

MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

29 January 2023



Response Victoria's single-use plastic ban

Single-use plastics bans are coming into force in Victoria on Wednesday February 1st, but what does that mean?

Plastic straws cutlery, plates, drink stirrers and plastic cotton bud sticks can no longer be sold or given out. We'll also see the end of polystyrene in cups and takeaway food packaging.

The ban was announced in February 2021 which has given businesses sufficient time to make the substitutions. Businesses are also being encouraged to think about avoiding single-use, and increasing reusability to reduce waste.

Food venues are required to use plastic alternatives for these disposable items, and the Victorian government suggests items made from responsibly sourced paper, bamboo or wood. But it can also include sugarcane pulp, or other materials which can be composted.

Reusables are a more sustainable solution to manage the single-use plastic ban. This can also encourage customer loyalty for those who prioritise sustainability, as many people want to reduce waste from ending up in landfill and our environment.

There are no food safety laws in Australia preventing businesses from letting customers use their own containers. So the use of reusable containers is an easy, affordable and more sustainable solution.

Zero Waste Victoria President Kirsty Bishop-Fox said:

Food outlets are now offering compostable packaging in order to comply with the government bans. But many of these are not composted and they're going to end up in landfill. So if people want a more sustainable option they can bring their own reusable containers, cups and cutlery.

Single-use cutlery can be avoided when takeaway food is eaten at home, in the office or work lunch room by using reusable cutlery which people already have. People who are keen to be more sustainable may bring their own reusable cutlery, along with their reusable coffee cups or containers too.

For further comment:

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Zero Waste Victoria is a community group with a mission to empower Victorians to downsize their waste through everyday choices, while advocating for meaningful change. We shift mindsets, facilitate action and spotlight solutions to reduce waste. Our impact is to amplify the community voice and connect people, inspiring and enabling them to reach their zero waste goals.

Cafes can reduce single-use coffee cups by encouraging customers to bring their own clean reusable coffee cups. Or they can take it further by eliminating single-use cups like Torquay's [Ocean Grind Cafe](#) by encouraging people to bring their own cups and providing a mug library, as well as dine-in options as well.