

# Western Australia Plastics Ban | Industry Q&A Session



**WA PLASTICS  
BAN**

Business Engagement Program



## **30 minutes: OVERVIEW**

- Introduction
- Ban overview
- Banned items



## **20 minutes: ASK QUESTIONS**

- Write your question in the CHAT



## **10 minutes: NEXT STEPS**

- Steps to prepare
- Business resources

Everyone will receive a kit (slides, materials, minutes, unanswered questions).



# Introduction



The National Retail Association (NRA) is a not-for-profit organisation which has represented the interests of retail and related businesses for almost 100 years.

## Our role

We contribute industry insights and feedback on policies and laws through consultation with government. We work with local, state and federal governments to interpret legislation and assist businesses to understand, prepare and comply.

## Recent plastic ban programs

- 2022 WA SUP ban
- 2022 NSW SUP ban
- 2021 QLD SUP ban
- 2021 ACT SUP ban
- 2021 SA SUP ban
- 2019 NZ bag ban compliance
- 2018-2019 VIC bag ban
- 2018-2021 WA bag ban
- 2017-2019 QLD bag ban





The NRA's goal is to make sure businesses have what they need to prepare, transition and comply.  
We also believe it is important to share business feedback, successes and challenges.



**The regulations are being implemented by the WA Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER).**

DWER are:

- developing and enforcing the regulations
- delivering public awareness campaigns and media to educate the general public, consumers, community groups, councils, etc
- preparing consultation on further bans

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## **NRA's role**

**NRA has been engaged to educate and assist businesses to understand, prepare for and comply with the ban.**

- Tollfree hotline: 1800 817 723
- Website for business: [www.plasticsbanwa.com.au](http://www.plasticsbanwa.com.au)
- Resources for business – factsheets, posters, point-of-sale
- Face-to-face visits in stores - 200 retail centres and precincts (approx. 3300 retailers)
- Online sessions & briefings
- Promote positive business case studies
- Continual feedback to government

# Ban Overview



Plastics have become a part of everyday life.  
They are inexpensive, convenient and used in many applications.  
However, many single-use plastics either end up as litter or landfill.

- In 2019, the WA Government received over 9,400 submissions which indicated strong support for reducing the impacts of single-use plastics.
- In June 2021, the Government announced it was fast-tracking Western Australia's Plan for Plastics to commence in 2022.
- On 17 December 2021, amendments to the Environmental Protection Regulations Amendment (Prohibited Plastics and Balloons) Regulations 2021 were passed by the WA Executive Council. This came into effect 1 January 2022.



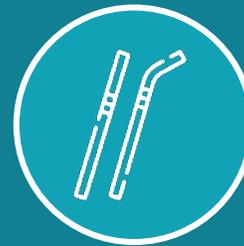
From **1 July 2022**, it is illegal to supply:



Any Plastic Shopping  
Bag with Handles



Paper Shopping Bags  
with Plastic Laminate



Disposable Plastic  
Straws & Stirrers



Disposable  
Plastic Cutlery



Disposable  
Plastic Plates



Disposable Plastic  
Bowls (without lids)



Disposable Plastic  
Food Containers  
(without lids)



Expanded  
Polystyrene Food  
Containers & Trays



Disposable Plastic Cups  
for Cold Drinks\*

\*banned from **1 OCT 2022**

Releases of balloons will also be banned in WA from 1 July 2022.

The ban commenced 1 January 2022, but will be enforceable at staggered dates through 2022.

### FROM 1 JAN 2022

It is illegal to provide false or misleading information regarding a banned item.

### FROM 1 JULY 2022

It is illegal to supply:

-  All plastic shopping bags with handles
-  Disposable plastic utensils - straws, stirrers, cutlery
-  Disposable plastic foodware without lids - plates, bowls, food containers
-  Expanded polystyrene food containers & trays

Balloon releases are also banned.

### FROM 1 OCTOBER 2022

It is illegal to supply:

-  Disposable plastic cups for cold drinks

Further bans are planned to commence 1 January 2023, with enforcement likely from 1 July 2023. Opportunities to provide input and feedback on these regulations will be provided in 2022. [Register for updates >](#)

The ban applies to anyone who supplies these items in Western Australia.

The ban applies whether you supply them free or charged.  
The ban applies whether you supply them individually or in packets.

#### Retail or hospitality businesses

e.g. restaurants, cafes, bars, hotels, takeaway food outlets, petrol stations, party supply stores, discount stores, supermarkets, market stalls, online stores, delivery services, etc

#### Suppliers

e.g. manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, wholesalers, importers.

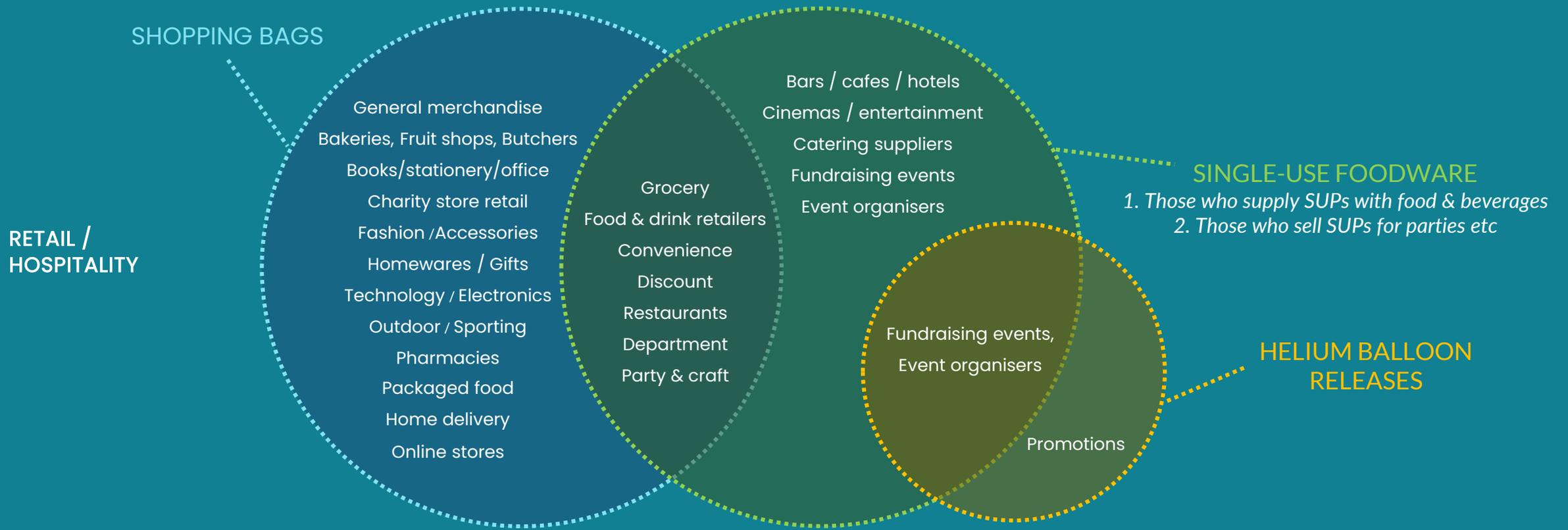
#### Community groups and not-for-profits

e.g. those that use items as part of a service, for daily activities, or during events or fundraising activities. (e.g. soup kitchens, church fetes, charity events, meetings, etc)

#### SUPPLYING OUTSIDE WA:

Businesses (such as distribution centres and online stores) can supply a banned item to a person outside WA, but we recommend checking for similar bans in other jurisdictions.

Exemptions apply in certain settings to allow the supply of single-use plastic straws to people with a disability or healthcare need.



**SUPPLIERS**

Manufacturers, importers, distributors to the above business sectors – national & local.

- Some only supply packaging, others supply a wide range of products and foodstuffs.
- They also supply to non-commercial organisations eg. festivals, charity events, disability services, religious orgs.

**SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDERS**

Representative bodies, communication networks, other impacted stakeholders (eg. shopping centres)

The WA Plan for Plastics is being implemented by the WA Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER).

The WA Government will firstly work with businesses and organisations to ensure they understand their obligations. DWER have also launched a state-wide consumer awareness campaign in early 2022.

From the enforcement dates, it will be an offence to do any of the following:

- supply a banned plastic item
- provide false or misleading information about a banned plastic item
- release, or cause/permit the release, of a balloon

**Fines of \$5000 per offence apply.**

# Banned Items



# Plastic Shopping Bags

## Banned from 1 July 2022

The ban now applies to all plastic shopping bags with handles used to convey goods from a business including:

- shopping bags made from plastic film, of any thickness
- paper shopping bags that are plastic laminated
- the above bags used for home delivery or online sales

The ban does not apply to:

- plastic bags without handles
- produce bags
- sealed packaging (e.g. bread bags)
- other bags not intended for conveying goods from a retailer (e.g. bags for waste, nappies or dog waste)



## ALTERNATIVES

First, consider if you need to supply a bag. You could encourage customers to bring their own, reuse stock boxes or provide trolleys.

Then, consider using reusable bags made from fabrics such as cotton, jute, hessian, bamboo or hemp.

You can also use synthetic fabrics such as nylon, recycled PET, or polypropylene\*.

\*Non-woven polypropylene bags (like the green bag pictured below) must have stitched seams and a minimum weight of 90 gsm.

Any shopping bag with handles made from plastic or compostable plastic film is banned, regardless of reusability.

Finally, if you need a disposable option, you can use paper bags, but these must not have a plastic or cello laminate.



# Straws, Stirrers & Cutlery

## Banned from 1 July 2022

The ban applies to:

- disposable plastic straws
- disposable plastic stirrers and swizzle sticks
- disposable plastic forks, spoons, knives, sporks, splayds, chopsticks and food picks.

The ban does not apply to:

- utensils used for food preparation or servingware (eg. tongs, cake servers)
- items which arrive to store in pre-packaged food and beverage products (eg. straw attached to juice box).



## ALTERNATIVES

First, consider whether you need to provide straws, stirrers or cutlery, especially if many of your customers consume your products at home or the office.

Then, consider reusable utensils such as metal, bamboo, silicone or glass. You could also encourage customers to bring their own reusable utensils which are available in handy kits.

Finally, if you do need disposable alternatives, consider uncoated paper, wood, wheat or bamboo.

Important: Utensils which contain any form of 'plant-based' or compostable plastic are not allowed. In particular, most straws and cutlery made from sugarcane or cornstarch contain bioplastics and are therefore banned.

**\*Limited exemptions apply for straws**



## Banned from 1 July 2022

The ban applies to disposable plastic plates, bowls and containers which:

- are used for food, and
- do not have a lid.
- This includes unlidded plates, bowls and containers made from paper which have a plastic coating or lining

The ban does not apply to:

- bowls or containers which have a lid when served (e.g. lidded soup bowls, deli tubs, sauce containers)
- items which arrive to store as part of pre-packaged food and beverage products (eg. plate in frozen meal)
- servingware (e.g. large platters) box).



## ALTERNATIVES

First, consider if customers could bring their own foodware.

Then, consider reusable options such as ceramic, metal, bamboo, glass or thick reusable plastic. If most of your customers dine in-store you could save money and waste by using washable items.

Finally, if you do need disposable alternatives, consider uncoated paper, bamboo, wood or sugarcane pulp.

Important: Unlidded bowls and containers made from paper must be uncoated, or have achieved Australian composting certification if they have a plastic lining or coating.

Items made purely from bioplastic are not allowed (even if they are certified).



# Expanded Polystyrene

## Banned from 1 July 2022

### The ban applies to:

- disposable takeaway food containers made from expanded polystyrene (EPS) such as clamshells, plates and bowls.
- disposable trays made from EPS (such as fruit/vege trays)

### The ban does not apply to:

- EPS trays which are solely used for raw meat or seafood
- EPS containers used for business-to-business transport
- EPS items which arrive to store in pre-packaged products (eg. EPS noodle cup, EPS trays packed by farmers)
- EPS cups are not banned at this stage



## ALTERNATIVES

For EPS takeaway containers, consider if customers could bring their own takeaway food containers, or if you can introduce reusable options such as ceramic, metal, bamboo or glass containers.

If you do need disposable containers, consider uncoated paper, bamboo, aluminium or sugarcane pulp.

Also be aware of the rules for plates, bowls and containers (previous page).

For EPS trays, such as those used in fruit, vegetable or bakery packaging, consider displaying products without trays or packaging.

You could offer reusable produce bags, or trays made from paper or sugarcane pulp if needed.

You can use EPS trays for raw meat or seafood, however many retailers are switching to more recyclable plastics, such as PET



# Cups (for cold drinks)

## Banned from 1 October 2022

The ban applies to:

- disposable plastic cups or plastic glasses of any shape which are used for drinks
- disposable paper cups which have a plastic lining
- disposable cups made purely from compostable plastic.

If the cup has a lid you must change the cup, but are not required to change the lid at this stage.

The ban does not apply to:

- disposable plastic cups used for drinks higher than room temperature (e.g. coffee cups)
- containers which are used for food (for example, a container for icecream or soup may be called a 'cup' but is defined as a bowl under this ban - see rules for bowls)
- plastic beverage containers such as soft drink bottles



## ALTERNATIVES

First, consider if customers could be encouraged to bring their own cups.

Then, consider reusable options such as ceramic, metal, glass or thick reusable plastic. If most customers drink onsite you could save money and waste by using washable items.

You may also like to swap to bottles or cans made from highly recyclable plastic (PET) or metal. Many of these now offer a 10c refund for recycling at collection points in WA.

Finally, if you do need disposable alternatives, consider uncoated paper, bamboo, wood or sugarcane pulp.

Important: Cups made from paper must be uncoated, or have achieved Australian composting certification if they have a plastic lining or coating.

Items made purely from bioplastic are not allowed (even if they are certified).



# Steps to Prepare



## 1. PLAN AHEAD



### Plan ahead and transition early.

- Assess which items in your range need to change.
- Stop ordering banned items now and use up existing stock.
- Order alternatives and change stock well ahead of the ban deadlines to avoid supply issues.
- Excess stock:
  - If you have large amounts of stock, speak to your supplier as they may accept returns or exchanges.
  - You may also be able to transfer excess stock to another state (however be aware of similar bans in other states),
  - If you cannot exhaust, return, exchange or transfer your stock in time, contact a local recycler to see if they can take some items.
  - You can use banned items at your own home.

**IMPORTANT:** You cannot continue to supply banned stock after the ban deadlines, even if you purchased it before those dates.

## 2. CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS



### Weigh up your best long-term options.

Consumers are increasingly seeking to support sustainable businesses and products.

- First, consider whether you need to keep supplying items like straws and cutlery if your customers do not really need them.
- Next, think about whether you can use reusable, washable alternatives and reduce the amount of items give away. Encourage customers to bring their own.
- Then, if you still need disposable items, ensure they are compliant and food safe. Check the specific rules for each item as well as banned bioplastics.

If you are unsure about options, check the website or speak to specialists at the National Retail Association. The NRA team can also advise on bans in other states.

## 3. SPEAK TO YOUR SUPPLIER



Ask your supplier to answer these questions in writing before you order alternatives:

1. Do these items comply with the WA plastics legislation that comes into effect in 2022?
2. Do these items contain any form of plastic or compostable plastic?
  - Compostable plastic alternatives are banned for most items.
  - The only exemptions are bowls, containers or cups which are primarily made from paperboard and have achieved Australian composting certification (either AS 5810-2010 or AS 4736-2006).

It is an offence to supply banned items, or to provide false or misleading information about a banned item.

## 4. INFORM TEAM & CUSTOMERS



Help your staff prepare for changes.

Prepare your staff for customer questions about the ban and inform them of changes you have decided to make. Make sure food and beverage staff know that they are allowed to provide a single plastic straw on request (and do not have to ask for a reason), but must not have these on display.

Inform your customers ahead of time.

Inform your customers of the ban and prepare them for changes you will be implementing. We recommend that suppliers contact their clients and all retailers display signage well ahead of the ban dates so customers have time to adjust.

Signage (including translated signage) is available at:  
[www.plasticsbanwa.com.au](http://www.plasticsbanwa.com.au)

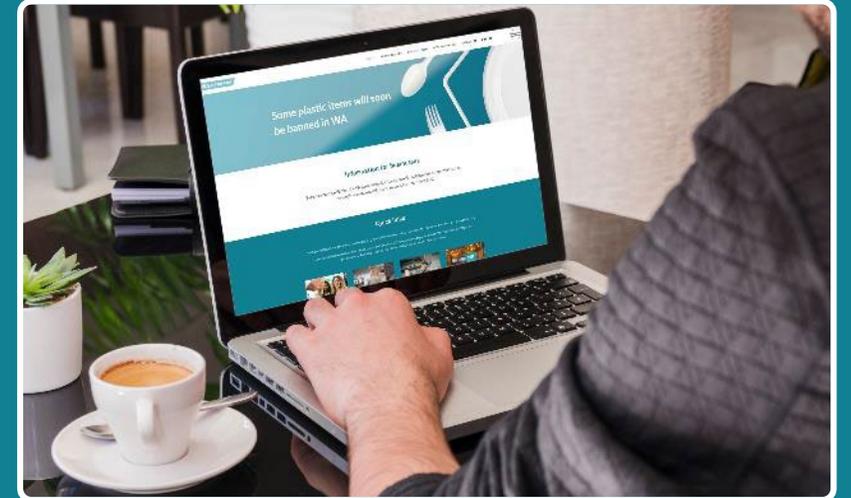
# Business Support



## Website for Businesses

The WA Government has provided information and factsheets on the regulations on their website. However we realise businesses need information and resources tailored to commercial questions and settings.

Most FAQs for businesses are answered here: [plasticsbanwa.com.au](https://plasticsbanwa.com.au)



## Business Hotline

If you can't find an answer to your question on the website or within the factsheets, our specialist team are available to provide advice. Our team can also answer questions about bans in other states.

Tollfree hotline for business: **1800 817 723**

## Business Resources

Businesses need straightforward, commercially-relevant information to understand the ban, as well as display materials to help inform customers of the new laws. It is important customers know the ban is not optional for business, and they need to prepare for changes.

Print your own factsheets, posters and point-of-sale materials: <https://plasticsbanwa.com.au/resources/>



 GUIDE FOR BUSINESS



 A4 POSTER



 A4 POSTER (MONO)



 COUNTER CARDS



 RETAILER VISIT SCHEDULE

## In Person Engagement

We understand many business owners can't get to workshops, some don't have internet access and many are just busy running their business.

The NRA team are visiting 200 shopping centres, retail precincts and strip malls. We are going door-to-door visiting over 3000 retailers in their stores to deliver materials and answer questions.

We can't get to everyone but please see our schedule here:

[plasticsbanwa.com.au/resources/](https://plasticsbanwa.com.au/resources/)



## Online Sessions

The NRA are holding **MONTHLY** sessions for businesses to ask questions between February and July 2022. Bring your team along or promote the sessions to clients so they also understand the ban. Large representative bodies or associations can contact the NRA for a dedicated session.



## Business case studies

It is important to celebrate and promote businesses preparing for and going beyond the ban.

Our team take hundreds of photos in stores (with staff permission of course) and share them on Instagram.

Instagram: [@realretail\\_au](https://www.instagram.com/realretail_au)



## Feedback

The NRA will continue to relay feedback to government regarding business insights, successes and challenges. If you have a great story to tell, or need to relay concerns about your ability to comply, contact the NRA team at [sustainability@nra.net.au](mailto:sustainability@nra.net.au)



**VISIT**

[www.plasticsbanwa.com.au](http://www.plasticsbanwa.com.au)



**CALL**

1800 817 723



**EMAIL**

[sustainability@nra.net.au](mailto:sustainability@nra.net.au)

[www.instagram.com/realretail\\_au/](https://www.instagram.com/realretail_au/)

## Register for Updates

Want to receive updates on exemptions, new business resources and details of information sessions?  
Can you help with spreading the word to more businesses? Keen to have your say on the Stage 2 ban?

Register: [eepurl.com/hPQ-bn](http://eepurl.com/hPQ-bn)

# Q & A Session

Raise your hand (virtually)  
or type in the chat.



## 1. Compostable plastics

- Bioplastics are a form of plastic that has been made from plant-based material, rather than conventional petroleum-based plastics.
- They are often described as 'plant-based plastic', 'compostable plastic', 'biodegradable plastic' or 'bioplastic'.
- There are many variations, such as polylactic acid (PLA), aqueous coating, water dispersion.
- They are usually chemically modified from corn starch, sugarcane or other plants.
- Most bioplastics do not biodegrade as litter or landfill, and must be treated in an industrial composting facility.

### **IMPORTANT: Alternatives made from compostable plastics are not allowed\***

#### Limited exemption:

- bowls, containers and cups which are primarily made from paperboard are allowed to have a bioplastic lining, only if the item has achieved Australian composting certification (either AS 5810-2010 or AS 4736-2006).

#### UPDATE:

Transitional, time-limited exemption for paperboard lined products which have proof that they:

- have achieved EU certification (EN 13432)
- AND have commenced AU certification.

Remember items cannot be made purely from bioplastics.

NOTE: this rule is different in QLD.



## 2. Is my item a bowl, container or cup under this ban?

- **Bowl**

If it contains food and is round = it's a bowl and banned 1 July 2022.  
BUT if it has a lid, then the whole item (base and lid) is not banned.

- **Food container**

If it contains food and is NOT round = it's a food container and banned 1 July 2022.  
BUT if it has a lid, then the whole item (base and lid) is not banned.

- **Cup**

If it contains a beverage = it's a cup and banned 1 October 2022.  
If it has a lid, the cup base is still banned 1 October, but you are not required to change the lid at this stage.

Beverages: Any room temperature, cold or frozen drink.

Food: eg. icecream, chicken, mousse, chips, soup.

A lid is any enclosure which covers, protects or seals the items.



**Food = bowl or container**

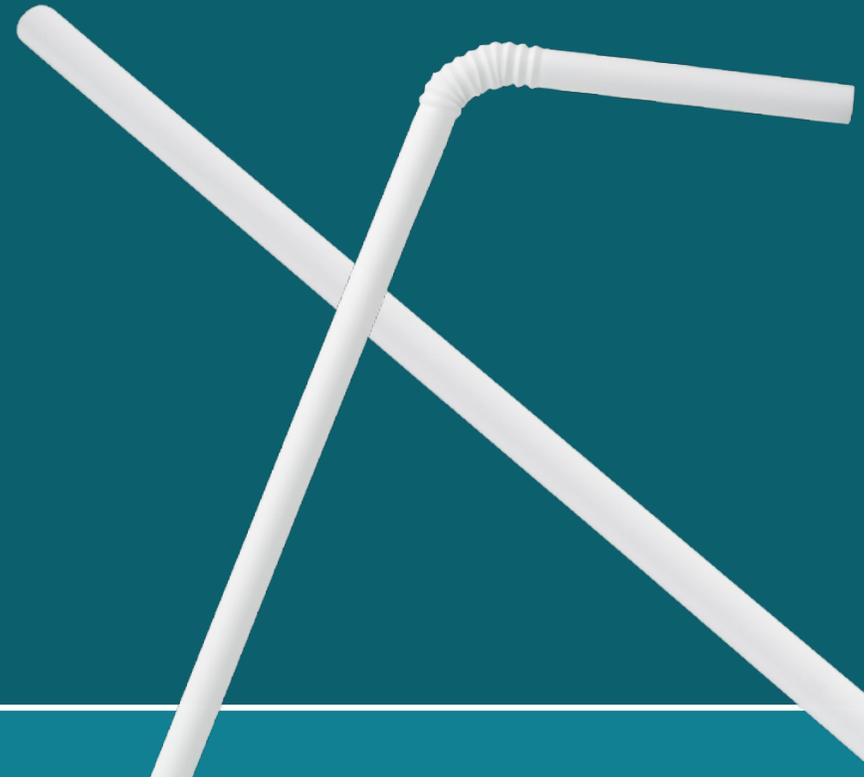
**Drink = cup**

### 3. Exemption for plastic straws

Businesses can supply disposable plastic straws in certain situations to ensure access for people with a disability or medical need.

- Businesses, such as cafes or restaurants, can keep plastic straws out of view and supply a single plastic straw only if a customer requests one as part of food or drink supply.
  - You do not need to ask for a reason
  - You are not obliged to provide a plastic straw.
- Packs of plastic straws can be supplied by authorised organisations and care facilities (see list on website).
- Manufacturers can supply plastic straws to clients if they have reasonable grounds to believe they are for the above purposes only.

NOTE: this rule is different in QLD.



## 4. Supplying outside WA

### Distribution centres

Distribution centres supplying to customers outside WA are not included in the ban, though businesses should check for similar bans in other jurisdictions. National suppliers can supply to clients outside of WA, but again please check local rules.

### Single-use plastic bans around Australia

Most states and territories in Australia are implementing bans on single-use plastic items, though the rules of each ban vary per jurisdiction. Check the links below or call the NRA:

- [New South Wales](#)
- [Queensland](#)
- [Victoria](#)
- [South Australia](#)
- [Australian Capital Territory](#)
- [Hobart](#)

[See NRA's detailed table on all bans.](#)



## 5. How do I know my items are compliant?

Every business should get answers to these questions in writing, before ordering alternatives.

1. **Do these items comply with the WA plastics legislation that comes into effect in 2022?**
2. **Do these items contain any form of plastic or compostable plastic?**

- Remember compostable plastic alternatives are banned for most items.
- The only exemptions are bowls, containers or cups which are primarily made from paperboard and have achieved Australian composting certification, or are in the process of this and have EU certification.

*Copy & paste  
into email*

Keep a written record in case you are requested to provide evidence later.

It is an offence to supply banned items, or to provide false or misleading information about a banned item.

## 6. What should I do with leftover stock?

You can continue to use banned items until 1 July 2022, except cups which you can use until 1 October 2022.

However it is important to ACT NOW to avoid issues such as lack of supply or shipping delays.

- Assess your range NOW and stop ordering banned stock.
- Speak to your supplier as they may accept returns or exchanges.
- You may be able to transfer excess stock to another state (but beware of similar bans).
- See if a local recycler can take some items.
- You can still use banned items at home.

### **IMPORTANT:**

You cannot continue to supply banned stock in WA after the ban deadlines, even if you purchased it before those dates.

If you are struggling with excess stock or experiencing significant supply issues, contact the NRA so we can relay this to government.



## 7. My item is plastic-free, isn't it?

Be very careful about claims of “plastic-free”.

Some RISKS from our experience:

- It's described as “plant-based plastic”, “compostable plastic”, “oxo-bio”, “PLA”, “degradable”, etc
  - RISK as it's probably a bioplastic
- Looks or feels a bit like plastic (e.g. sugarcane straw)
  - RISK as it's probably a bioplastic
- It has water-resistant properties (eg. paper cup, cardboard bowl)
  - RISK as most paper items that hold liquid have a plastic or bioplastic lining / coating
- It's paper but it's printed (eg. paper party plates)
  - RISK as most printed paper plates and bowls have a plastic laminate to protect food against inks.

Your manufacturer should be able to provide a written response confirming if it is compliant.

You should also ask about food safety and chemical testing.

