

Victoria's Household Recycling Reforms

Frequently Asked Questions: Councils



Q: What will change for councils?

The most significant change for councils will be the overhaul of household recycling.

Following feedback from communities, local councils and industry, we will introduce standardised waste and recycling services across Victoria, including the introduction of a new four-bin waste and recycling system.

That includes an extra service for glass and access to food organics and garden organics ('FOGO') waste recycling for every local government area in the state.

Existing commingled recycling (paper, cardboard, plastics and metals) and the normal waste bin will remain. This will be supported by a container deposit scheme for beverage containers.

| Current household recycling | Future household recycling |
|---|--|
| Commingled recycling (paper, cardboard, plastics, metals, and for most councils, glass) | Commingled recycling (paper, cardboard, plastics, metals) |
| General waste | General waste |
| Garden organics for most councils, and food – or food organics and garden organics (FOGO) – for some councils | Food organics and garden organics (FOGO) |
| | Glass |
| | Container Deposit Scheme (<i>Glass, aluminium & PET plastic beverage containers</i>) |

Q: What do councils need to do?

We will support councils to implement these changes to services in their local areas. This may include supplying an additional bin or replacing bin lids to ensure they are consistent state-wide.

We do not expect these changes to be implemented straight away, with timing informed by the needs of local communities and existing council contracts.

The Government understands that councils impacted by bushfires will be rightly focussed on response and recovery efforts. As such, the Government will work closely with these communities in managing an appropriate timeline for the rollout.

Local councils will be best placed to determine if drop-off points or transfer stations are a better alternative to kerbside collection in some areas.

Q: What funding support will be available to support these changes?

As a key implementation partner, the Government will support councils to gradually phase-in the new household collection program through an \$129 million Household Recycling Reforms package.

An education and behaviour change campaign will support the rollout of the initiatives. It will target households, businesses, councils, community groups and charities – helping them transition to the new system.

This investment will deliver a new, reliable system that will help maximise household recycling and create thousands of jobs and investment across Victoria.

Q: What will change for households?

The main changes for households will be in the way we collect waste and recycle across the state.

Under these changes, Victorians will be asked to separate waste at home and work, including using separate bins or services for food organics and garden organics (FOGO), and glass.

We're also introducing a container deposit scheme to help Victorians recycle their beverage containers.

The scheme will start by 2022/23 and will be designed and delivered in partnership with councils and industry.

Q: How many bins or services will households have?

Victorians will separate their waste across **four** services: glass, commingled recycling, general (or 'residual') waste and, across Victoria over the longer term, a food organics and garden organics (FOGO) service. Where households do not currently have a 'kerbside' bin collection service, alternative access to these four services will be provided, based on the needs of local communities.

Q: Why is there going to be a separate bin or service for glass?

When glass is collected in commingled recycling bins, it can become a major contaminant as it breaks and glass fragments stick to other materials, particularly in paper and cardboard.

It is very difficult to separate glass from other materials, limiting the recyclability of both the glass and the other materials.

By collecting glass separately, we can make sure more of it is effectively recycled – with jars and bottles transformed into multiple different products, including new roads and footpaths.

Separating glass will also reduce contamination in commingled recycling bins, and make sure that paper and plastics can be recovered effectively.

Q: What is the benefit of removing food waste from landfill?

Food waste is one of the main causes of greenhouse gas emissions as well as odour from landfill sites. Removing food waste from the garbage bin means it can be used to provide valuable nutrients in compost or

become a source of energy. Developing these uses further in Victoria will encourage innovation and enable the adoption of new technologies to reuse materials that are otherwise going to waste.

Q: How will these changes affect areas that currently don't have household collections?

In council areas that do not have kerbside collections, households will be asked to continue to dispose of their commingled recycling, garden organics and general waste as they do currently.

Councils will be able to decide what works best for these areas over time. This may be putting new arrangements in place like transfer stations and drop-off points to help recycle glass and food waste.

Q: How will the changes affect householders living in apartments?

We understand that people living in apartments have different needs and may need to use crates or tubs for sorting and separating their recyclables and share bins with their neighbours. The Government will work with local councils to determine the best arrangements for these residents.

Q: When will these changes happen?

The Victorian Government will work with individual councils to roll out the new waste collection services, including new bins and bin lids.

New services are likely to commence in the second half of 2021 for many council areas, with other areas introducing new services later as they enter new contracts for waste and recycling collection.

The new separate glass service is expected to be fully in place by 2027, while the new services and consistent bin lid colours for glass, commingled recycling, food organics and garden organics (FOGO) and residual waste will be in place across Victoria by the end of 2030.

Before introducing FOGO services across Victoria, the Government will work with industries, including the waste and agricultural sectors, to ensure Victoria can process this material into the highest value products and that we have markets available to take all the product generated.

Q: Why are some councils getting their new bins before others?

At the moment, the waste management system is largely managed by individual councils.

With almost three million households across Victoria, living in 78 different council areas, this staged rollout is the best way to transition to an integrated waste and recycling system and to make sure the right infrastructure – such as bins, trucks and processing facilities – are appropriately in place.

Q. Will bin collection timings change?

Councils are best placed to determine the frequency of collection in their own communities.

We do, however, expect that councils will maintain the regularity of their services – including residual waste on a weekly basis – in line with the needs of their communities.

The Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group has developed guidance for councils on optimal collection frequency relating to the current system, this is especially important for food and garden collection systems. The introduction of glass is likely to best alternate with commingled collections given the anticipated reduction in volume in the commingled bin.

Q: Will we have a container deposit scheme and what are the benefits?

Victoria will introduce a container deposit scheme (CDS) by 2022/23, which will work alongside the new household waste collection system. The community, councils and the recycling industry will be consulted about how a new container deposit scheme in Victoria will work.

A CDS will help us extract more value from plastic, aluminium and glass containers. It will also mean financial benefits for material recovery facilities and local governments, reduce litter, and make producers more responsible for the end stage of their products.

A CDS is expected to halve drink container litter in Victoria by 2030.

Q: What will Victoria's container deposit scheme (CDS) look like?

Our state's CDS will be designed in a way that provide a convenient, reliable and accessible service to all Victorians.

Victoria will work to harmonise our CDS with schemes in other jurisdictions to help reduce confusion for industry, retailers and consumers. The Government will also implement learnings from other jurisdictions to ensure that Victoria's CDS follows best practice and meets the specific needs of our state.

The Government is working on the design of the Victorian CDS, and more information will be available later this year. Through public consultation, Victorians will have the opportunity to have their say on how the scheme should be designed and implemented.