



Turn the Tide  
on  
**Plastic**



A guide to moving away  
from single use plastics

The City of Rockingham has made some changes to the types of disposable items that can be used by traders, at events and in Council operations. A Council Policy on Single Use Plastics and Balloons was endorsed by Council in May 2019, acknowledging the environmental impact associated with disposable plastic.

### What are the changes?

From May 2019, all City operations, events and permits to trade within the City will be required to comply with the Single Use Plastic and Balloons Council Policy (the Policy). A transition period of 12 months will apply, allowing time for existing stock to be used up and suitable alternatives to be sourced.

The Policy requires food and beverage serving materials to be either reusable or compostable. Serving materials include plates, bowls, cups, lids, cutlery, straws and food containers, as well as any plastic carry bags. Helium balloons and the intentional release of any balloons is also not permitted.

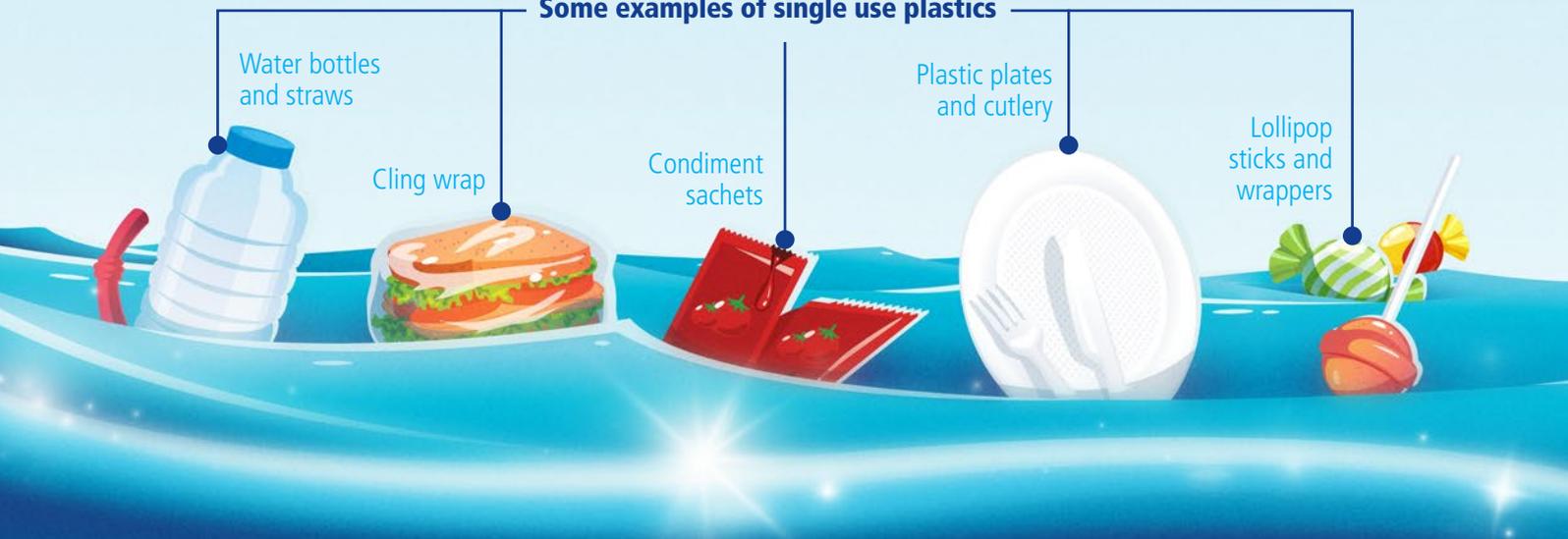
### What are single use plastics?

Generally, single use plastics are used for packaging or consuming food and beverages and are intended for a very short useful 'lifespan'. They include bottled water, straws, disposable cups, plates and bowls, cutlery, condiment sachets and containers, food and lolly wrappers, lollipop sticks and cling wrap. Balloons and disposable coffee cups are also considered single use items. Please refer to the Policy for relevant definitions.

### What does 'Turn the Tide on Plastic' mean?

Turning the Tide on Plastic means changing some of the ways we do things to ensure we're taking care of the environment. It means avoiding disposable plastic items and reducing unnecessary waste. It places an emphasis on reusable or compostable products as alternatives and the effective separation of waste materials to minimise waste to landfill. This simple guide aims to minimise plastic use in our community, working towards a sustainable, plastic free future.

#### Some examples of single use plastics



“It’s affecting every marine species in the marine environment”

Marine and seabird researcher – Eric Woehler, Tasmania

These changes have been implemented to help protect the City of Rockingham's unique environment and to advocate for change on a broader scale.



It is estimated that disposable plastic items such as bags and cups have an average useful life of 12 minutes.

## Why Turn the Tide on Plastic?

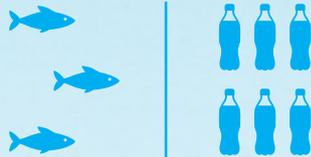
More plastic has been produced in the last 10 years, than in the 100 years prior.



Plastics are generally made from non-renewable resources, do not safely break down in the environment and cause harm to wildlife.



Plastic will outweigh fish in the ocean by 2050:



Lightweight plastics are highly mobile and easily blown from landfill or other areas into waterways and the ocean.



Only a small percentage of plastic is actually recycled.

**IN 2016/17**

Australia consumed

**3,513,100**

tonnes of plastic.

Of that, **only 11.8%** was recycled.

**22,128 BLUE WHALES**



This can be due to poor market for low grade plastics and unclean material.

being landfilled each year in Australia, and **only 2,965** being recycled.

# How do I Turn the Tide on Plastic?

- 1. Bring your own (BYO)** where ever you go - coffee cup, water bottle, shopping bag, cutlery set, food container, straws. Choose three (or more) as your essential 'don't leave the house without' items and keep a clean reusable set in your car or backpack. There's a great range of travel friendly options available, or get creative with resources you already own.
- 2. Encourage others to do the same.** Share tips and tricks with your friends. Hint: reusable coffee cups are a great gift idea!
- 3. Snap a photo and share on your social media to reach a wider audience.** You may even want to include the hashtag #turnthetideonplastic
- 4. Don't stress if you forget to BYO.** Choose dine-in options where possible and do your best to remember next time.
- 5. Make sure you are up to date** with new WA recycling rules and ensure you are putting things in the right bin.
- 6. If you see plastic litter in the environment, pick it up.** Once you realise how much there is it will be a great incentive to reduce your own impact where you can.
- 7. Ask your local café or food outlet if they offer a discount when you BYO** cup or container and encourage them to consider it if they don't already.
- 8. If you're organising an event,** anything from a birthday party to a festival, make it plastic free.

For any questions in relation to this guideline, please contact the City's Sustainability Officer via [customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au](mailto:customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au) or 9528 0333.



# Know your plastics

Plastics can be made from either fossil fuels or renewable resources such as starch (sometimes labelled bioplastic or biodegradable plastic).

All plastics, including biodegradable products, can break down into smaller and smaller pieces to become micro plastic.

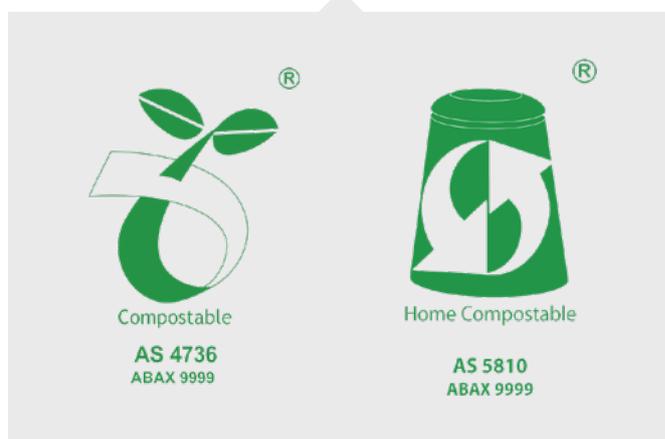
## Go compostable!

The Policy requires that **suitable alternatives to single use plastic must be compostable, available and fit for purpose**. There are a range of these products available on the market today and options continue to grow with increase in demand. Many products and materials are inherently suitable for compost, such as paper, cardboard and food scraps and therefore do not have specific certification.

A compostable material is capable of entirely decomposing or breaking down, without leaving a toxic residue. When properly composted and applied to land, this organic material can improve soil quality, reduce nutrient losses and produces no greenhouse gases in the process.

Should you have any further queries you can check with product suppliers or contact the City for more information.

Look for these symbols when purchasing single use alternatives:



Some 'bioplastics' can be safely composted, while some cannot.  
If you're unsure please check with the supplier to make sure composting is possible.

'Degradable' and 'biodegradable' are loose, often misleading terms meaning that something may break up into smaller pieces, rather than break down completely. This fragmentation may take weeks, months or years to occur, and is not governed by any certifiable standards.

# Events

The temporary nature of events and markets means that disposable, single use plastics are convenient and commonplace. Considering all of the events held in the City throughout the year, there is a significant opportunity to minimise the use of these materials in our local area. With a collective effort, we can have a big impact.

Think about ways in which you as a customer, vendor or organiser can contribute. The best option is to avoid using disposables altogether.



**Avoid:**

Avoid things that will become waste, *i.e. choose reusable options.*



**Reduce:**

Reduce the amount of waste you generate, *i.e. opt for no lid, or no straw.*



**Reuse:**

Choose to reuse items where possible (Several reusable cup services are available who deliver, collect and wash reusable cups at coffee shops and events).



**Recycle:**

Make sure you put waste in the right bin and recycle correctly.

**Include waste wise messaging in event promotions:**

“Don’t forget to bring your reusable coffee cup.”  
“This is a waste wise event, choose reuse.”



## What to use instead

	Best option	Next best option
 <b>Bottled water and drinks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drinking water facilities available on site</li> <li>• Patrons BYO bottles and refill on site</li> <li>• Have reusable bottles available for purchase at the event.</li> </ul>	Drinks in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glass</li> <li>• Aluminium cans</li> <li>• Cardboard cartons (all recyclable).</li> </ul>
 <b>Cups for hot/cold drinks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage customers to BYO reusable cup</li> <li>• Stall holders or event organisers could provide reusable mugs with an appropriate wash up station.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified compostable cups (only provide with lid when requested).</li> </ul>
 <b>Plates and bowls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stall holders could provide reusable options with an appropriate wash up station</li> <li>• Encourage customers to BYO plate/bowl/container.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the best fit compostable alternative i.e. serviette, paper bowl/plates, cabbage leaf, banana leaf, bamboo material or other certified compostable packaging.</li> </ul>
 <b>Cutlery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide silverware with an appropriate wash up station</li> <li>• Encourage customers to BYO cutlery (many portable, travel friendly options are available).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compostable cutlery i.e. bamboo or wooden material.</li> </ul>
 <b>Straws</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No straws</li> <li>• Sell reusable options i.e. stainless steel, bamboo.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compostable straw i.e. paper, bamboo. Only provide straw when requested by customer.</li> </ul>
 <b>Bags</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage BYO bags</li> <li>• Offer Boomerang Bags, or a shared bag alternative</li> <li>• Sell reusable options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper bags made from either 100% recycled paper or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper. Both options are recyclable or compostable.</li> </ul>
 <b>Condiments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vendors to provide condiments in large containers i.e. large sauce bottles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve in compostable ramekin.</li> </ul>
 <b>Cling wrap</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beeswax wraps</li> <li>• Silicone wraps</li> <li>• Fabric pouch or coverings</li> <li>• Tupperware containers (all reusable).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aluminium foil (recyclable)</li> <li>• Baking paper.</li> </ul>

## Balloons

Balloons are highly mobile and once released (whether intentional or not) into the environment, will eventually return to the earth as litter. Whether they are helium or ordinary balloons; balloon rubber or latex, plastic attachments, ribbons and string pose a serious threat to wildlife, becoming choking and entanglement hazards. In the marine environment balloons and other plastics are often mistaken as a common food source for seabirds, turtles and other marine life.

The Policy restricts the use, sale or distribution of helium balloons and the organised release of balloons of any kind.

---

**You can still keep that festival feel by replacing balloons with plastic free, wildlife friendly alternatives such as:**



Bunting



Flags and banners



Bubbles



Kites



Paper lanterns



Flower petals  
(for confetti or symbolic 'releases')



Paper decorations  
(i.e. streamers,  
pom-poms)

*What goes up*  
**must come down**

## Drinking water

The Policy stipulates that bottled water is not to be provided at City functions. For all other events it is suggested that free non-bottled drinking water be made available, and encouraged through the promotion of the 'choose, reuse' message. Event organisers may choose to hire a portable drinking water facility to ensure adequate provision of potable water.

## Legislation

In addition to the Policy, there are a number of other requirements you may need to consider.

Below are those most applicable to events:

- *Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911*
- *Public Health Act 2016*
- *Health (Public Buildings) Regulations 1992*
- *Public Places and Local Government Property Local Law 2018*
- *Local Government Property Local Law 2001*

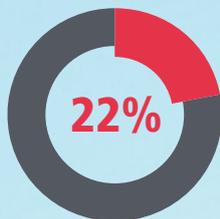
## Glitter



Glitter is usually made from non-biodegradable materials such as plastics or foil. These tiny pieces can be classified as microplastics, and are best avoided as they can easily enter the environment and are hard to clean up.



If you require any further details about permits or legislation relevant to your event, please contact the City's Permits Officer via [customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au](mailto:customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au) or **9528 0333**.



Research has shown that a turtle has a 22% chance of dying if it eats just one piece of plastic.



Globally, it is estimated that at least 50% of all sea turtles have ingested plastic.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. Which bin do I put it in?

The table below provides guidance on possible management streams for common food packaging and event waste. **Please note that for materials to be recycled, they must be clean and free of food residue.**

It is important to note that at present, no City managed facility is available to process organic waste for composting, however, considering the alternatives and in the hope that services will be developed in the future, prioritising

viable compostable streams is the best interim solution. With changing technology and accessibility, we expect to see composting facilities and services become more available in the local area.

	Compost	Recycling	General waste
 <b>Paper and cardboard</b> (including newspaper, napkins, trays, plates etc.)	 (Can be composted at home and in commercial facilities)	 (Item must be dry and free of food residue)	 (Paper and cardboard materials will decompose in a landfill environment, albeit releasing greenhouse gases)
 <b>Food waste</b>	 (Can be composted at home and in commercial facilities)		 (Food waste will decompose in a landfill environment, albeit releasing greenhouse gases)
 <b>Wooden products</b> (e.g. cutlery made of Birchwood)	 (Can be composted at home and in commercial facilities)		 (Will breakdown in a landfill environment)
 <b>Sugarcane-fibre (Bagasse) products</b> (e.g. plates, cups)	 (Can be composted at home and in commercial facilities)	 (Unless specific recycling facility is available)	 (Will breakdown in a landfill environment)
 <b>Cornstarch plastics or 'bioplastics'</b>	 (Usually only in a commercial facility, however check specific recommendations)	 (These plastics are not designed for recycling and will contaminate the recycling stream)	 (To fully decompose, heat, light and microbes must be present)
 <b>Generic plastics</b> (recycle codes 1,2,4,5)		 (In most recycling facilities)	 (Plastic will not breakdown in a landfill environment, therefore recycling is a preferred option)
 <b>Generic plastics</b> (recycle codes 3, 6, 7)		 (Unless specific recycling facility is available)	 (These plastics cannot be recycled through Council facilities. Drop soft plastics off at REDcycle collection points at Coles and Woolworths for private recycling)
 <b>Polystyrene</b>			 (Polystyrene cannot be recycled through Council facilities at this time)
 <b>Balloons</b> (including clips, ribbon and string)			



## 2. What messaging should I provide on bins?

For best results it is suggested that bins be labelled in a way which clearly delineates recycling streams from general waste. Some helpful practices include:

- Colour coding
- Graphics
- Messaging at eye-level
- Lids or bin chutes with different shapes
- Waste assistants or volunteers

You can contact the City for a template to use on bins at your event or business. It is also recommended that you ensure each bin 'station' has at least one general waste and one recycling bin. Consider offering an organics waste stream where possible.

 Ensure the event location is left as you found it.

## 3. Can food and drink be served in containers provided by customers?

The Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code does not strictly prohibit the use of a reusable food or beverage container. It is a decision of an individual business as to whether they accept these items or not.

## 4. By what date must traders have made the switch?

Traders can start transitioning to plastic free alternatives right away, however, in order to give traders sufficient time to switch, the Policy will not be actively enforced until March 2020. This will allow traders 12 months to use existing stocks and source suitable alternatives.

## 5. What about dog poo bags and bin liners?

The term 'single use plastic bag' has the meaning given to it in the Policy. Dog waste bags and bin liners, while usually lightweight plastic, are not included in the Policy restrictions at this time. It is, however, intended that compostable dog waste bags will be made available at all public facilities within 12 months.

While not a requirement, some alternatives to consider instead of using bin liners are listed below:

- Compostable bin liners (i.e. corn starch based plastic)
- Line bin with newspaper instead
- Go without a bin liner and wrap food waste and wet material in newspaper. Wash out bin after emptying.
- Separating organic materials for composting is ideal, as it will also keep your bin cleaner and reduce odour.

## Tips for a successful waste wise event

- Calculate the right number of bin stations to provide, based on expected attendance and location size.
- Each bin station should include at least one of each recycling, landfill and compost bins where possible (food waste may be able to be donated to a community garden for composting). While there is no commercial collection of compost currently available, the City is working towards a full FOGO system by 2025.
- Consider the use of 'bottles only' or 'cans only' recycling bins to help ensure a cleaner recycling stream.
- Consider how the Container Deposit Scheme (due 2020) will be implemented.
- Ensure convenient placement of bins, considering high traffic areas.
- Consider employing volunteers to assist with correct waste management during the event.
- Encourage stallholders to only hand out single use, disposable items when customers ask for them.
- Event organisers or stallholders could consider branding reusable cups, bags or bottles available for customers to purchase. Stallholders could consider offering a discount for customers using BYO materials.
- Provide communal wash up stations for customers to borrow, wash and return cups and plates etc.
- Vendors or event organisers may wish to engage a share initiative such as Go2Cup or Green Caffein.
- Consider incorporating waste-wise activities during the event, for example; A 'Make Your Own Bag' workshop, or a raffle to win reusable items.
- Evaluate the success of your event to identify areas for improvement.
- Be transparent, share your successes and struggles with the community and anyone looking to implement more plastic wise procedures.



Printed on  
recycled paper



2019

## Contact us

**P:** 9528 0333

**E:** [customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au](mailto:customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au)

**W:** [rockingham.wa.gov.au](http://rockingham.wa.gov.au)