Friday, 27 January 2023

**SINGLE-USE PLASTICS BAN TO PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT**

The Andrews Labor Government is creating a cleaner and healthier environment for all Victorians, with the next phase of the landmark ban on single-use plastics set to be introduced next week.

From Wednesday 1 February, single-use plastic drinking straws, cutlery, plates, drink stirrers, cotton bud sticks and expanded polystyrene food and drink containers will be banned from sale and supply in Victoria.

Single-use plastics currently make up a third of Victoria’s litter, pollute our precious waterways and harm wildlife. These items are often only used for a few minutes, yet generate a significant amount of waste – and can be easily avoided or replaced with reusable alternatives that save plastic, and save families money in the long run.

This builds on the Labor Government’s successful ban on plastic shopping bags in 2019, and a $515 million investment to transform our waste and recycling system and divert 80 per cent of waste from landfill by 2030.

These reforms have created thousands of new jobs in recycling and manufacturing, increased our recycling capacity and found end products from our recycled materials. Last year, the Government invested $1 million towards new technology that will turn hard-to-recycle materials like cartons and coffee cups into sustainable building products.

As part of this transformation, Victoria will move to a standardised four-stream bin system – supporting households to easily sort their waste and recycling to reduce landfill – and have access to a container deposit scheme which will maximise the return of used drink cans, bottles and cartons for recycling.

Since the ban was announced in February 2021, the Government has delivered $595,000 in grants to 15 pilot sites including catering businesses, universities and aged care facilities to help replace their single-use items with reusable alternatives.

The Reuse Pilots Fund alone, will prevent more than 5 million single-use plastic items ending up in landfills or as litter in our environment each year.

The Government has worked with organisations like the National Retail Association to help thousands of retail and hospitality businesses prepare for the change, with more than 6,500 visits to metro and regional businesses across the state.

For more information, resources and translated materials to assist businesses and organisations to understand the ban, visit [vic.gov.au/plastics](http://www.vic.gov.au/plastics).

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt**

*“We are taking action to protect Victoria’s environment and reduce pollution by banning single-use plastic items and supporting businesses to switch to reusables instead.”*

*“Plastic pollution has significant impacts on our health, wildlife, and the environment. This single-use plastics ban is a crucial step to protect Victoria’s rivers, waterways and oceans from plastic pollution.”*