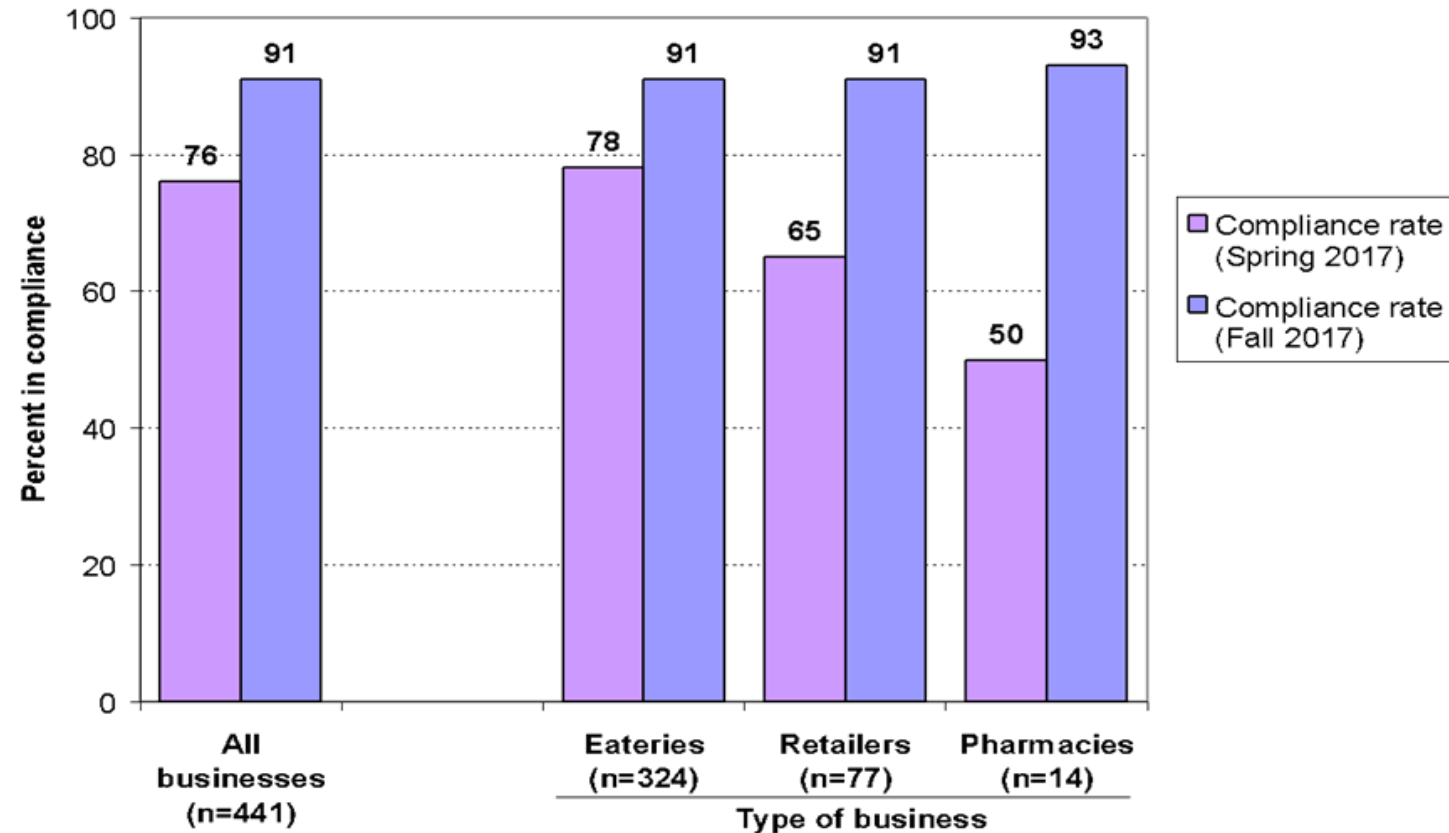
- Written notice of violation and 3 months to correct it
- Up to \$250 per violation
- MDE to be notified of any violation

# Compliance is high when businesses are aware!

## Prince George's County

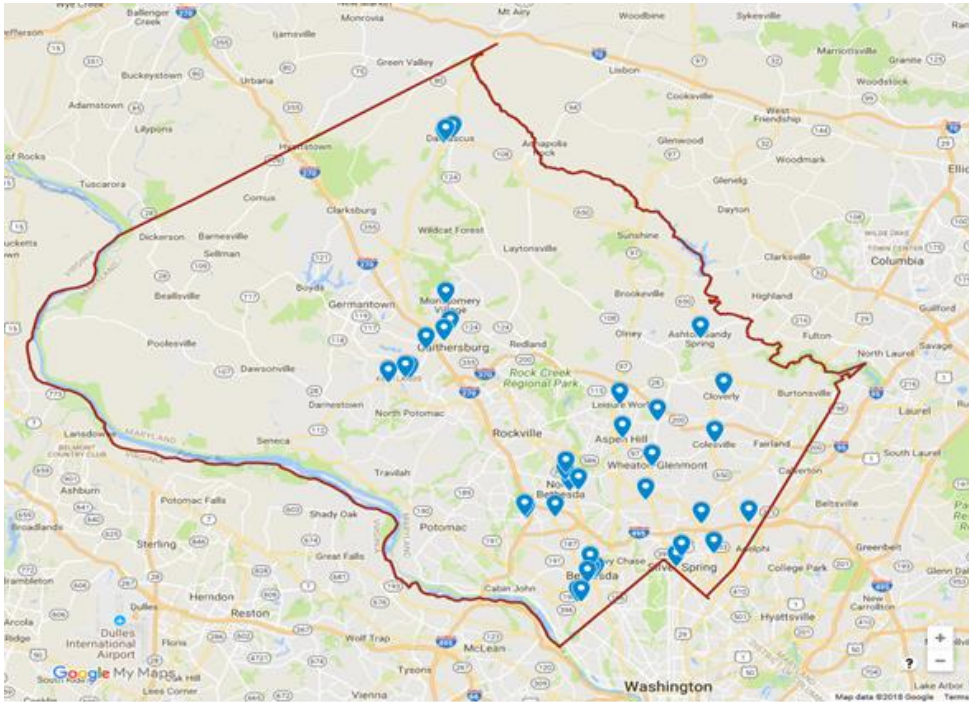


*Compliance rose to over 90% after face-to-face education of businesses by Sierra Club volunteers.*



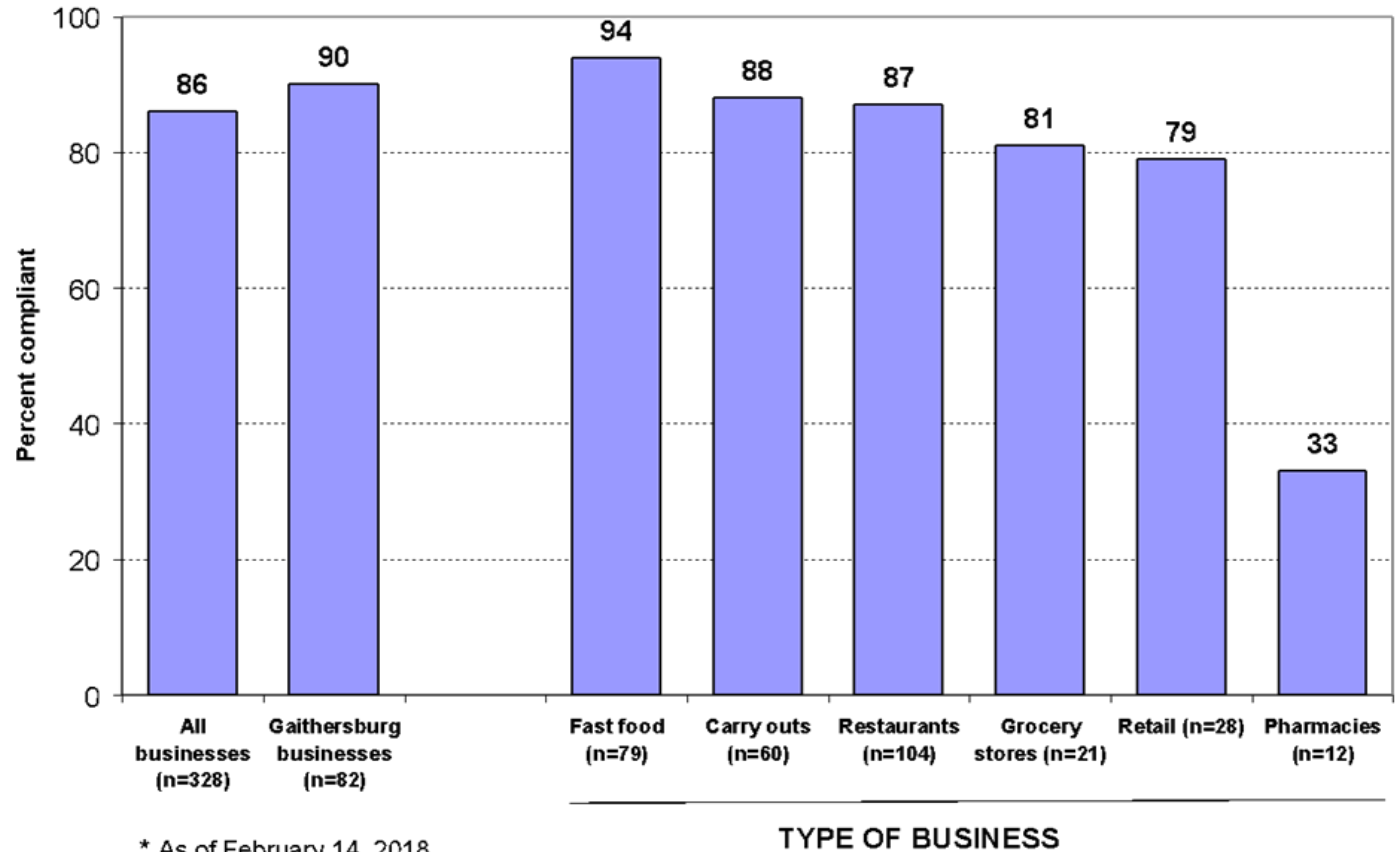
*Source:* Prince George's Sierra Club monitoring of 465 businesses in 45 shopping centers, 2017 (symbols are shopping centers)

# Montgomery County



Source: Montgomery County Sierra Club monitoring of 328 businesses in 38 shopping centers, Jan-Feb 2018 (symbols are shopping centers)

Compliance by Montgomery County businesses and those in Gaithersburg is about 90% at first visit, though pharmacies are less aware.



\* As of February 14, 2018

# Thank you!

*For more information:*

**MDE Foam Ban Website**

<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/LAND/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/Pages/Expanded-Polystyrene-Food-Service-Products-Ban.aspx>

**John Sullivan's email:**

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**Sierra Club Zero Waste Website**

(where materials will be posted)

[www.sierraclub.org/maryland/zero-waste](http://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/zero-waste)

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