

Bill To Prohibit One Pound Disposable Propane Tanks Passed By Assembly

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A bill to prohibit the sale of one pound disposable propane tanks in California by 2028 was passed in the Assembly on Monday.

Senate Bill 1256, authored by Senator Bob Wieckowski (D-Fremont), would begin the ban on January 1, 2028. There would only be a few minor exceptions according to SB 1256, including propane tanks used for construction use, cylinders that have a height-to-width ratio of 3.55 to 1 or greater, and those given by federal and local purchase by the United States General Services Administration’s State and Local Disaster Purchasing Program.

Those who violate the bill following the ban date will receive \$500 per day fines for first offenses, \$1,000 per day fines for second offenses, and \$2,000 fines per day for all subsequent violations.

While the one pound disposable cylinders are often used for camping stoves, small grills, or for lanterns, Senator Wieckowski noted that only one in four sold in California are typically recycled and cost local governments \$3 million a year to handle the hazardous waste issues each year. In addition, the bill would combat the environmental “unsustainability” of the one time use cylinders, particularly in National Parks such as Yosemite that only sell reusable cannisters within the park.

“These 1-pound propane cylinders are often among the litter found in our parks and beaches, highly expensive for local governments to properly handle and dangerous for workers in our hazardous waste programs,” said Wieckowski on Monday. “Putting in a five-year transition period gives the industry plenty of time to create a safe, refillable product, like it has with larger-sized cylinders. It is the environmentally responsible approach to take and will take a big burden off of our local governments.”

SB 1256 voting split by parties

Introduced in February, SB 1256 has passed every major vote so far, including an initial Senate vote before amendments in May. However, the bill has only been voted on based strictly on party lines, with Republicans either voting against the bill or abstaining.

“Many see this bill as redundant, as not as big as a problem as they are making it seem, or as an action that will cut into how many camp,” explained Greg Enos, a consultant on issues affecting the camping industry to the Globe on Tuesday. “The people behind the Californian one pound propane cannister bill don’t realize just how valuable it is to have the disposable ones, especially as an emergency supply. I mean, they had to make amendments to it just because it was going to wreck several emergency planning situations in California. But on the individual level, they won’t be allowed to buy them in six years. I’d say I hope they know what they’re doing, but it’s obvious that they don’t.”

Despite numerous concerns over what the ban would entail, the bill passed the Assembly 54-14 on Monday, with supporters praising having a roadmap towards having only sustainable reusable cylinders in sight.

“The fact that SB 1256 cleared yet another hurdle on its way to becoming law in California just emphasizes the Legislature’s understanding of the need to replace the wasteful non-environmental single-use 1-pound cylinders with the sustainable alternative offered through the refillable/reusable ones,” noted California Product Stewardship Council executive director Doug Kobold. “As the proud sponsors of SB 1256, we commend Senator Wieckowski and his staff for the wonderful job they have done informing others in the Legislature and the public at large about why this change is necessary. Without their dedication, the requirement to transition from single-use cylinders to reusables in the next five years here in California would not be possible.”

SB 1256 is due to be voted on in a Senate in the next few weeks.