



Your guide to
making the switch from
single use disposable plastics



plastic
WISE



City of Darwin has made changes to the types of disposable items that can be used at events on council land and at Darwin's markets. These changes have been implemented to reduce the amount of single use plastic used and protect Darwin's unique environment.

What are the changes?

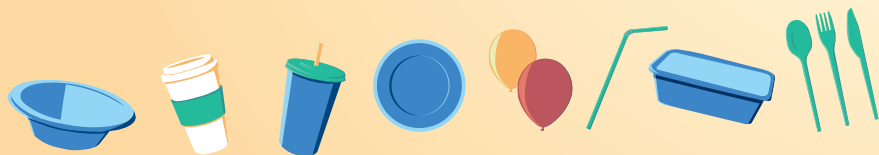
Single use plastic items including disposable coffee cups, smoothie cups, lids, straws, cutlery, stirrers, plates, bowls, and takeaway containers will all be phased out from use on council land from 1 January 2019. This will include a ban on any deliberate release of helium balloons.

Council permits and leases will reflect these changes as conditions of hire from January onwards.

City of Darwin considers the environmental impacts of those using council land, and aims to engage businesses and organisations that demonstrate environmentally sustainable practices.

What are single use plastics?

Single use plastics are disposable items that are typically used once for a few minutes before being thrown away, such as straws, disposable cups, and containers.



Single use plastics are made from oil and put pressure on our earth's valuable resources while creating unnecessary waste. These items are commonly found as litter and are a significant part of the pollution being swept into our waterways and oceans. There, they partially degrade, harming marine life and affecting human health.



What can I do?



- 1. Bring reusable containers for food and drink as well as your carry bags***
- 2. If you purchase takeaway coffee or food, you may want to invest in a BYO (Bring Your Own) kit of reusable, washable cup, container, straw and cutlery***
- 3. Encourage others to BYO and share your tips and tricks on what to use and do instead***
- 4. If you forget your BYO find a stall that has reusable plates, or head to the community wash hub to borrow one***
- 5. Check if the stall you're buying from uses compostable items***
- 6. Ask your local takeaway outlet if they use compostable items***
- 7. If you're organising an event – make it plastic free!***
- 8. Identify places that discount coffee or meals when you BYO***

Did you know that Darwin only recycles 12% its waste?

One reason for this is that many single use plastics aren't recyclable and end up as landfill or litter.

recycling

landfill or litter

These new changes will help reduce this waste and litter. It will require a little planning to get used to but it's worth it!

Look for these symbols when purchasing reusable or single use alternatives:



Home Compostable

AS 5810
ABAX 9999



Compostable

AS 4736
ABAX 9999

With your help, we can provide a cleaner, healthier natural environment to build our reputation as a beautiful location to live in and visit.



It's time to say **no** to
single use plastics



Seven reasons to switch



1. *It's easier than you think*
2. *Plastics use up non-renewable resources*
3. *Plastics fill our world with litter that doesn't go away*
4. *Plastics end up as microplastics in our food chain*
5. *Plastics harm animals and the environment*
6. *It makes you feel good doing the right thing*
7. *There are many alternatives so get creative with your BYO!*



FAQs

Q. What are single use plastics?

A. Single use plastics are disposable items that are typically used once for a few minutes before being thrown away. These products are made from oil and are used for packaging or consuming food and drink. They include straws, disposable cups, plates, cutlery, containers, food wrappers, balloons and disposable coffee cups.

Q. Can customers legally bring their own containers?

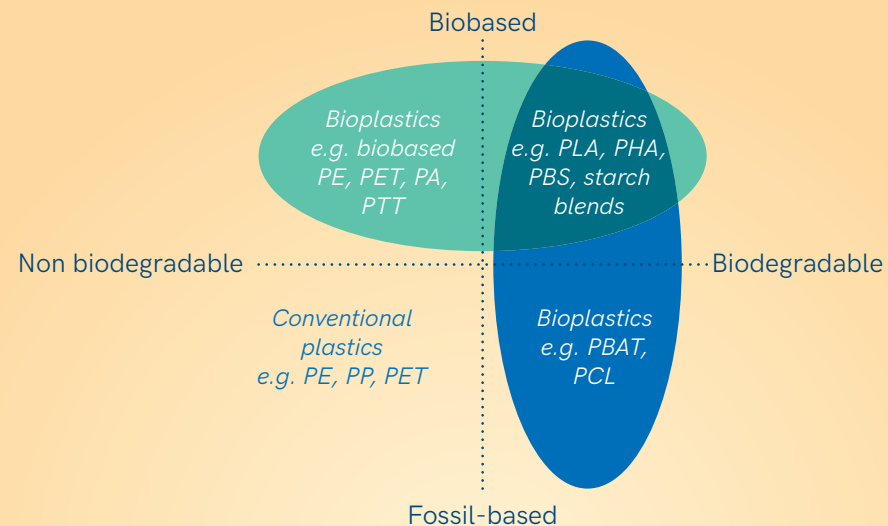
A. Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) does not set down any regulations regarding customers bringing their own containers when purchasing food. Most businesses happily accept a BYO container to save them money. However, if you bring dirty or unhygienic container businesses have the right to refuse to use it.

Q. What is Bioplastic?

A. Bioplastic is a substance made from organic sources, unlike conventional plastic, which is made from petroleum. Bioplastic contains vegetable oils, cellulose and starches.

Some biodegradable bioplastics can break down in 180 days, given the right conditions. Others are not biodegradable at all. City of Darwin is banning plastics from council land that are non-degradable in both fossil-based and bio-based categories. If a compostable option (cardboard, wood, plant material) cannot be found for your product then a bioplastic may be used. The bioplastic must be bio-based and biodegradable – fitting into the overlapping green and blue area of the graphic on the following page.

Plastic vs Bioplastic



Q. Won't the alternative products just go to landfill anyway?

A. City of Darwin has plans for a commercial composting facility that will deal with compostable waste from our marketplaces, homes and businesses.

Q. Don't biodegradable products melt and disintegrate in our hot and humid climate?

A. Technology around biodegradable and compostable products is constantly evolving. Many products these days are well suited to a variety of conditions and uses.

Q. What are Darwin's usual smoothie and coffee cups made from?

A. These are made from cardboard (corrugated or double layered for hot liquids and single layered for cold) and are lined with a thin layer of plastic. This plastic layer and the lids are made from petroleum.



FAQs cont.

Q. Can smoothie and coffee cups be recycled in Darwin?

A. Smoothie and coffee cups are not currently recyclable in Darwin. If large numbers of these are found in the recycling stream, the whole load must be taken to landfill.

Q. Where can I purchase reusable or environmentally friendly single use containers?

A. City of Darwin has been working with local distributors and businesses to ensure that there is ample supply of appropriate packaging available for purchase. We want to ensure that putting these changes into practice is easy, affordable and achievable for everyone. Check out suppliers such as Vegware, Biopak or Earthens for a product that suits you.

Q. By what date must businesses have made the switch away from single use packaging?

A. Market stalls will start transitioning away from single use plastic from 1 January 2019. Many stalls have already made the switch and are using environmentally friendly compostable products. Using up current stock for some businesses may take a few weeks, however well before the end of 2019 it is envisaged our markets will be single use plastic free!

Goal:
single use plastic free by 2020

Compostable or reusable?



Reducing the waste Darwin produces and diverting it from landfill is a high priority for City of Darwin.

Avoiding packaging altogether is always the preferred option. Reusable containers are one way to achieve this, so BYO today.

Didn't realise you were going to pop in to the markets? Didn't bring a container? That's ok. This is why having compostable disposable alternatives is important.

One recent Darwin market waste audit revealed the following items:



straws



coffee and smoothie cups plus lids



pieces of cutlery

City of Darwin believes that reusing our waste and diverting it from landfill is an environmentally sustainable change.

Once the organic waste including compostable containers and leftover food is collected and processed it can be reused as soil conditioner and fertilizer, returning the organic waste back to the earth. There is even the possibility that the heat generated during the composting process can be used as a renewable source of energy.



Product guide

Where possible, accept BYO and reusable containers.

The table below contains some recommended products:

Product	Preferred option	Alternative option
Cups and lids	Paper / PLA lined	PLA*
Icecream cups	Edible	Paper / PLA lined
Cutlery	Bamboo / wood	PLA
Straws	Paper	PLA
Cold food	Cardboard unlined	Cardboard PLA line
Paper bags	Paper	Paper lined with PLA
Containers	Biocane	Paper lined with PLA
Plates and bowls	Palm leaf / bamboo / paper	Biocane / paper lined

*PLA is a bioplastic made from plants not oil

What else can I use?

Anything fully compostable is ok! There are a whole range of alternatives available that are kinder to our environment - think paper, bamboo, sugarcane, wood and palm leaf. These, plus some PLA bioplastics, are all compostable so are better for the planet.

Check out suppliers such as Vegware, Biopak or Earthens for a product that suits you.

Local distributors are stocking these items so chat to them today about what you need.

With your help, Darwin and our local businesses can become environmental role models for the rest of Australia and the world.



Still have more questions?
 Visit www.darwin.nt.gov.au/plasticwise
 or contact Jade in our Climate Change and Environment team:
 08 8930 0629 / environment@darwin.nt.gov.au



Printed on recycled paper



www.darwin.nt.gov.au/plasticwise