

# SUP?

single  
use  
plastic

there's a better choice



our guidelines to becoming  
**Single-use Plastics Free**



**MORNINGTON  
PENINSULA**  
*Shire*

Mornington Peninsula Shire acknowledges and pays respect to the elders, families and ancestors of the Bunurong/BoonWurrung people, who have been the custodians of this land for many thousands of years. We acknowledge that the land on which we meet is the place of age-old ceremonies, celebrations, initiation and renewal; and that the Bunurong/BoonWurrung peoples' living culture continues to have a unique role in the life of this region.

## What are single-use plastics?

Single-use plastics are used only once, or for a limited time before being discarded.

For example, the average plastic bag is used for just 12 minutes.

### The problem

The average Australian produces **130kg of plastic** each year



Plastic has been found in beer, salt, water, seafood and honey.



Plastic has also been found in the air that we breathe.



One study found that tap water contained **4,000 pieces of plastic**, whereas bottled water contained **an additional 90,000**.



Cigarette butts, beverage containers and takeaway food packaging accounts for **66%** of all the litter counted across Australia (KAB 2017).



## Why do we need a single-use plastics policy?

As a coastal community, the protection of our rivers, bays and oceans is integral to ensuring that our wildlife thrive and that we continue to support the health and wellbeing of our residents and visitors.

Council has committed to sending zero waste to landfill by 2030. Part of this vision is the phasing out of problematic single-use plastics with reusables, and where this is not possible, certified compostable/biodegradable alternatives. By working together, we can have a huge impact on reducing single-use plastics. Every action counts!

## When will this happen?

From 2020, Council will begin to phase out single-use plastics.

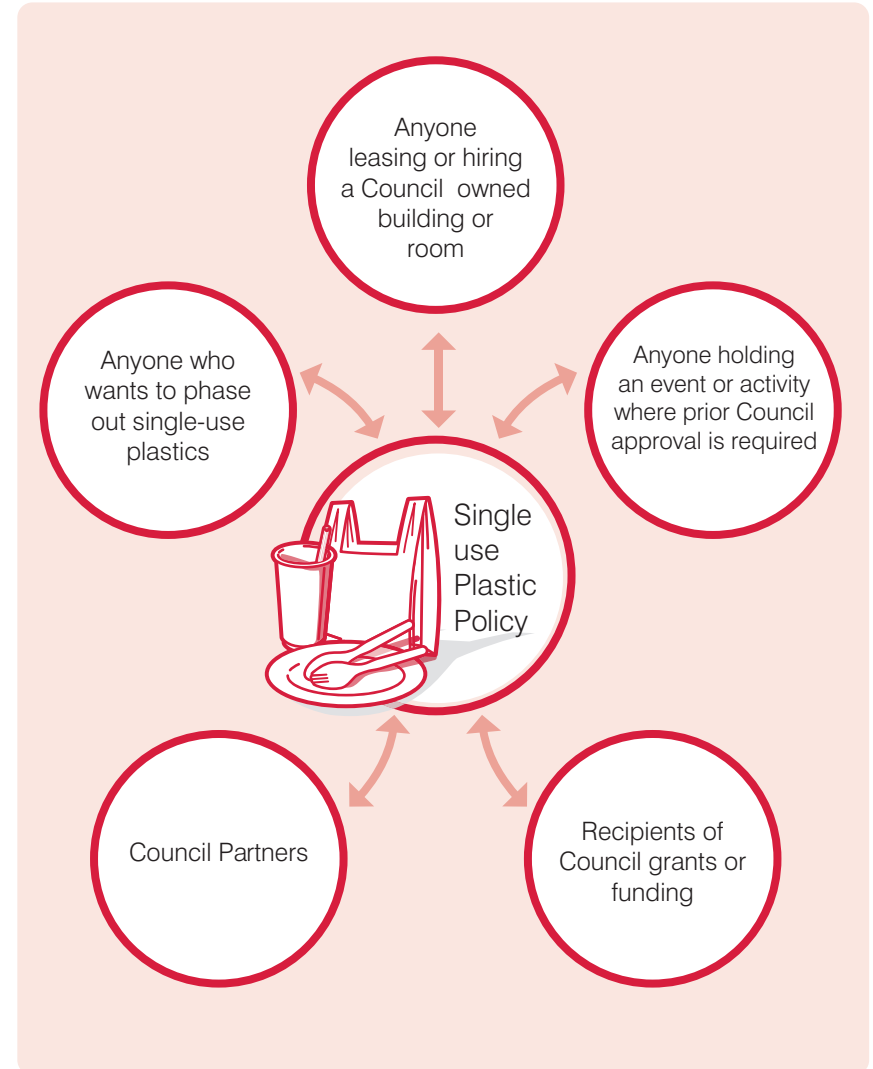
From August 2020, the Single-use plastics policy will apply.

## Who will be impacted?

The Single-use Plastics policy will apply to all Council operations, including contracts, leases on Council owned and managed land and buildings, sponsorships, and activities and events that require Council approval.

“protection of our rivers, bays and oceans”

## Who should use this Resource Kit?



## Plastic Free Places: Supporting businesses to become plastic-free

The Plastic Free Places program provides advice to businesses, to help them transition from single-use plastics to more sustainable alternatives. Plastic Free Places has successfully inducted 17 Mount Martha businesses into their program during their Plastic Free Mount Martha trial.

As of March 31, 2020, the Mount Martha trial has eliminated 28,332 pieces of plastic and counting.

The program targets common single-use items, such as water bottles, straws, cups and lids, take away packaging and plastic bags.

Once businesses have successfully eliminated six key items, they can become certified as 'Plastic Free Champions'.



Photo credit: Waste Wise Mornington Peninsula

## How this will benefit you

### 1. Community & Customer Support

You can build your customer base by providing certified eco-friendly products that align with community values.

### 2. Spend less on packaging



### 3. Promotional opportunities:

- There are many platforms and directories available to promote sustainable businesses, for more information on these, please 'additional resources'.
- Moving to sustainable practices means that you can promote your business as 'green' or 'eco-friendly', which may attract new customers!

### 4. Increase customer loyalty

If customers receive discounts for returning and reusing packaging, they are more likely to come back to your store (Hofman-Kohlmeyer 2016).

You can also advertise discounts on promotional platforms for free (see additional resources).

### 5. You will be recognised as proactive

The demand for plastic-free businesses is growing, be ahead of the crowd and impress your supporters.

Hofman-Kohlmeyer, M., 2016, September. Customer loyalty program as a tool of customer retention: literature review. In *CBU International Conference Proceedings* (Vol. 4, pp. 199-203).

# %

## 92.45%

of the community surveyed supported a Shire wide ban on single-use plastics.

## How to remove a single-use plastics:

### Step 1: Remove

It is best practice to completely remove plastic items where possible.

### Step 2: Reduce

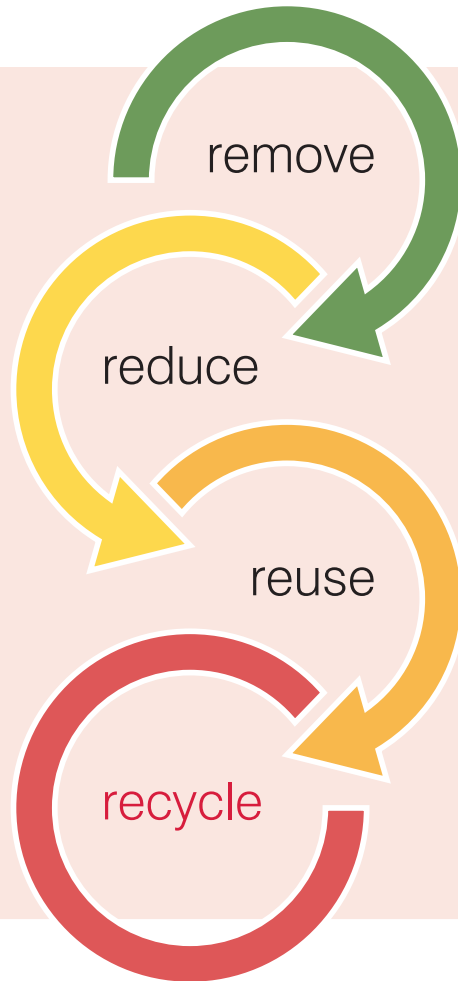
When the item cannot be removed, find ways to use it less.

### Step 3: Reuse

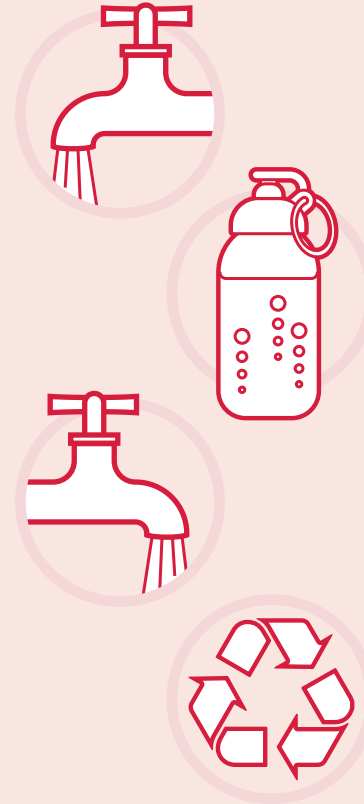
For items that are used, you can find creative ways to reuse them!

### Step 4: Recycle

As a last option, choosing recyclable or compostable items means that less resources need to be taken from the environment.



Take a plastic water bottle for example...



- Refuse to sell bottled water and instead provide access to free water.
- Sell long lasting water bottles for patrons to refill either in store or a nearby tap.
- Remind your customers where they can refill their bottles throughout the day.
- Recycle used water bottles instead of letting them go to waste!

## The Peninsula's Last Straw:

### A cost effective way to remove plastic straws

The Peninsula's Last Straw campaign supports businesses, clubs and organisation to transition from plastic straws to paper. Participating retailers receive a month's supply of paper straws, supplementary marketing material and the remaining plastic straws are recycled.

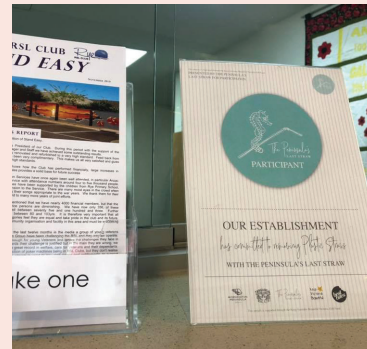
63 vendors have joined the campaign, including The Rye Hotel, the Rye RSL and both Peninsula Cinemas sites.

Participation in the program has been profitable, with vendors who only provide straws upon request and keep them behind the counter, have experienced an 80% reduction in straw usage.

This has offset the slightly higher cost of supplying paper straws. Additionally, these participants are now producing substantially less waste.



Photo credit: Josie Jones



## Other approaches to using less:

- Do not display, supply on request:
- Items such as cutlery, straws, stirrers and napkins are not always needed, not displaying items will ensure that they are only used as needed, and not wasted!
- Offer incentives or disincentives:
- Charge a takeaway fee (e.g. 10c) for packaging to encourage customers to dine in or BYO containers. Stamp loyalty cards twice when customers BYO.
- Offer returnable packaging / a swap scheme:
- Take a deposit or membership for coffee cups or crockery and encourage customers to return to your store!

**Note:** There are many websites or apps that let you advertise your business for free if you offer incentives or reusable packaging. See 'Additional Resources'.

“Stamp loyalty cards twice when customers BYO”

## Guidelines to removing single use plastics:

1. Prioritise the 'reduce' principal by offering reusable items
2. As a last resort, offer recyclable or compostable alternatives
3. Prioritise home compostable over industrial compostable products
4. Choose sustainably sourced alternatives (e.g. FSC certified)
5. Don't offer individually wrapped food unless it is a health requirement

### Exceptions

Single-use plastic items required for health and safety or accessibility requirements will be exempted from the policy.

## Different types of compostable packaging:

Truly compostable packaging has been certified by the Australian Bioplastic Association, with the these two symbols.

Home compostable packaging is the best compostable alternative. It can be broken down at home without harming microbes. If this kind of packaging ends up in the environment, it will cause much less harm than other packaging types.

Industrially compostable packaging does not break down naturally and requires industrial processes to be broken down.

TIP: Products that are '100% compostable' or contain PLA, but do not display the Home Compostable (AS 5810) certification, are generally industrially compostable. Ask your supplier to clarify a products certification if you are unsure.



Home Compostable & non-toxic to worms AS 5810

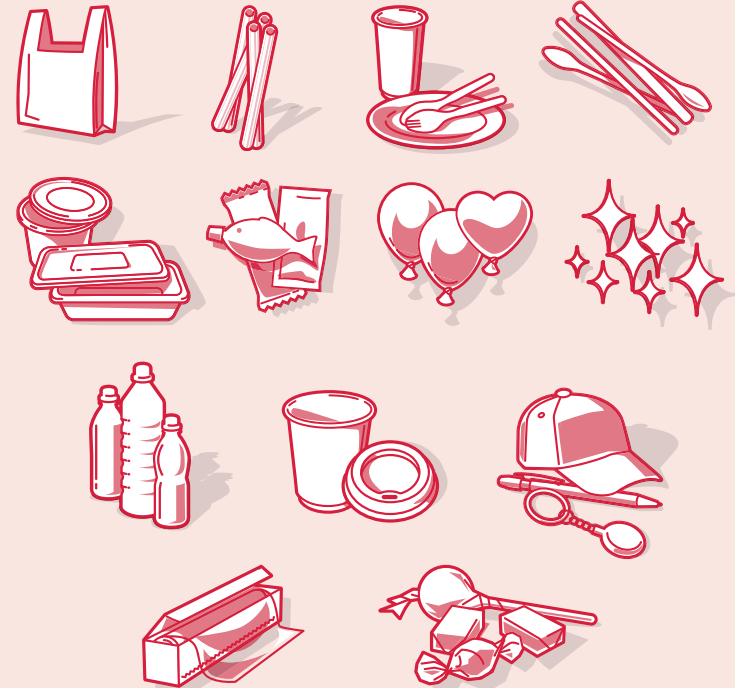


Industrially Compostable AS 4736

## Items we're phasing out

All items must be replaced with home compostable (AS5810) alternatives at a minimum. Industrially compostable (AS4736) alternatives only permitted where specified.

We have listed the best alternatives to these items on the following pages



# Single-use plastics – priority items

## All plastic bags

(Including thickened supermarket style bags)

### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

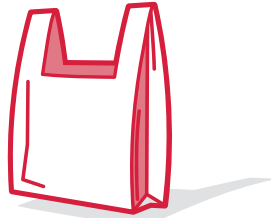
No plastic bags are supplied, and customers are encouraged to BYO reusable bags.

#### ● Other good alternatives:

- Reusable cloth bags
- Cardboard boxes
- Paper bags

#### TIP:

Selling branded reusable bags encourages customers to remember to reuse and bring their own.



## Straws

Note: Please keep some plastic straws in storage for customers with accessibility requirements.

### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

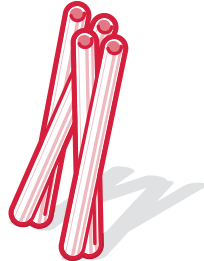
Remove straws from display and provide reusable straws upon request.

#### ● Other good alternatives:

- Reusable straws (bamboo, stainless steel, silicone)
- Paper straws

#### TIP:

Less straws are used when they are provided on request only. You could spend your savings on reusable straws!



# Single-use plastics – priority items

## Cutlery, crockery and drinkware

Exceptions: industrially compostable items where waterproofing is necessary.

### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

Use reusable cutlery, crockery and dinnerware, and encourage dining in.

#### ● Other good alternatives:

- FSC home compostable paper, sugarcane or wood pulp products.
- Bamboo or wooden cutlery

#### TIP:

Only provide take away cutlery upon request, many people will take the food home, or back to an office. Ensure all crockery and drinkware is reusable if not for takeaway.



## Stirrers

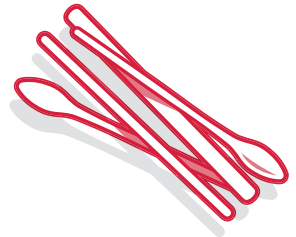
### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

Do not provide drink stirrers. If requested, offer a reusable teaspoon.

#### ● Other good alternatives:

- Wooden or paper stirrer (FSC certified)
- Bamboo stirrers



# Single-use plastics – priority items

## Takeaway containers

### Exceptions:

Industrially compostable items where waterproofing is necessary

### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

Encourage BYO containers

#### ● Other good alternatives:

- Use home compostable (paper, cardboard, wood pulp or sugarcane) products
- Paper or aluminium containers
- Reusable containers that can be returned/refunded
- Glass jars

### TIP:

Encourage BYO containers and charge a packaging fee for takeaway (e.g. 10c).



## Condiments and sachets

### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

Do not provide. Dispense sauces, salt and sugar from refillable containers.

Allow customers to access dispensers for take away.



## Balloons

### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

Use reusable decorations, like paper lanterns.

#### ● Other good alternatives:

Bubbles for entertainment



# Single-use plastics – priority items

## Glitter

### Alternatives

#### ● Other good alternatives:

- Paper confetti

### TIP:

Reconsider the need for glitter and alternatives. Many of these decorations are wasteful and are never used again!



## Bottled water

### Exceptions:

Where access to safe drinking water is not available

### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

Free drinking water must be provided where there is access. Display a water jug and reusable cups, or signs that offer to refill drink bottles for free.

#### ● Other good alternatives:

- Offer reusable cups
- Sell reusable bottle

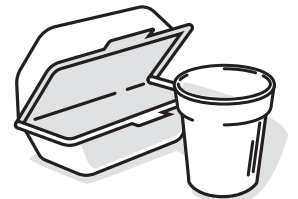
### TIP:

If water is sold, inform customers that you can refill their bottle for free.



## Polystyrene

Polystyrene is banned.  
See alternatives above.



## Single-use plastics – challenging items

### Coffee cups and lids (takeaway)

#### Exceptions

Where disposable cups cannot be eliminated, industrially compostable cups may be used.

#### ● Best:

Dine in or BYO reusable cups only. Do not offer disposable cups.

#### ● Other good alternatives

- Return to store system where customers can subscribe to a 'cup library' membership and returned to store
- Industrially compostable lids and cups

#### NOTE:

All 'compostable' coffee cups are industrially compostable only as they have waterproof linings. Therefore, it is best to eliminate disposable coffee cups, where possible.



### Merchandise

#### Alternatives

#### ● Best

Give experiences

#### ● Other good alternatives:

- Buy local reusable items

## Single-use plastics – challenging items

### Plastic cling wrap

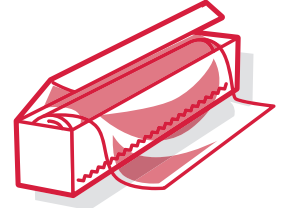
#### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

Display and store food in airtight containers and/or Silicone food covers

#### ● Other good alternatives:

Wrap in compostable or recyclable packaging (paper or foil) when sold.

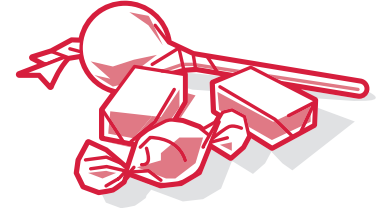


### Individually wrapped items

#### Alternatives

#### ● Best:

Reconsider whether items, such as mints, need to be individually wrapped or used at all.



### Additional Resources

- ✓ [byebyeplastic.org.au](http://byebyeplastic.org.au) – Advice for cafes, suppliers, events and schools
- ✓ [plasticfreejuly.org](http://plasticfreejuly.org) - Advice on how to transition to becoming plastic free
- ✓ [responsiblecafes.org](http://responsiblecafes.org) – Promote your café by offering BYO incentives
- ✓ [thelaststrawonthegeb.org](http://thelaststrawonthegeb.org) – Resources for eliminating plastic straws
- ✓ [marineconservation.org.au](http://marineconservation.org.au)  
– Plastic free resources for businesses and advocates

## FAQ: BYO containers

This advice is current as of April 2020

Many businesses are embracing the use of environmentally friendly reusable packaging, such as cafés using reusable cups. This can reduce packaging waste and if done correctly can be a safe, sustainable option for food businesses and food consumers throughout the Mornington Peninsula.

### Is there a law or regulation that prevents customers from using their own containers?

No. The Victorian Food Act 1984 and the National Food Safety Standards do not restrict customers from providing containers. If a food business has a policy to not accept customer containers for the storage of food purchased, then that is a business decision rather than a restraint due to food safety legislation.

### Can a consumer take home leftovers?

Yes. The Victorian Food Act and the National Food Safety Standards do not restrict customers from taking home leftovers in their own container.

### What are the obligations on food businesses, community groups & consumers?

Whilst there is no requirement for businesses to reject customers containers, the container must not pose a risk to the food, meaning that it must be free from biological, chemical or physical contamination.

It remains the customers responsibility to ensure that their container is clean and does not provide a food safety risk.

## How should food containers be cleaned?

Before using a food container from home, consumers should make sure that it has been properly cleaned and sanitised to remove all food poisoning bacteria. Cleaning can be achieved by washing in warm water and detergent then rinsing. Sanitising can then be achieved using either spray sanitiser or soaking in a sanitising solution for 30 seconds.

### Examples of sanitising solutions:

- 2.5ml of bleach per litre of water
- 10ml of Milton per litre of water

Organic food grade sanitisers are also available. These need to meet the requirements set out in National Food Safety Standards which can be accessed here:

[🔗 foodstandards.gov.au/foodsafetyhub](https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodsafetyhub).

### For more information on food safety/handling:

**Mornington Peninsula Shire  
Environmental Health Team:**

☎ 5950 1050

✉ [food@mornpen.vic.gov.au](mailto:food@mornpen.vic.gov.au)

**Food Standards Australia New Zealand**

✉ [foodstandards.gov.au](https://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

**Victorian Department of Health  
and Human Services**

✉ [dhhs.vic.gov.au](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au)

“...the container  
must not pose a  
risk to the food”





[mornpen.vic.gov.au/sup](https://mornpen.vic.gov.au/sup)