

Western Australia's

Plan for Plastics

Single-use plastics ban Plastic bowls

January 2022

From 1 January 2022, regulations to ban the sale, supply and distribution of single-use or disposable plastic bowls in Western Australia come into effect.

Businesses, organisations and consumers who use these items are being supported to switch to reusable and non-plastic alternatives.

In the 2019–20 financial year, Western Australians used an estimated **EIGHT MILLION** plastic plates and bowls.



Quick fact

► What is being banned?

The ban applies to the sale, supply or distribution of single-use or disposable plastic bowls designed to contain food – whether they are made wholly or partly of plastic, are lined with plastic, or are made from expanded polystyrene.

This includes packs of disposable bowls sold by retailers, and individual bowls supplied or sold by hospitality businesses and other organisations.

Banned bowls include those made from compostable, biodegradable and degradable plastics.

The ban applies to food containers made from plastic that are provided without a lid.

► Why are bioplastics included?



Bioplastics are made from plant or other organic materials instead of hydrocarbon oils. Bioplastics are plastic, and behave the same way as regular plastics in the environment. Bioplastics can contaminate recycling streams and often require separate collection systems and industrial composting.





► Why are plastic bowls being banned?

About 40 per cent of all plastics used are 'single-use', designed to be used only once or a few times before being thrown away (disposed of). While recyclable, only 11 per cent of single-use plastics are currently recycled, with the majority ending up as litter or in landfills.

In the environment plastic waste breaks down into smaller fragments over a long period of time, if at all. Plastic waste poses a major threat to the health of marine, freshwater and land ecosystems and impacts the amenity of our environment and coastlines. The consequences and abundance of single-use disposable plastic items is significant, and immediate action is required to reduce these effects.

► What is **not** included in the ban?

Specific use of plastic is permitted for bowls that form part of a pre-packaged product (e.g. pre-packaged noodle bowls) and heavier-weight plastic bowls that are designed for multiple use and sold as individual items or sets by retailers (e.g. outdoor dinner sets or camping equipment).

Exceptions also apply to lined paperboard bowls that are certified to Australian Standard 4736-2006 or 5810-2010. Products that are not certified, but are seeking certification, can enquire about supply arrangements.

Bowl lids and films are not included in the Stage 1 bans but will be addressed in Stage 2.

Bowls supplied with lids are not included in the ban.

► Who does the ban apply to?

The ban applies to all businesses, manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers and distributors in Western Australia. Community organisations and institutions may also be affected by the ban.

► Can I still use disposable plastic bowls I have at home?

Yes, you can. The ban does not apply to the personal use of the items – only the sale, supply and distribution of them.

► What can I use instead?

There are many options to choose from that are both better for the environment, and prevent waste going to landfill. Choose to:

- Refuse – say 'No' to plastic bowls
- Reuse – opt for reusable bowls made from stainless steel, ceramic, silicone, glass and heavier reusable plastics. Where possible, businesses should consider switching to washable and reusable bowls.

If you simply can't refuse and reusable options are not available, then consider disposable bowls made from non-plastic materials such as wood/bamboo, bagasse and unlined paper. Where using disposable options, look for opportunities to reduce waste or to purchase products that are certified as compostable to Australian Standard 4736-2006 or 5810-2010.

► When do penalties apply?

From **1 July 2022** penalties apply for the sale, supply or distribution of plastic bowls that are banned under the Environmental Protection (Prohibited Plastics and Balloons) Regulations 2018. This is to allow time for alternative products to be developed.

Penalties also apply to any person who supplies or manufactures plastic bowls and knowingly provides false or misleading information about its composition or whether or not it is a banned plastic bowl.

► Need more information?

Call the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation: 08 6364 7000

Email: plastic-action@dwer.wa.gov.au

Check out the website: [Western Australia's Plan for Plastics | Western Australian Government](#) (www.wa.gov.au)

