**The Warehouse Group bids goodbye to 20 million single-use plastic checkout bags**

New Zealand’s largest listed retail group is bypassing its transitionary step of introducing compostable bags at its checkouts and is moving directly to offering only reusable bags at its 254 stores.

The move for The Warehouse, Warehouse Stationery, Noel Leeming and Torpedo7 stores coincides with the government’s proposed legislation to ban single use plastic checkout bags, a proposal that The Warehouse is endorsing.

The Warehouse and Warehouse Stationery CEO Pejman Okhovat says the change is an exciting one for the Group:

“We’re really chuffed to once-again be leading the charge against plastic and removing all single-use checkout bags next year.”

“This is a historic occasion for New Zealand’s environment and we’re very proud to be standing alongside Prime Minister Ardern and Associate Environment Minister Eugenie Sage as they  propose this legislation,” said Mr Okhovat.

**Other options**

Once the bags are removed, The Warehouse and Warehouse Stationery, Noel Leeming and Torpedo7 will offer a broad range of affordable, environmentally friendly plastic-free reusable bags.

**Part of a bigger picture**

This change is the latest in the Group’s longstanding commitment to the community and environment, which includes installing electric vehicle chargers at stores around New Zealand, organising and managing The Great Community Clean Up, and carefully monitoring carbon emissions.

The Warehouse introduced a charge for single-use plastic checkout bags back in 2009, with net proceeds given back to the local community.

Since then, The Warehouse has donated close to $4.5 million to support kids’ sports teams, food banks, disability support services and many other grass roots community organisations.

“That support will not stop with the end of single-use plastic checkout bags, instead we’ll introduce new ways for our customers to support their local communities when they visit our stores and announce details of that plan in due course,” said Mr Okhovat.

The Warehouse is a founding partner of the [Soft Plastics Recycling](https://www.recycling.kiwi.nz/solutions/soft-plastics/) scheme which recycles plastic bags and other soft plastic packaging.

The Warehouse Group used approximately 21m plastic bags in the calendar year 2017.