

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Suburban Development



Wednesday, 27 June, 2018

VICTORIA SAYS NO TO PLASTIC WASTE

The Andrews Labor Government will ban single-use, lightweight plastic shopping bags from 2019 to help protect our environment from plastic pollution.

The ban will come into effect from late next year and will include all plastic shopping bags less than 35 microns in thickness – like those commonly used at supermarket checkouts.

The ban will also include shopping bags made from degradable, biodegradable and compostable plastic.

It follows an overwhelming response of more than 8,000 submissions during community consultation on plastic pollution.

The public consultation found enormous support for a ban on lightweight plastic shopping bags, with more than 96 per cent of submissions supporting a ban.

Over the next 12 months, the feedback will be used to develop a plastic pollution plan to reduce other types of plastic contaminants in our environment.

The Labor Government will establish a reference group to help develop the plan, with representatives from government, industry, retailers and community environment groups.

To support the transition away from plastic shopping bags and make the ban as effective as possible, the government will support an education campaign for retailers and the community.

Plastics in the environment break up into smaller and smaller pieces over time, becoming increasingly difficult to manage.

They can end up in our waterways, lakes and oceans — contributing to litter and posing a significant hazard to our marine life.

A transition period is required to help consumers and businesses adapt to the changes.

The government will continue working with other states and territories on a national, voluntary phase-out of thick plastic bags.

To view the consultation report, go to environment.vic.gov.au/sustainability/plastic-pollution.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"Banning single-use plastic bags will slash waste, reduce litter and help protect marine life in Victoria's pristine waters."

"We know Victorians want to do more to reduce pollution in our environment – we've received an enormous amount of feedback and they've told us loud and clear they want us to deliver this ban."

"The Government will continue to work closely with Victorian communities and businesses to design the ban – to ensure it works for all Victorians and our environment."

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