



Degradable plastic, including oxo-degradable and landfill-degradable plastics

Enforcement begins 1 September 2023

What is proposed to be banned and when?

The sale and wholesale supply of degradable plastics, including oxo-degradable and landfill-degradable plastics, will be phased out from 27 February 2023.

This ban does not apply to Australian Standard-compliant compostable bags.

Degradable plastics often include an additive (commonly a metal) to increase the rate of fragmentation. Degradable plastics can be found in many single-use products including the following:

- magazine covers and newspaper sleeves
- drycleaning bags and garment covers
- bin liners other than compostable liners commonly used for Food Organics and Garden Organics kitchen caddies
- mulch film.

There will be a transition period of six months before the rules are enforced to allow businesses to use up supplies and source alternative products.

Enforcement of the ban on degradable plastics will commence on 1 September 2023.



Why ban degradable plastics?

Degradable plastics contain additives that allow them to break up under certain conditions. They were originally designed to address the plastic litter problem, but degradable plastics persist in the environment as microplastics.

Degradable plastics contaminate recyclable waste streams and some of the additives are toxic to the environment. The degradable labelling on these plastic products creates confusion and leads retailers and consumers to believe they are making a more environmentally friendly choice.

What alternatives are there?

Products can be redesigned to use flexible polymers that can be reused or recycled. Alternatively, products can be manufactured using compostable plastics that meet the Australian Standards for industrial (AS 4736:2006) or home (AS 5810:2010) composting.



Will it cost more to buy alternative products?

For manufacturers of degradable plastic product lines, a ban on these plastics will require a change in product design. These plastics are being banned in other Australian states and internationally.

Compliant alternatives may cost slightly more in the short term. However, costs are likely to decrease as alternative products become more available.

Who will the ban apply to?

The ban applies to all businesses, manufacturers, retailers and distributors that sell or supply degradable plastics and products that contain these plastics.

