

## Conservation News & Announcements

January 1, 2009



### JSCEE Deli Phasing-Out Foam Food Ware



Starting in 2009, Seattle Public Schools will stop purchasing all expanded polystyrene (EPS or Styrofoam) foam food ware containers. The plates and bowls currently in use at the JSCEE Deli will be replaced with compostable or recyclable alternatives. Foam food ware is no longer used in schools so school containers will remain unchanged.

The City of Seattle recently passed an EPS Ban Ordinance prohibiting the use of such containers in all food service businesses. Similar bans are already in place in more than 20 U.S. cities, including Portland and San Francisco. The Ordinance is part of the city's new waste reduction and recycling strategies. The overall goal is to increase Seattle's recycling rate to 70% by 2025 in order to reduce the amount of waste shipped to landfills.

Foamed polystyrene does not biodegrade and collects in our storm drains before making it's way to other waterways. It is now a principal component of marine debris. It contains about 99% air which presents a significant challenge for recycling collection. Styrene, a known neurotoxin used to make polystyrene, has been shown to leech out from EPS packaging under a variety of circumstances, most notably when it comes in contact with an acidic solution such as lemon juice. Eliminating EPS packaging helps us move towards a healthier environment.



Los Angeles River, polluted with EPS