

U.S. city will fine people who waste food

26th September, 2014



The U.S. city of Seattle is introducing a system to fine people who waste food. The city, in the USA's northwest, will begin issuing warnings on January the 1st and then start fining people six months later on July the 1st. Homeowners will get a \$1 fine if more than 10 per cent of their garbage is food. Businesses will get a \$50 fine. City officials want

to reduce the amount of food that people and businesses waste. Americans waste around 40 per cent of the food they buy. The city hopes its new fines will bring this figure down. Seattle aims to increase the amount of waste it recycles from the current level of 56 per cent to 60 per cent. It has also become the second U.S. city to make composting compulsory.

The Seattle Public Utilities department said the new garbage disposal system should make people more aware that recycling is important. City official Tim Croll told the 'Seattle Times' newspaper that the programme would not make any money. He said: "The point isn't to raise revenue. We care more about reminding people to separate their materials." He added that he thinks the fines system will be a success and said he didn't expect to collect a lot of money in fines. It will be up to garbage collectors to decide if a house or business gets a fine. The collectors will look inside garbage bins to see how much food waste they contain. They can then add \$1 or \$50 to the next garbage bill.

Sources: *Seattle Times* / *BBC*

Writing

Fines are a great idea to cut the amount of food waste. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

system / warnings / fines / garbage / waste food / recycles / composting / compulsory / public utilities / garbage disposal / programme / materials / collectors / bill

True / False

- Seattle will start issuing warnings to people who waste food. T / F
- People who have too much food in their garbage will get a \$100 fine. T / F
- Businesses that waste too much food will be fined \$50. T / F
- Seattle has become the first US city to make composting compulsory. T / F
- Seattle wants to make more people aware about recycling. T / F
- The city hopes to make a lot of money from the fines. T / F
- Garbage collectors will decide who gets fined and who doesn't. T / F
- People who waste food will get a pay-on-the-spot fine. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. introducing | a. divide |
| 2. issuing | b. cut |
| 3. reduce | c. rubbish |
| 4. figure | d. required |
| 5. compulsory | e. starting |
| 6. aware | f. purpose |
| 7. point | g. include |
| 8. separate | h. sending out |
| 9. garbage | i. number |
| 10. contain | j. informed |

Discussion – Student A

- Should Seattle try and make money from its fines?
- How could you reduce what you waste?
- Is raising awareness more important than raising revenue?
- What happens to all the world's waste?
- What does the expression "waste not, want not" mean?
- How will the garbage collectors judge the amount of waste?
- Do you agree with the saying that "one man's trash is another man's treasure"?
- What questions would you like to ask Seattle city officials?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. People will get | a. this figure down |
| 2. Americans waste around 40 per cent | b. a lot of money in fines |
| 3. its new fines will bring | c. compulsory |
| 4. increase the amount | d. disposal system |
| 5. make composting | e. a \$1 fine |
| 6. the new garbage | f. to raise revenue |
| 7. make people more aware that | g. to the next garbage bill |
| 8. The point isn't | h. of waste it recycles |
| 9. he didn't expect to collect | i. recycling is important |
| 10. add \$1 or \$50 | j. of the food they buy |

Discussion – Student B

- How good are you at recycling?
- Why is recycling important?
- What things do you waste a lot of?
- What do you think of fining people who waste food?
- Why do people waste so much food?
- Is a \$1 fine too small to make people recycle?
- What recycling system does your town have?
- What do you think of making composting compulsory?

Spelling

- a yssetm to fine people who waste food
- begin usgniis warnings on January the 1st
- 10 per cent of their egbarag is food
- increase the nmtuao of waste it recycles
- from the nrtecur level of 56 per cent
- make composting suormclopoy
- The Seattle Public Utilities tntedaepm
- make people more rwaae
- the romgperam would not make any money
- he didn't expect to coctle a lot of money
- peatsrae their materials
- garbage orctecsoll

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. b	4. i	5. d
6. j	7. f	8. a	9. c	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Fines

You think fines are the best way to reduce food waste. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things won't work. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): using smaller plates, Internet campaigns or increased food prices.

Role B – Smaller plates

You think using smaller plates is the best way to reduce food waste. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things won't work. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): fines, Internet campaigns or increased food prices.

Role C – Internet campaigns

You think Internet campaigns are the best way to reduce food waste. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things won't work. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): using smaller plates, fines or increased food prices.

Role D – Increased food prices

You think increased food prices are the best way to reduce food waste. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things won't work. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): using smaller plates, Internet campaigns or fines.

Speaking – Wasters

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest wasters of food at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- restaurants
- hotels
- supermarkets
- food producers
- farmers
- market traders
- rich people
- charities

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.