

Western Australia Plastics Ban, Stage 2 | Industry Q&A Session



**WA PLASTICS
BAN**

Business Engagement Program

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.



Business engagement program



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

DWER are:

- implementing and enforcing the regulations
- delivering public awareness campaigns and media to educate the general public, consumers, community groups, councils, etc.

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
- Email service: sustainability@nationalretail.org.au
- Website for business: www.plasticsbanwa.com.au
- Continual feedback to government

Ban Overview



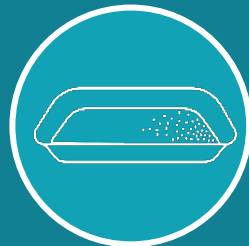
From 1 Sep 2023, it is illegal to supply:



Expanded Plastic
Loose Fill



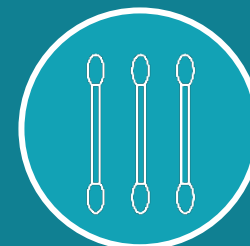
Expanded Polystyrene
Cups



Expanded Polystyrene
Trays



Degradable Plastics



Disposable Cotton
Buds with Plastic
Stems



Microbeads

From 1 March 2024,
it is illegal to supply:



Disposable
Coffee Cups and all
Plastic Cup Lids



Disposable Plastic
Trays

From 1 Sep 2024,
it is illegal to supply:

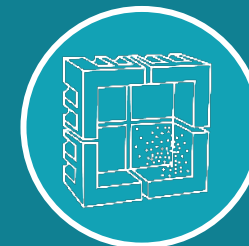


Disposable Plastic
Produce Bags



Disposable Plastic Lids
for Bowls, Trays and
Containers

From 1 July 2025,
it is illegal to supply:



Expanded Plastic
Packaging (Moulded)

The ban commenced 1 March 2023, but will be enforceable at staggered dates between 2023 and 2025.

FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2023

It is illegal to supply:

- ✘ Expanded plastic loose-fill packaging
- ✘ EPS cups and EPS trays for meat and seafood
- ✘ Degradable plastics
- ✘ Disposable cotton buds with plastic stems
- ✘ Microbeads in rinse off personal care, cosmetic and cleaning products

FROM 1 MARCH 2024

It is illegal to supply:

- ✘ Disposable plastic coffee cups and all plastic cup lids
- ✘ Disposable plastic unlined trays for takeaway or eat in food

FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2024

It is illegal to supply:

- ✘ Disposable plastic produce bags used for fresh unpackaged fruit and vegetables
- ✘ Disposable plastic lids for bowls, trays and containers used for takeaway or eat in food

FROM 1 JULY 2025

It is illegal to supply:

- ✘ Expanded plastic packaging (moulded or cut)

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 may be granted to a person or class of persons for a banned item.

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

The WA Government will pursue an education-first approach and firstly work with businesses and organisations to ensure they understand their obligations. DWER have also launched a state-wide consumer awareness campaign.

From 1 March 2023, it is an offence to provide **false or misleading information** about a banned plastic item.

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

- **supply** a banned plastic item
- **release**, or cause/permit the release, of a balloon.

Banned Items



1 September 2023

Banned Items

Expanded Plastic Packaging (Loose Fill)



Banned from 1 September 2023

The ban applies to loose-fill EPS or other foamed plastic packaging material including:

- packing peanuts
- packing beads
- S shaped beads.

The ban does not apply to:

- EPS that is used as part of a product (e.g. bean bag fill, craft items)
- flexible EPS and other foamed plastic wraps and sleeves
- packaging retained by a business after that installation of consumer goods by a licensed installer
- specialist packaging for medical applications



ALTERNATIVES

Consider if your goods require protective packaging at all or if expanded plastic can be replaced with reusable protective packaging and wraps.

Paper or pulp based protective packaging, such as moulded pulp or cardboard, honeycombed paper, wool or straw.

Soft plastic air pillows and bubble wrap are allowed but we recommend considering plastic-free options first.



Expanded Plastic Cups and Trays

Banned from 1 September 2023

The ban applies to:

- expanded polystyrene cups
- expanded plastic trays used for raw meat and seafood, including those that are pre-packaged

The ban does not apply to:

- expanded plastic pre-packaging for non-perishable food products (e.g., expanded plastic noodle cups)
- non-expanded plastic trays can continue to be used for food that is not takeaway or eat-in food (such as raw meat, seafood)



ALTERNATIVES

Encourage customers to bring their own takeaway food containers or introduce reusable options such as ceramic, metal, bamboo, or glass containers.

Consider uncoated paper, bamboo, aluminium, or sugarcane pulp.

For raw meat and seafood consider butcher's paper or plastic trays.

Lined paperboard or pulp products with Australian Standard composting certification.



Banned from 1 September 2023

The ban applies to all degradable plastics including:

- oxo-degradable
- photo-degradable
- landfill degradable
- any other plastic material designed to fragment more quickly

IMPORTANT: This is a ban on a type of material and is not specific to any particular plastic item. It applies to all products, packaging, and other uses.

Most commonly found in soft plastics like doggy waste bags, drycleaning sleeves and other soft plastic packaging.

Please consider bans on specific items separately.



ALTERNATIVES

Consider whether the plastic can be avoided.

Australian Standard certified compostable plastics.

Soft plastics without additives designed to accelerate fragmentation.



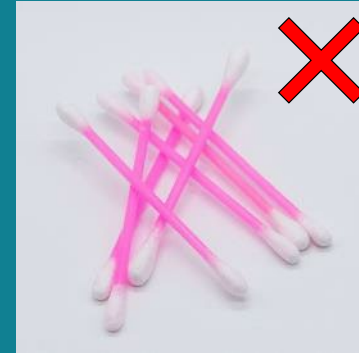
Disposable Cotton Buds with Plastic Stems

Banned from 1 September 2023

The ban applies to cotton buds with plastic stems, including stems made with degradable plastic and bioplastic materials.

The ban does not apply to cotton buds:

- for professional medical, veterinary, scientific, forensic and law-enforcement purposes
- that make up part of a testing kit, for example rapid antigen tests
- applicators that are pre-packaged as part of a set, for example cosmetic kit
- reusable plastic cotton buds



ALTERNATIVES

Single-use cotton buds made without plastic stems (e.g. bamboo, cardboard or sugarcane).

Reusable plastic cotton buds are a permitted alternative.



Banned from 1 September 2023

The ban applies to rinse-off personal care cosmetics and cleaning products that contain microbeads, including:

- 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

The ban does not apply to:

- 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)



ALTERNATIVES

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.



Disposable plastic coffee cups

Banned from 1 March 2024

The ban applies to:

- disposable plastic cups for hot drinks such as tea, coffee and hot chocolate
- disposable plastic-lined paper/fibre cups which are not AU certified compostable

The bans on plastic cups do NOT apply to:

- disposable paper or fibre cups which are lined or coated with plastic or bioplastic where the whole cup has achieved Australian Standards for industrial composting (AS 4736:2006) or home composting (AS 5810:2010)
- plastic beverage containers such as soft drink/juice bottles
- reusable plastic cups that are designed for reuse (strong and sturdy)



ALTERNATIVES

Encourage customers to bring their own cups or initiate a cup return scheme

Consider reusable options such as ceramic or metal for all dine in customers

Disposable lined/coated paper or fibre cups (e.g. sugarcane) that have achieved Australian Standards for industrial (AS 4736:2006) or home (AS 5810:2010) composting.



Banned from 1 March 2024

The ban applies to:

- disposable plastic cup lids for all hot and cold cups
- paperboard/fibre cup lids which have a plastic or bioplastic lining
- bioplastic lids made purely from bioplastic
- certified compostable plastic lids
- heat-sealed films made of plastic or bioplastic

The ban does NOT apply to:

- paperboard/fibre lids without a lining
- reusable plastic cup lids that are designed for washing and reuse, for example, as part of a 'keep' cup



ALTERNATIVES

Encourage customers to bring their own lidded-cups or go without a disposable lid.

Contact Plastic Free Places for further information on joining a cup exchange scheme or initiate a cup return scheme for your customers.

Disposable lids made entirely of paperboard or fibre (without a plastic or bioplastic lining or coating) e.g., uncoated paperboard or sugarcane pulp (also known as bagasse).

IMPORTANT: Cup lids must be uncoated and completely plastic-free



Disposable plastic trays

Banned from 1 March 2024

The ban applies to:

- disposable plastic unlined food trays, such as sushi trays and bento boxes

The ban does not apply to:

- compostable lined paperboard trays certified to Australian Standards for industrial (AS 4736:2006) or home (AS 5810:2010) composting
- trays which have a lid when served until 1 September 2024, when lidded foodware is banned
- plastic trays designed for reuse
- food or drink items which have been pre-packaged offsite



ALTERNATIVES

Encourage customers to bring their own foodware.

Consider reusable options such as ceramic, metal, bamboo, glass or thick reusable plastic for all dine-ins.

Disposable uncoated paper, bamboo, wood or sugarcane pulp which is plastic-free, or if it has a plastic/bioplastic lining then it must have an Australian Standard composting certification.

IMPORTANT

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



1 September 2024

Banned Items

Disposable plastic produce bags

UPDATED ADVICE



Banned from 1 September 2024

The ban applies to the sale and supply of plastic produce bags for **loose fresh fruit and vegetables**.

The ban does not apply to:

- produce bags which have achieved an Australian composting standard.
- produce bags used for anything other than loose fresh fruit and vegetables (e.g. those supplied for meat, deli, nuts)
- pre-packaged fruit and vegetables
- bulk bags sold on-shelf
- reusable produce bags made from plastic fabric such as polyester or nylon



ALTERNATIVES

First, encourage customers to place loose produce directly into their baskets and trolleys, then straight onto the scales. Customers can also be encouraged to bring their own reusable bags.

Then, consider whether you could offer loose produce or bulk produce in shop-owned caddies for weighing. Loose produce could then be transferred to the customer's own reusable bags at the point of sale.

Finally, if you need disposable alternatives, you can supply paper bags or boxes.

Plastic produce bags which have achieved an Australian composting standard are allowed.



Disposable plastic lids for bowls, trays and containers

Banned from 1 September 2024

The ban applies to:

- plastic lids (including rigid or flexible lids, heat-sealed films or windows) for bowls, trays or containers that are used for takeaway or eat-in food and are not pre-packed
- lidded plastic bowls, trays or containers that are used for takeaway or eat-in food which were previously exempt because they were served with a lid
- packs of lidded disposable plastic foodware

The ban does not apply to:

- lids or lidded foodware primarily made from paper or fibre with a plastic or bioplastic lining where the whole item is certified to Australian composting standards
- plastic containers pre-packaged offsite
- plastic lids and windows for pre-packed takeaway food placed on display
- lidded foodware that contains food that is not eat in or takeaway
- reusable container lids designed for washing and ongoing use



ALTERNATIVES

Encourage customers to bring their own foodware with lids.

Then, consider reusable options such as ceramic, metal, bamboo, glass or thick reusable plastic.

Disposable uncoated paper, bamboo, wood or sugarcane pulp which is Australian Standard compostable



Expanded plastic packaging (moulded and cut)

Banned from 1 July 2025

The ban applies to moulded, cut or shaped packaging made from expanded plastic.



The ban does not apply to:

- flexible plastic wraps and sleeves made from expanded plastic
- packaging for products weighing more than 45 kg
- packaging for fragile or precision products as proven by testing to a manufacturer's standard
- fresh produce boxes and bulk cold home-delivered meal services
- packaging retained by a business after that installation of consumer goods by a licensed installer
- packaging for products where the packaging is a permanent part of the product's carry case or kit
- specialist packaging for medical applications, for example, organ transport or pharmaceuticals
- Packaged products manufactured before 1 July 2024.

ALTERNATIVES

Consider if your goods require protective packaging at all. Reusable protective packaging and wraps.

Consider paper or pulp based protective packaging, such as moulded pulp or cardboard, honeycombed paper, wool or straw. Soft plastic air pillows and bubble wrap are allowed but consider plastic-free options first.

TIPS

Understand how the regulations apply to your products and business, including reviewing goods in your range that may not be your own brand.

Communicate with manufacturers and suppliers to ensure you are ordering products that contain compliant packaging which is free from expanded plastic.



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.
- 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.

IMPORTANT: You cannot continue to supply banned stock after the enforcement dates, even if you purchased it beforehand.

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, lids 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 you give away. Encourage customers to bring their own.

Then, if you still need disposable items, ensure they are compliant and safe for your products. Check the specific rules for each item and allowed alternatives. 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 (both Stage 1 and Stage 2 bans)?
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, trays, containers or cups which have a plastic or bioplastic lining/coating AND are primarily made from paperboard AND have achieved Australian composting certification (either AS 5810- 2010 or AS 4736-2006).
 - Lids for bowls, containers, and trays have the same exemption but remember that cup lids must be completely plastic-free.
 - Produce bags which have achieved an Australian Standard composting certification are also exempt.
3. Do these items contain any degradable plastic or banned types of expanded plastic packaging?

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 an individual plastic straw on request with food or beverages (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 ahead of time and prepare them for changes you will be implementing.
- We recommend that suppliers contact their clients, and that 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

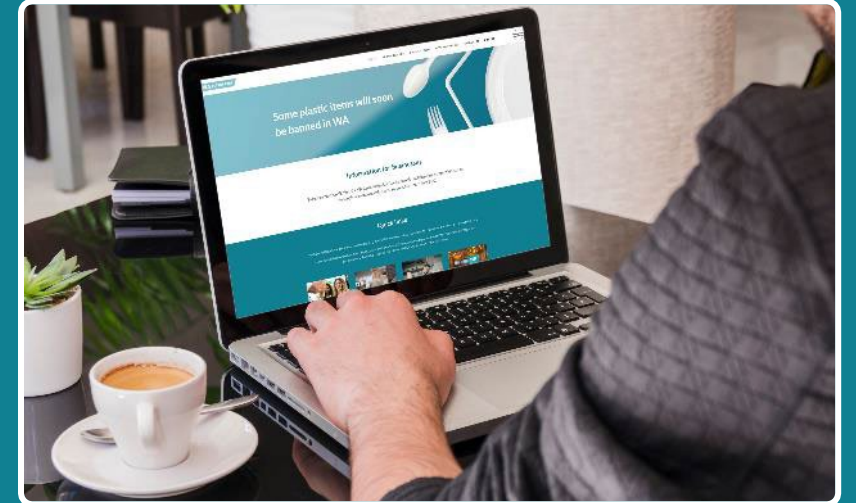
Business Support



Website for Businesses

Visit the business website for detailed information on each banned item, alternatives and exemptions. Also check regularly for any updates on the regulations or important new information. Download factsheets and signage including the **Comprehensive Guide for Business** which has all WA bans from 2022 to 2025 in one document.

Visit: plasticsbanwa.com.au



Business Hotline and Info Sessions

The NRA specialist team are available to provide advice. Tollfree hotline for business: **1800 817 723**

The NRA are holding regular sessions for businesses to ask questions. 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.



VISIT

www.plasticsbanwa.com.au



CALL

1800 817 723



EMAIL

sustainability@nationalretail.org.au

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?

Register: eepurl.com/hPQ-bn

FAQs



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

- **Bowl**

If it contains food and is round - it's a bowl and was banned 1 July 2022. BUT if it has a lid and is supplied with takeaway/dine in food, then the whole item (base and lid) is not banned until 1 September 2024.

- **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 and is supplied with takeaway/dine in food, then the whole item (base and lid) is not banned until 1 September 2024.

- **Cup**

If it contains a cold beverage = cold cup and banned 1 October 2022, lid banned 1 March 2024

- If it contains a hot beverage = hot cup and banned 1 March 2024 (as is lid)

Beverages: Any room temperature, cold or frozen drink.

Food: eg. ice-cream, chicken, mousse, chips, soup.



Food = bowl or container

Drink = cup

2. What rules apply to pre-packaged or pre-packed takeaway food?

Pre-packaged product:

- (a) arrives at the premises from which it is to be supplied to a consumer in a container or packaging in or by which the product is wholly enclosed, whether or not it is also in an outer container or packaging that contains multiple units of the product; and
- (b) is **not designed to be removed** from its container or packaging, other than any outer container or packaging, before it is supplied to the consumer.

Pre-packed takeaway food:

- (a) means takeaway food that is **prepared in advance and placed into foodware before being put on display** for selection by a consumer; but
- (b) does not include takeaway food that is prepared or placed into foodware following an order or request by a consumer.



3. What is takeaway or eat-in food?

Eat-in food means food that is intended to be eaten at the premises at which it is supplied, including restaurants, food courts, markets or anywhere food is typically consumed on the premises.

Takeaway food means food in which the whole item is typically consumed soon after purchase without any further preparation, ingredients, or components.

For example, items that are NOT likely to be considered takeaway food include:

- Foodstuffs which are typically used as an ingredient or component of another e.g. olives
- Food that needs further preparation, cooling or heating before being consumed e.g. cold pie that needs heating
- Food which is not typically consumed whole or in one sitting e.g. large box of cookies



4. Is my product a fragile or precision product?

Expanded plastic packaging may be used to protect items that have been identified by the manufacturer as **being fragile and requiring protective packaging** that complies with a standard specified by the manufacturer, such as:

- Australian Standard transport tests (drop tests, vibration tests or rough handling tests),
- International Safe Transit Association (ISTA) tests for packaged products, or
- International standard packaging performance tests,

If **at least two suitable packaging alternatives** (e.g. moulded cardboard, hybrid card and air pillow wrap) fail to provide the standard of protection, this would be sufficient evidence that expanded plastic packaging is required.

Hybrid packaging with reduced single-use plastic content is the next best approach.



5. 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.](#)



6. 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 2023?

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, trays, containers or cups which have a plastic or bioplastic lining/coating AND are primarily made from paperboard AND have achieved Australian composting certification (either AS 5810-2010 or AS 4736-2006).
- Lids for bowls, containers, and trays have the same exemption.
- Produce bags which have achieved an Australian Standard composting certification are also exempt.
- Remember that cup lids, shopping bags, cotton bud sticks, plates, and utensils must be completely plastic free

3. Do these items contain any degradable plastic or banned types of expanded plastic packaging?

Copy & paste
into email

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

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

Be very careful about claims of “plastic-free”. Any form and any amount of polymer is considered plastic.

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.

