



Holding a waste wise, plastic-free event in Greater Bendigo

A guide for event holders and food vendors
to eliminate single-use plastics at events



Sort it out before
you throw it out



CITY OF GREATER
BENDIGO

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Introduction

The City of Greater Bendigo (the City) has introduced a Waste Wise Events Single-Use Plastics Elimination Policy to reduce the amount of material sent to landfill from events. The policy is also a way to inform and educate stakeholders and the public about single-use plastic, the impact that it has, and the way in which it can be reduced and avoided.

The City is strongly committed to reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill and is working to achieve this through educational campaigns and events, and by introducing policies such as this.

The policy will assist in driving change by encouraging event holders and the community to think about waste generation, where these materials end up and how the transition can be made to avoid, reduce and encourage reusable options.

Remember: waste = wasted resources



What are single-use plastics and why does the City want to eliminate them from local events?

Many major and community events take place throughout Greater Bendigo each year.

Single-use plastics include items such as plates, bowls, cups, straws, cutlery, bags, bottled water, condiment sachets and containers, cling wrap and soft plastic food packaging. It also includes glitter, balloons, and plastic-lined cardboard containers such as disposable coffee cups and noodle boxes.

These items are typically used for very short periods of times before being disposed of and ending up in landfill or as litter. These items last a long time in landfill and in the environment, and pose a risk to people and animals.

By eliminating single-use plastics from events we will:

- reduce waste to landfill
- reduce litter
- reduce the demand for these products
- increase the public's awareness about the impacts that single-use plastics have on our community and the environment



How to make your event waste wise by eliminating single-use plastics

It all starts with planning, and the City's Resource Recovery and Education staff are available to help you so that you can promote your waste wise event free from single-use plastic. To do this, you should:

Inform

Informing stallholders, contractors and sponsors about what products, packaging and giveaways are acceptable, and how their waste must be managed is essential.

Educate

Considering the waste hierarchy, it is important to remember to promote reusable before recyclable and compostable. The less waste that needs to be managed at the end of the event, the better!

Plan

Determine what kind of waste will be generated, and then determine how many disposal stations will be needed, where they will be placed and how and when they will be collected. If you need assistance with this please contact the Resource Recovery and Education unit.

Spread the word

Displaying signs at food stalls to show event attendees which packaging items go in which bins is also an important step to eliminate contamination in bins.

Keep it clean

Making sure the site is left clear of all litter and that waste is managed appropriately is important. Stall holders and event organisers need to remember they are responsible for the waste they generate at the event.



Checklist for event organisers

Please refer to this checklist while organising your plastic-free waste wise event. Please contact the Resource Recovery and Education unit if you require assistance with holding a plastic-free event by emailing resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au

1) Have you reviewed the Waste Wise Events Single-Use Plastics Elimination Policy?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No
- ☐ We have reviewed the policy but we need more information (contact resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au)

2) Have you determined your disposal needs, that is what waste will be generated at the event?

- ☐ Food or garden waste
- ☐ Recyclables (e.g. cardboard, aluminium cans etc.)
- ☐ General waste

3) Have you ordered the appropriate quantity of waste bins through the City based on your disposal needs?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

4) Do you know if the venue you've chosen for your event has existing reusable alternatives available (e.g. ceramic mugs for hot beverages)

- ☐ Yes, the venue has existing reusable alternatives available
- ☐ No, the venue does not have existing reusable alternatives available
- ☐ Due to COVID-19, we will organise certified compostable cutlery options (refer to **page 9** for more information).

5) Have you mapped out the location for your waste disposal stations at the venue? Bins should be placed in a row to ensure attendees have all disposal options available to them.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No
- ☐ We need advice about mapping the waste stations (contact resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au)

6) Have you ensured that sponsors and other support services are aware that disposable plastic promotional items are not permitted at the venue?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

7) Have you organised water supply as an alternative to single-use plastic bottles? e.g. Coliban Water portable water stations or reusable water bottles?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (to organise a portable water station, go to www.coliban.com.au)
- ☐ No, but we will encourage attendees to bring their own water bottles

8) Have you organised signage for waste stations about correct waste sorting?

See **page 12** for sample signage available for printing.

- ☐ Yes, we have printed the signage
- ☐ No (contact resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au to have signage delivered)

9) Have you provided vendors with signage promoting reusable items? See **page 12** for sample signage available for printing.

- ☐ Yes, we have printed the signage
- ☐ No (contact resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au to have signage delivered)
- ☐ Not applicable for this event (no reusable items in use)

10) Do you need assistance with certified compostable cutlery options?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, we have purchased certified compostable cutlery
- ☐ We are not sure if the cutlery is certified under Australian Composting Standards (refer to **page 9** for more information)

Checklist for stallholders

Please refer to this checklist while organising for a plastic-free waste wise event. Please contact the Resource Recovery and Education unit if you require assistance with a plastic-free event by emailing resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au

1) Have you reviewed the Waste Wise Events Single-Use Plastics Elimination Policy?

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ I have reviewed the policy but we need more information (contact resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au)

2) Does your stall have food/beverage products?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3) Have you ordered compostable cutlery options for food and beverage items?

☐ Yes, I have ordered products complying with Australian Composting Standards

☐ I am not sure if the purchased product is certified under Australian Composting Standards (refer to **page 9**)

☐ Not applicable (no food/beverage items for the event)

4) Does your compostable cutlery meet the Australian Composting Standards?

☐ Yes

☐ Unsure (refer to **page 9** or contact resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au)

5) Have you swapped all single-use plastic for acceptable reusable, compostable or recyclable options?

☐ Yes

☐ No, I need assistance with certain products (contact resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au)

6) Have you received signage to promote the use of reusable products at your stall? See **page 12** for sample signage available for printing.

☐ Yes ☐ No

7) If your stall involves food preparation, have you requested onsite bins for your personal food preparation? Please note that organics bins will be provided to food vendors for food preparation waste only.

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not applicable (no food preparation)





Understanding plastics and their alternatives

Single-use plastic has become such a large part of our lives, in particular when we are consuming food and drinks in public places.

Plastic and biodegradable plastics

These types of plastics can be made from fuel resources like typical plastics or a combination of renewable resources and fuel resources. Unfortunately these materials are not able to break down or they will break down into smaller and potentially more damaging pieces of plastic material.*

Remember biodegradable does not equal more environmentally friendly or sustainable options.

Compostable

Compostable products need to meet Australian Composting Standards. These can be paper and cardboard products or bioplastics, and are made from materials such as potato and corn starch.*

Understandably there is a lot of confusion around plastics and bioplastics and how they need to be managed in the disposal process. This is why avoiding plastics altogether is the best option!

Event-friendly Alternatives

The City hosts a large variety of events in a range of local community spaces each year. As an event holder you need to think about the waste that your event will generate and how you can reduce this waste.

By following the waste hierarchy, you can find ways to avoid waste in the first place, reduce the waste generated, and reuse and recycle products so they don't end up in landfill.

Waste hierarchy



Remember if you can't reuse or recycle it, refuse it

Check with the City to ensure that all products purchased can be recycled or composted at the processing facility.

Greater Bendigo's organics bin collection can accept material that meets the Australian Composting Standards, so keep an eye out for these logos.



Switching to recycled products

If you can't reduce or remove a certain type of waste for health reasons, try buying the product with recycled content e.g. items that have already been used and recycled as this reduces the amount of virgin materials used and energy generated.

* Dobrucka, R 2019, 'Bioplastic Packaging Materials in Circular Economy', LogForum, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 129–137



A quick guide to single-use plastic alternatives

There are plenty of suppliers for compostable options available in the market. If the products does not comply with Australian Composting Standards, please check with the Resource Recovery and Education unit by emailing resourcerecovery@Bendigo.vic.gov.au to determine if they are acceptable for your event.

While choosing your compostable cutlery options, remember to look for symbols:

- Home compostable logo for compliance to the Australian Standard AS5810-2010 (pictured left)
- Seedling logo for compliance to the Australian Standard AS4736-2006 (pictured right)



While we understand that not all packaging can be avoided, there are several alternative options that are recyclable or compostable. This table highlights what products are classified as single-use plastic and will not be allowed to be sold or distributed at events and provides acceptable alternatives.

SINGLE-USE PLASTIC PRODUCT	BEST OPTION	NEXT BEST OPTION	HINTS AND TIPS
Plastic cups and bottles for cold drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BYO reusable cold cups and drink bottles • Drinking water available at the event through taps and portable water stations • Other alternatives include recyclable options such as aluminium cans and reusable cups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified compostable cold cups with lids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use signage to direct people to taps or refill stations • Encourage the use of BYO bottles at your event • Coliban Water have several options for refillable water stations for use at events
Plastic cups and lids for hot drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BYO reusable coffee cups or mugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified compostable hot cups with lids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage BYO cups by adding a surcharge to the disposable cups sold

SINGLE-USE PLASTIC PRODUCT	BEST OPTION	NEXT BEST OPTION	HINTS AND TIPS
Plastic cutlery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BYO reusable cutlery • Using skewers or toothpicks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compostable cutlery options such as bamboo and wood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even if you have a compostable option, only provide cutlery upon request • Try to serve foods that do not require cutlery
Plastic plates, bowls, and trays including polystyrene and styrofoam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BYO reusable plates or bowls • Vendors to provide reusable options • Use napkins, raw compostable cardboard plates, bowls and trays (non- shiny or wax coated) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified compostable plates, bowls, and trays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often disposable options that are made from cardboard have a thin plastic lining that can be hard to identify, make sure you avoid this • Avoid shiny or waxed cardboard plates, bowls, and trays
Plastic straws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BYO straws or no straws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified compostable paper or cardboard straws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even if you have a paper or compostable option, only provide straws upon request • Offer compostable sip cup lids instead of straws • Click here to know more about alternatives to plastic straws
Balloons, glitter and plastic confetti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bubbles, paper decorations or reusable alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable/paper decorations such as paper lanterns, flags and banner, paper streamers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get creative with decorations that won't harm wildlife or end up in waterways • Click here to know more about how to make your own bubble solution
Plastic bags (any thickness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BYO reusable bags 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sell or provide reusable bags, recycled paper bags or cardboard trays/ boxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid providing plastic bags of any thickness at your event • Sell your products in cardboard boxes
Condiment sachets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve condiment from small containers, reusable squeeze bottles or dispensers 		



Evaluation and support

Evaluating the success of your Waste Wise event

The City's Resource Recovery and Education unit will randomly undertake evaluations at events to determine the success of the policy. The evaluations will involve:

- Checking in with event organisers and vendors
- Auditing bins and bin stations and any other arrangements that have been put in place to avoid the use of single-use plastics
- Educating vendors and event attendees about reducing single-use plastics

The City's staff are happy to support trialling alternative packaging options, labelling, staff education, collection and providing support and advice to reduce your environmental impact.

You can contact a staff member by emailing resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au

Support provided by the City of Greater Bendigo

- The City has organics, recycling and general waste bins that can be provided for events (there is a cost associated with these bins)
- Special event bins that are labelled and are accompanied by signage
- Assistance with bin locations to encourage patrons to stop and make a choice
- Guidance and examples of waste wise and recycling signage for vendors
- Support for trialling alternative packaging options, labelling and staff education
- Support and advice to reduce your environmental impact

Appropriate signage for correct sorting of waste and promoting reusable items at your event

Event holders and food vendors are encouraged to use our signage to promote their commitment to being single-use plastic free. You can [download these signs](http://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/waste) from www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/waste



Make sure these products go in the organics bin!

- Paper straws
- Napkins
- Wooden cutlery
- Wooden skewers
- Raw cardboard boxes
- Compostable cups and lids

Look for these symbols!

Compostable AS 4736 AS44 1999

Home Compostable AS 5810 AS44 1999

www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/waste

DON'T WASTE GOOD WASTE Sort it out before you throw it out

BENDIGO

We love reusable!

We will happily fill your own clean reusable containers with our food and drink!

www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/waste

DON'T WASTE GOOD WASTE Sort it out before you throw it out

BENDIGO



Frequently Asked Questions

I am an event organiser, what if the food vendors/stallholders I have arranged for my event cannot, or do not, comply with the City's policy in respect to waste wise food packaging?

If an organisation or individual does not comply with this policy, the event may not be supported or approved by the City in the future.

Does the City supply signage to tell patrons what can go in the organics and recycling bins?

The City can supply organics and recycling bins that have signage attached. The City can also supply PDF versions of signage that assist patrons to sort their waste correctly.

Can food vendors supply food in paper bags to customers?

Yes, paper bags can be used as an alternative to plastic bags.

Can food vendors provide paper serviettes and paper straws to customers?

Yes.

Can food and drink be served in reusable containers provided by customers?

Yes they can! Just be sure to check and make sure that the container or cup is clean and that it is fit for purpose. Supporting and encouraging customers to use reusable is important.

Can coffee cups be put in the recycling bin?

No. The cups have a thin waterproof lining so need to be placed in the general waste bin. Only coffee cups and lids that meet required composting standards can be served at events.

Can compostable coffee cups go in the recycling bin?

No. These cups can go in the organics bin but please make sure that they are compostable before placing them in the bin.

What's the difference between compostable and biodegradable?

Compostable products are designed to fully breakdown, leaving no residue and do not impact micro-organisms in the composting process. In some cases products meet commercial composting standards and in others they meet commercial and household composting standards. Products that meet these standards will have the logos listed above on the product information.

Biodegradable products often breakdown into smaller pieces but do not all together. The particles left behind can have significant negative impacts on the environment.

What bin does biodegradable packaging go into?

These should be placed in the general waste bin and is therefore not an acceptable alternative for events held on City property or events supported by the City.

What bin does compostable packaging go into?

If the packaging has the Australian Composting Standards logo on it, it can go in the organics bin.



**Thank you for your support in reducing
the single-use plastic consumption
and holding a waste-wise event.**

For further information contact the City of Greater
Bendigo Resource Recovery and Education unit on
5434 6000, email resourcerecovery@bendigo.vic.gov.au
or visit www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/waste



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