



Microbeads

Enforcement begins 1 September 2023

What is proposed to be banned and when?

The sale and supply of rinse-off personal care, cosmetic and cleaning products that contain plastic microbeads will be phased out from 27 February 2023.

This includes:

- rinse-off products including dyes, shampoo, conditioner, shaving cream, hairsprays, gels, creams, pastes, face, hand and body cleansers, scrubs, exfoliants and masks
- oral hygiene products including toothpaste, mouthwash and tooth whiteners
- cleaning products in indoor and outdoor commercial, industrial and residential settings.

There will be a transition period of six months before the rules are enforced to allow businesses to use up existing supplies and source alternative products.

Enforcement of the ban on products containing microbeads will commence on 1 September 2023.



Why ban microbeads?

Microbeads in rinse-off personal care, cosmetic and cleaning products enter the wastewater system, making their way into our oceans and waterways, and if ingested are a risk to wildlife.

Why not rely on the voluntary agreement?

A voluntary agreement to phase out microbeads in rinse-off personal care, cosmetics and cleaning products (known as BeadRecede) has been in place across Australia since 2017. A survey of relevant products in 2020 found 99.3 per cent were microbead free. Most of the remaining products that still contain microbeads are used for personal care such as face scrubs.

The ban ensures all products, existing and new, will not contain plastic microbeads.

What is not included in the ban?

- wipe-off products such as sunscreen, moisturiser and make-up
- leave-on personal care products such as moisturiser, deodorant, make-up and lipstick
- printing applications such as toners and textile printing products
- craft glitter
- products required for industrial and medical applications (other than cleaning products).

What alternatives are there?

- non-plastic products with the same abrasive, exfoliant, filler and aesthetic function are available in more than 99 per cent of products, including pumice and salt
- reusable exfoliant products such as brushes and loofas can be used to replace rinse-off exfoliants.



Will it cost more to buy alternative products?

BeadRecede has identified many non-plastic alternatives available to replace the function of microbeads. These alternatives are already in use and are economically viable.

Who will the ban apply to?

The ban applies to all businesses, manufacturers, retailers and distributors that sell or supply rinse-off personal care, cosmetic and cleaning products.

